

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 1970

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

PANEL OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN

NOMINATION OF MESSRS. E. D. HARRIS AND M. H. THACKERAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of Standing Order No. 13, I nominate Edward David Harris, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Wynnum, and Mervyn Herbert Thackeray, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Rockhampton North, to fill the vacancies in the panel of Temporary Chairmen caused by the resignations of Mr. Dean and Mr. R. Jones.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Report of the State Stores Board for the year 1969-70.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

SENTENCE IN MANSLAUGHTER CASE,
TOWNSVILLE

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

Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* of October 7 wherein Mr. Justice Kneipp is reported to have said that while he could not allow his sympathy for the relatives and friends of the deceased to influence the sentence he proposed to impose, he would allow his sympathy for the killer named McLoughlan, who was convicted of manslaughter, to influence him to impose a lesser term of imprisonment than he otherwise would and, if so, will he peruse the depositions in connection with the case and inform the House of exactly what Mr. Justice Kneipp did say and at the same time consider lodging an appeal against the inadequacy of the sentence?

Answer:—

“Yes. I am advised that sentences recently imposed upon adults for the crime of manslaughter range from 18 months to nine years’ imprisonment. It would appear that the Trial Judge took the youthful age of the defendant into consideration in imposing the sentence of imprisonment for seven years. The matter of reform in the field of penalties in our Criminal Law was referred to the Law Reform Commission about six months ago.”

SALE OF SUGAR TO JAPAN

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* headed “We’ll buy more sugar—Can Australia supply it?” wherein a Japanese sugar industry leader, Mr. Kyoji Tsuji, is reported as saying in Townsville on October 1 that the consumption of sugar in Japan is increasing, that Japan is going to buy more and that it is up to Australia whether it can supply more?

(2) Has the Sugar Board held discussions with Mr. Tsuji and are negotiations presently under way to secure any of this additional sugar market?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) “Yes. The objectives of the visit were—to promote goodwill and understanding; to let the Japanese confirm in their minds, personally and by seeing, that the Australian sugar industry is stable, well organised, efficient, well equipped and with careful quality control for continued good export performance in all aspects; to let them see that the industry is developing and forward looking, and has great potential for the future. There is good reason to believe that the Japanese refiners left Australia convinced that our sugar industry is the ideal supplier for Japan, now and in the future. However, the limitations placed on all exporters by the quotas imposed under the International Sugar Agreement preclude any free market sales beyond allotted quotas. Japan already customarily receives at least half the Australian quota under the I.S.A. In addition to Japan, Australia has a number of old and valued free market customers all of whom are receiving a share of our quota. If Australia was given an increase in its I.S.A. quota, Japan would certainly figure largely in our endeavours to place this extra sugar.”

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

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

How many railway employees were subject to departmental disciplinary action for the year ended June 30, 1970, by being (a) suspended from duty, (b) fined, (c) cautioned, (d) reduced in rank or grade and (e) dismissed?

Answer:—

“The information sought is not extracted, and to do so would involve the use of clerical time, the expenditure of which is not considered justified.”

PUPILS-TEACHER RATIO IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS, CAIRNS AREA

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

(1) What is the maximum desirable number of children per teacher and the present and/or average number of primary pupils per teacher in the Cairns area, compared with figures for this time last year?

(2) Is he aware of a move to reduce the primary teaching staff so that the pupils-teacher ratio will be increased from 30-35 to 1 to more than 40 to 1 by the proposed exodus of teachers from the area? If so, will he immediately prevent any such move and, if not, what is the reason?

Answers:—

(1) "There is no general consensus regarding optimum class size. Modern educationists stress flexibility of organization, and groupings within a school are determined by the organization within that school. The average class size in Cairns city primary schools in September 1970 was 32.3; and, coincidentally, this also was the figure in September 1969."

(2) "No."

WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS SECTION, S.G.I.O.

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

(1) Will he appoint additional staff to the workers' compensation claims section of the S.G.I.O. to act outside the counter as courtesy or welfare officers to assist claimants or their dependants who have difficulty in completing forms and to furnish advice on problems related to interim social service or State assistance so as to make, as far as possible, a one-stop point for such persons?

(2) Will he have space provided at the new S.G.I.O. compensation office for union representatives so that claimants may consult them regarding compensation claims?

Answers:—

(1) "Appropriate action is already in train whereby qualified claims officers will be readily available at tables to assist and advise all claimants."

(2) "The Honourable Member's suggestion does not appear practicable. Numerous unions could be involved and the appropriate place for consultations with unions would normally be at the respective union offices. I understand that some 28 unions have offices in the Trades Hall, only a short distance from the new S.G.I.O. building."

NUDITY IN QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY STAGE PLAY

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 14 relative to nudity on the stage at a public performance at the University theatre, why cannot the Police Commissioner take action on a Press statement?

Answer:—

"Police can take action on Press statements if there is sufficient information contained in those statements. Usually the information released by the Press is general in character and lacks sufficient detail for police to make inquiries with a view to commencing action. Information as to the identity of the source is invariably regarded as confidential by the Press and will not be given to the police."

INDEBTEDNESS, BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL

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

(1) What is the present Brisbane City Council debt?

(2) How much does the Council owe by way of (a) loans through authorised Council loan raising, (b) bank overdrafts and (c) hire purchase, fringe banking and other financial sources and to whom is it owed?

(3) When is each of the loans repayable and in what manner?

(4) What rate of interest applies to these loans?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) "The latest information available to me is contained in the 1968-1969 annual report of the Brisbane City Council, a copy of which is available in the Parliamentary Library. The annual report of the Auditor-General on the books and accounts of the Brisbane City Council for the financial year 1968-1969 is attached to the firstmentioned report. It is understood that the Auditor-General's report for the financial year 1969-70 will be presented to Parliament during the present session."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

POLICE STRENGTH, GOLD COAST AREA

Mr. HOUSTON: I ask the Minister for Works: As the hon. member for South Coast has said that a minimum of 40 extra police is required at the Gold Coast, will this number be supplied and, if not, what number of extra men is proposed to prevent this area from becoming a sanctuary for law-breakers?

Mr. HODGES: The matter of police personnel on the South Coast is under investigation at the moment. How many men are required I do not know, but the hon. gentleman can be assured that the correct number of personnel will be stationed there after the investigation is completed.

Mr. HINZE (South Coast) rising to give notice of a question—

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! When an hon. member rises to ask a question, other hon. members should not interject, and the hon. member who does rise should pose his question without comment.

ELECTRICITY CHARGES TO PENSIONERS

Mr. F. P. MOORE: I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: Will he make representations to the various electricity boards throughout the State to investigate the possibility of allowing old-age, invalid and widow pensioners to be charged the former rates for electricity, not the present rates, which involve a 5 per cent. increase?

Mr. RAE: I appreciate the question, because the hon. member has written to me on previous occasions about this matter and I have asked my officers to look into it. We have tried to solve some of the problems outlined by the hon. member in his representations, and I am hopeful that we will be able to do something at a later date to meet his wishes.

STANDING DOWN OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: In view of the situation now created by the Commissioner for Railways being granted the right to stand down employees in the event of an industrial stoppage, what is the position of employees not directly involved in the dispute who are directed to report for work on the date on which the stoppage is precipitated and who, on reporting on that date as instructed, sign on and immediately, or almost immediately, are stood down, and is he aware of the discontent that such action—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! It seems rather a complicated question to ask without notice. I thought the hon. member was about to conclude. Now he is continuing with what is more or less an observation on the question.

Mr. R. JONES: I will conclude by asking: Is he aware of the discontent such action creates amongst employees who know they can be gainfully employed, and who have reported after travelling long distances at great inconvenience—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I cannot accept the hon. member's question as one without notice. I suggest that he place it on notice.

FORM OF QUESTIONS

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) having given notice of three questions—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! A section of the hon. member's first question is completely out of order because it imputes improper motives. I shall have a look also at some sections of his later questions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (11.27 a.m.), by leave: On Tuesday, 13 October, while the hon. member for Rockhampton South was making his speech he said this about me, *inter alia*—

"It is apparent, also, that he spends much of his time in the bordels of this State; in fact, one could well believe the rumour that he is a product of one himself."

I want to give this House the solemn assurance that I have never been in the home of the hon. member, and I certainly was not born there.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 15 October (see p. 1142) 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. HANSON (Port Curtis) (11.28 a.m.): The Financial Statement and the Tables relating to it, as presented by the Treasurer, should create considerably more interest than the many other matters that are debated in this Chamber. The Financial Statement and the Tables are of prime importance and, as well as covering broadly the ramifications of all Government departments, reflect the economy of the State. However, Government members who have spoken in this debate have presented a very sorry spectacle indeed. Many of their contributions were completely unrelated to the Budget and certainly lacked the enthusiasm that one expects to be engendered among hon. members by the presentation of the Financial Statement.

Unfortunately, the document itself paints a very gloomy picture, so perhaps it is natural that Government members should endeavour to make comments that are unrelated to it and also far removed from it. It indicates that the Government is very tired in office. After 12 or 13 years of trying to administer the affairs of the State, it is now floating on an uneasy coalition sea, with

the political partners trying to show the people a very straight bat in presenting the State's accounts.

During the course of this debate, one Government member, in very fine and attractive style, akin to a presentation with songs, slides, and a film projector, outlined a most entertaining picture of his tour of the dominion isles, dealing with matters completely unrelated to the accounts of the State. Another Government member—I would not be so unkind as to say that he was Treasurer-inspired—told the Committee about the rape of Estonia and the invasion of Lithuania and Latvia by the Bolsheviks some three decades ago. We heard another Government member who, I have no doubt, could have been Cabinet-inspired—it was even suggested that, on the day on which he spoke, which was the day of the great meeting in Canberra, the Treasurer was very unhappy that he was not there at his side—speak of the storming of the Bastille, the great victory of Waterloo, and the battle of nations at Leipzig—all matters completely unrelated to the Treasurer's Budget. We, in virile Opposition, have had to sit virtually in solitary silence and listen to the drivel emanating from a Government that is some 13 years old, a very tired administration that is dying desperately on its feet. The contributions from this side of the Chamber have certainly been very enthusiastic and full of thought, and have dealt with matters in a way which prove that, if given the chance, we could form an administration that would certainly be very beneficial to Queensland and Queenslanders generally.

The Treasurer's presentation of the State's accounts was in sharp contrast with what is found on a reading of the ballyhoo emanating from the Department of Industrial Development, which depicts photographs of the Minister for Industrial Development, urges people to come to Queensland, the State of the future with unlimited progress, with all types of land available at almost no cost, and urges industries to start their future here.

Many glossy brochures are produced by this department. They appear with monotonous regularity and urge people to come to Queensland, at the same time telling them all about the wonderful Government, the wonderful Department of Industrial Development, and many other wonderful departments that are here, and how they will almost go down on their knees to entice industries to this State so that they will provide job opportunities for young Queenslanders.

What do we find in the Treasurer's Financial Statement? On every page we read a story of gloom, a story of ever-increasing drought, a story of the State being ransacked for funds, a story of the State being unfortunately cast as a mendicant at the feet of the Commonwealth Treasurer.

Mr. Chalk interjected.

Mr. HANSON: I hope I am getting under the Treasurer's skin. Like Murphy's dog, he can give it but he cannot take it.

We find the Treasurer, like a very humble dog, lying as a mendicant at the feet of his master and asking, "Why can't we get a little bit of assistance?"

Mr. Bennett: There isn't enough go in him to wag his tail.

Mr. HANSON: That is so. Is this the kind of Financial Statement that should go out to the people of the world, including the industrial leaders, in an effort to bring them here to promote Queensland and put Queensland on the march? Certainly not!

Only 12 months ago a controversy raged on the proposed power station at Gladstone. For seven or eight years, members of the Opposition have been calling out loud and clear for the construction of this power station. But there has been very little progress, despite the fact that both legislative and financial approval has been given by the Commonwealth to launch this enterprise. We are missing out very badly and will continue to do so unless, within a short space of time, this project is launched, because it is very necessary in the development of our State. Might I add that this is not a socialist objective. Those who are delaying erection of this power station are the men behind the Treasurer—his Cabinet colleagues—with whom he cannot agree.

Mr. Chalk: They all agree with me.

Mr. HANSON: Yes. They are letting the Treasurer carry the baby.

Whilst I am critical of the Treasurer's political performance, I must admit that he is possibly the most courteous of our Cabinet Ministers. He at least gives hon. members a reply to any letter or submission they send him. This does not apply to his Cabinet colleagues, who sometimes reply in three months' time and at other times do not reply in 12 months' time.

I have no doubt that the Treasury staff is completely adequate for the administration of the policy enunciated by the Government. Unfortunately, in other departments there is a complete detestation of hon. members; so much so, that at times public servants go out of their way to be discourteous to members of this Assembly.

Recently, in the Press, a member of Parliament was chided because Parliamentarians enjoy parliamentary privilege. I shall have more to say about that later on. As a matter of fact, the person who took that hon. member to task might regret mentioning that members of Parliament enjoy a certain privilege in criticising Government departments. We should have that privilege, and it is to the discredit of any public servant who is critical of members of the legislature when they raise matters that are for the benefit, comfort and general well-being of

their constituents. Unfortunately, this state of affairs has been allowed to prosper in certain Government circles, and it is something that is not very desirable.

When viewed in broad analysis and in the light of world history and development, the present Budget is a very gloomy one indeed. On page 6, the Treasurer speaks of the wage and salary increases that have occurred since last year's Budget was introduced. He said that we must expect further wage and salary increases during this year. He provided \$3,000,000 for this purpose last year, and the increases amounted to about \$7,000,000. Provision for such increases is made in this year's Budget to the extent of \$3,000,000. I suggest that what happened last year will happen again this year, and \$3,000,000 does not appear to be an adequate provision.

No doubt the State's accounts will be in a better position when rain falls. However, when the rain really falls the taxation imposts will be sufficiently severe to wet the eyes of primary producers and others who are suffering the ravages of the worst drought in our history.

The Treasurer bemoans the inflationary trend, and says that the States are the ones who lose by it. How true that is! There is no doubt that much criticism of inflation comes from members of the Treasurer's party who at times, both in this Chamber and on the hustings, are very vocal in their criticism of the trade union movement for seeking wage increases. But, to use a colloquialism, they are not reluctant to kick the guts out of trade unions when it suits them to do so.

Inflation is a matter of great argument in the community. There is the contest of wages v. prices; of consumption v. investment; of allocation of resources v. labour available. A very interesting document that came to my notice some time ago is a Federal Government publication headed, "The Australian Economy in 1970". It deals quite frankly with costs and prices, and it might do some Government members a little good to take cognisance of its contents, which may allay some of their fears. One passage reads—

"What will be said here about the effect which rising wages have had on prices in recent years is not at all intended to imply that they have been solely responsible for the price increases which have occurred. It is not so. A good many other factors have contributed—larger profit margins probably more than most. Also any tendency for demand to run to excess quickly reflects itself in the elements making up costs, but the directly consequential rises in wages are the symptoms rather than the causes of the prevailing inflation."

I sincerely hope that that sinks into the minds of hon. members opposite.

I contend that inflation would not be the worry and anxiety of Treasurers, industry and commerce, and the public, if all incomes increased only to the extent that prices rose. Inflation is such a serious social problem because some incomes rise faster than prices. Some rise more slowly than others, and some unfortunately do not rise at all unless some social action is taken at Government level. How can wage-earners be blamed for seeking higher wages when prices last year increased by 3.7 per cent., and the rise this year is expected to be about 5 per cent.?

Short of a decrease in prices, how can a reasonable economic level be maintained, and how can a share of productivity be given to all unless wage levels continue to rise? No doubt there could be some argument about the share that should be given to each person or group of persons, and no doubt some problems can be solved by action taken through budgets or the banking system. But, for some sections of the community, many of these problems have not been solved. Unfortunately many of them have not even been examined. Along with other members of the Australian Labour Party, I prefer to see inflation with full employment in the community, rather than deflation and large-scale unemployment. The latter would be tragic for Australia as a whole.

Members of the Committee who wish to exercise their minds and attempt to find the root causes of the anxiety and industrial action now present in the community do not have to look very far. On the financial pages of many newspapers, one sees reports giving a true picture of the performance of companies. They certainly conjure up in the minds of those who are involved in manufacturing the goods from which companies derive profits that they should have a greater share of the returns than they receive at present. It is Labour philosophy that wealth should be distributed more equitably throughout the community than it now is. That is not an odious philosophy. In fact, it is very desirable and, in certain circumstances, very necessary that such a humane approach should be adopted.

As I said earlier, the financial pages of magazines and newspapers contain reports on the operations of companies in many fields of industry and commerce. For example, great emphasis is placed on the mining industry on a national basis, and I refer first to Hamersley Holdings Ltd. This is a comparatively new company that has shown considerable expertise in developing huge iron-ore deposits in Western Australia. Its profit last year was \$46,000,000.

Next, let me turn to the Shell Co. of Australia Ltd., an old-established company in the oil industry in Queensland and in Australia. As a matter of fact, it pioneered much of the development in the port of

Gladstone, and it has wide ramifications throughout the State. Last year its profit was \$26,000,000. Many of the workers employed by the Shell Co., being aware that the hip-pocket nerve is the most sensitive part of the human anatomy, desire to obtain a greater share of that profit than they are now receiving. They do not contend that they should receive the full \$26,000,000; they ask merely that they should receive a greater share of the profits as the performance of the company improves.

Let me turn now to Mount Isa Mines Limited. The Australian Labour Party is very proud that, in the early days, it assisted that company very generously and was responsible—the Treasurer may smile if he wishes—for providing a suitable railway line to Mt. Isa. I remind the Committee that that improvement was effected in the days of the pick and shovel. A.L.P. Governments gave considerable assistance to Mount Isa Mines Limited to enable it to establish itself in this State. I admit, too, that for 25 years the company did not pay a dividend. Every member of the Labour Party believes that, under the system prevailing in Australia, no company can continue to operate unless it makes a profit. However, hon. members on this side of the Chamber believe that the profit motive is not the most important objective and that man is certainly greater than the machine.

If we look at the performance of Peko Wallsend—a company of which I am proud because it is essentially Australian and which is handling coal, gold, copper and many other minerals—we see that its profit last year of \$7,152,000 represented an earning rate of 99.8 per cent. That is not a bad performance. The Treasurer cannot get that out of T.A.B., and I certainly cannot get it from the business with which I am associated.

The earning rate of Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. was 93.2 per cent. As the racing boys would say, that is not a bad bit of chaff. New Broken Hill Pty. Ltd., another very virile company, shows an earning rate of 64 per cent.

Mr. Chalk: Are you going right through your portfolio?

Mr. HANSON: I have been to the companies office, and I am going through the Treasurer's list. Let us turn now to press and radio interests. Consolidated Press showed an earning rate of 160.5 per cent. I listened to Sir Frank Packer the other night on television. It was not such a great performance but it clearly indicated why he could be beaten at Newport and not squeal too much even though the rules might have been against him. Television Corporation showed an earning rate of 65.7 per cent. In view of these results, is it any wonder that there is a tendency among employees working for these companies to seek a greater share of their profits. After all, these performances

are possible only through their skill and labour, in conjunction with skill of management.

Coming now to the retail field, Myers had an earning rate of 49.3 per cent. despite the fact that it can offer the best deal on washing machines, Mixmasters and many other items advertised in our newspapers. Grace Bros.' earning rate was 33.5 per cent. The profit earned by I.C.I.-A.N.Z.—I notice some hon. members opposite wriggling in their seats—was \$15,000,000 last year. British Tobacco Co. Ltd., the Craven A specialists, showed a profit of \$12,000,000, and Australian Paper Manufacturers of Petrie, a profit of \$10,000,000. Dunlop Aust. Ltd., for selling us tyres that, at times, are not comparable with those sold by Good-year Tyre & Rubber Co. (Aust.) Ltd. and Hardie Rubber Co. Pty. Ltd., made a profit of \$17,000,000.

I want to deal now with Broken Hill Pty. Ltd., and I inform the Treasurer quite frankly that I am not a shareholder in B.H.P. or any of the other companies I have mentioned. Anyone who happened to take up 100 shares in B.H.P. in 1950 for a market value of \$565 and who took up the options that have been available since then would now have 577 shares valued at \$7,000. Such a holding would have increased in value in 20 years from \$565 to \$7,000. If I had the resources to buy shares, I would not mind waiting that period of time for that amount of capital gain plus the dividends that have been paid over the year. That brings me to the crux of the whole problem. This company has a virtual monopoly on steel in this country, and the terms dictated by it are very stringent indeed. Although the price per ton of steel has increased from \$37.50 in 1950 to \$99.68 today, steel supplies cannot be obtained and developmental projects are being held up all over this State and nation. This company is not able to supply the steel necessary for their completion.

The Government has been sadly lacking in any move to launch a steel industry in this State. I have spoken previously in this Chamber about the need for a steel industry in Queensland, and I firmly believe that one will be established. However, at present the Government hides behind a wall of silence, even though certain Japanese industrialists have indicated their interest in the establishment of a steelworks in Queensland. Over a considerable period representatives of Japanese industrial organisations have visited Queensland and inspected our industrial enterprises. As well, representatives of the American Bethlehem Steel Company have toured Australia, and have said that they might establish a steelworks at Jervis Bay, or over in Western Australia, or somewhere else. A steel industry is vital to this State, and the Government should look urgently at its establishment. I have no doubt that Mr. Charles Court, the Western Australian Minister for Development, has written into

agreements that he has made with many iron companies the stipulation that they must undertake the initial stages of development of a steel industry in that State. It is a pity that agreements drawn up in this State do not contain similar provisos.

Mr. Chalk: He has not got any coal; we have.

Mr. HANSON: But we do not have much iron. Perhaps one of these days I might unearth some for the Government.

While the hon. member for Barcoo was making his speech the Treasurer interjected and implied that Gladstone had reached saturation point in its coal trade. That is not so. Huge tracts of land close to the waterfront are still available for the operations of industrial undertakings. The Port of Gladstone has tremendous potential. I point out to the Treasurer that many people were disappointed by his remarks, although I realise, of course, that he may not have been referring to the broad aspect of the potential of the port. I agree that the present coal-loading facilities at Auckland Point have reached saturation point and that the facilities for loading Moura coal will soon become saturated. However, large tracts of land in the northern portion of the harbour area have great potential for future coal-loading facilities, and I am sure that that area of the port will play a significant part in the development of Central Queensland. Hydrographic surveys will reveal that it possesses very deep water.

The Japanese steel representatives who inspected Gladstone, were impressed by the work being undertaken to deepen the northern channel. They realise that the use of that channel will save a good deal of time in shipping schedules. I have no doubt that before the Treasurer decides to establish new ports in this State he will examine the claims put forward by the Central Queensland ports. They possess tremendous potential for future development. I believe that in Gladstone only the surface has been scratched.

The Treasurer painted an interesting picture about his dealings with the Commonwealth. His Financial Statement reveals that in the next financial year and for the duration of the present five-year agreement the States will be better off than they were in the past; however, cognisance must be taken of the Treasurer's moans that the States have no substantial and progressive sources of revenue to meet increased costs.

I think rather nostalgically of the positive action that was threatened during the first part of this year. The true spirit of Federation appears to be lost. Despite the consistent and rather extraordinary build-up in the first part of the year, at a subsequent meeting in Canberra, more or less in a few words, there was a virtual collapse in the Premiers' talks. With a few significant

improvements in allocation and the betterment factor, and a promise by the Commonwealth to assist with some debt servicing, the status quo is more or less preserved. I hope that, for the future benefit of Australia, the present political position does not continue; if it does I am afraid that the Commonwealth will never surrender its centralist powers. Lord preserve us from too many Liberal Governments. Our best hope lies in Commonwealth-States co-operation, whether given freely or forced upon the Federal Government by public indignation, otherwise we will see an increase in centralised power, with the States committed to an annual harangue with their Federal counterpart.

The exercise in which the Premiers engaged was not a total loss, because the Commonwealth was made to realise, in small degree, that the States had some power, some sovereignty and some jurisdiction. In the present circumstances, a Labour Government in Queensland would have the ability to identify problems, offer solutions, and marshal votes and pressures. There can be no error about that.

We all share in the concern expressed by the States earlier this year when it was forecast that a national development corporation would be established. That promise was given blatantly and openly to the people, without reference to the States and without reference to the source of finance. No statement was made about whether this proposal would have considerable impact on the States' loan funds for electricity and water developments. Unfortunately the Commonwealth acts very arrogantly, and to the detriment of Queensland and the other States, if it is not subjected to certain pressures.

Mr. Lickiss: Surely you are wearing the wrong hat at the moment.

Mr. HANSON: I am not wearing the wrong hat; we are in Opposition.

The Governments in the State and Federal spheres have the ball but they are indeed lacking in co-operation, despite the few entreaties heard from the Government corner. The Federal Government has embarked on a savage policy of centralism such as has not been seen since the advent of Federation. The shame must be borne by all Government members who have not gone to Liberal Party Conventions and had the guts to try to impose their will on those who administer the Federal and State laws of Australia. Let the blame rest where it should. Government members should examine their consciences. We in Opposition have very definite policies. We know where we are going, and we will cross the bridge when we come to it. We will meet the problems, and I say quite frankly and openly that Queensland will not be in a state of stagnation as it is at present, unable to move, with everyone watching everybody else, like the black man's dog watching the white man's

dog—very intently indeed—with the State unfortunately suffering because of the political manoeuvres of members of the coalition parties.

I shall now deal with some matters of local concern, the first of which relates to country race clubs. Few people realise that country race clubs do a useful job in conducting regular race meetings in various localities. They could be classified really as industries worthy of some consideration by the Government. I am not completely sold on the idea that racing is a great social benefit. I would much rather see our young people engaging in more wholesome forms of activity. Race clubs are with us—they are here to stay—and we have to do something for them while they are here. I feel they could be described better as institutions which are conducted, in the main, by public-spirited men acting in honorary capacities and which provide, directly and indirectly, a substantial portion of both State and Commonwealth revenue.

To illustrate my point, I shall quote a few figures from the latest annual report of a very modest but progressive club, namely, the Gladstone Turf Club. According to its accounts, that club pays bank charges and interest amounting to \$218.30, of which interest represents approximately \$200. A good deal of that expenditure could be saved if the Totalisator Administration Board's contribution was paid on a quarterly and not an annual basis. The annual disbursement for the year ended 30 June is made at the end of September. Some allocation should be made to each race club at quarterly intervals after September. I do not say that the amount should be assessed on a cold or ruthless basis, right down to the last cent. However, many clubs are faced with a grave financial problem because one large amount of money is paid to them each year instead of smaller quarterly payments.

The Gladstone Turf Club pays \$70 to the Stamp Duties Office for the privilege of conducting a meeting on Anzac Day. It pays \$26.10 in registration and licence fees, and that does not include nearly \$300 paid for booth licences. A payment of \$451.44 is made to the Police Department for the sight of a uniform at race meetings. This should be looked at, because the money paid to the Police Department throughout the State for attendance at similar functions would be very substantial.

Most members of the public overlook the fact that race clubs pay taxation. Last year the Gladstone Turf Club paid \$2,500 in taxation. That represented roughly 10 per cent. of its receipts from the T.A.B. For the information of hon. members who are not familiar with the financial workings of race clubs, I point out that race clubs are taxable at company taxation rates and, except for small concessions on members' subscriptions and donations, no deductions which are not

applicable to a dividend-paying company are allowed. This is a very severe penalty on race clubs. It increases their capital expenditure by nearly 40 per cent.

At 30 June, the club at Gladstone had an overdraft of more than \$800 on which the top rate of interest is being paid, and the only way it can secure financial accommodation is by the personal guarantees of supporters and the many honorary officials who look after the interests of the club. That is the position, despite the fact that there has been capital expenditure of \$45,000 on the grounds. The club's land is similar to many sports reserves throughout the State. It is used for racing only, and no bank or other lending institution will give financial accommodation on such a weak title. This situation is not peculiar to race clubs; it applies also to other sporting societies and show societies throughout the State.

I should like the Treasurer and the Minister for Lands to see if it is possible to find some solution to this problem. After all, many sporting bodies and race clubs suffer under the present system as they have to rely on those associated with them becoming guarantors. As I have mentioned, banks and other lending institutions are not very happy with the present situation, and it is certainly strongly against their policy to lend money for use on land held under the present conditions of lease. No doubt many members of the public regard racing as a social evil, but it must be accepted that race clubs provide considerable employment and entertainment for a section of the community. They also contribute substantially to the Consolidated Revenue of the State.

The essence of my submission is that there should be a better understanding of the functions and problems of race clubs, and I bring that to the notice of the gentlemen who run the T.A.B. Race clubs, particularly those in country areas, are regarded as poor relations to whom the T.A.B. pays a remittance as a balm to its conscience for the huge profits that it takes from the unfortunate punters.

Mr. Chalk: The T.A.B. pays 70 per cent. of the prize money.

Mr. HANSON: Yes, but it is still doing all right, and, without the clubs, it could not function. Let there be no mistake about that. I leave those points with the Treasurer, and I trust that they will be given favourable consideration by him.

I now wish to bring to the notice of the Committee a very alarming situation that exists in our community. I refer to the economic plight of many people. I raised this matter during the Budget debate last year. Unfortunately the Treasurer was not as serious then as he might have been, and I hope that he will now take some cognisance of what I have to say and consider it in the framing of his party's policy. We have certainly given it consideration in the framing of our policy.

Unfortunately many people think that we live in a society where everything is milk and honey, where dollar notes flow freely, and where, when one walks down a street, one can see \$20 bills sticking out of workers' pockets. That is far from the real situation. There are areas in this city not very far from Parliament House, which one can reach in a lunch-hour stroll or a walk before returning for the evening sitting, where many of our fellow human beings line up to obtain a little sustenance to keep them alive. They are people who have suffered greatly in life. Although in some cases their problems may be self-inflicted, one should look at them and say, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

About 12 months ago what was known as the Australian Institute Summer School on Poverty in Australia was held in Canberra. On that occasion a great deal of discussion took place relative to the 10 per cent. of the Australian population that is virtually trapped in what might be called the "culture of poverty". Although there was not one really poor man at that conference who could express a poor man's point of view, a number of statements and submissions were made. I hope that members of the Committee will read the reports of the conference and that, if the opportunity ever arises, they will do something positive in an endeavour to cure the creeping paralysis that is afflicting this country at the moment. It certainly was made clear that an entirely new approach is needed if the problem is to be combated successfully, and it was made clear also that no Australian Government is attempting to introduce the necessary new programmes.

As hon. members know, I live in a town that is regarded throughout the State as being of considerable affluence and in which there are great employment opportunities and the people generally are very satisfied and happy. Unfortunately, coming into that community seeking work are people who are in very poor circumstances and who have come from towns and cities over the length and breadth of Australia. I can take hon. members to areas in Gladstone—I am sure that every hon. member could do this in his own town or city—and show them people who are trapped in what I referred to earlier as the "culture of poverty". One finds not far from Parliament House, at the top of the hill, many elderly people who have real problems and to whom the sight of a \$2 bill would certainly be very welcome.

Mr. F. P. Moore: People in the North are paying \$16 a week for two rooms.

Mr. HANSON: I know of towns where people are paying \$20 to \$25 a week for one room, and it is a very modest room indeed. It certainly makes one think when one becomes aware of the number of people with children who face these very difficult problems.

Unfortunately, the thought permeates the minds of many people—certainly those comprising the conservative element in society and many hon. members on the Government benches—that the poor are automatically inferior, that they are perhaps happy primitives who do not want any other role in life, and that they should not be disturbed because they are lazy and would not work even if a job was offered to them.

Mr. Murray: Are you saying that we are inferior? We are poor.

Mr. HANSON: I would not mind having the hon. member's bank balance.

A survey in the United States of America revealed that 35,000,000 citizens were living in abject poverty before President Johnson launched his attack on poverty. Fifteen per cent. of them were 18 years of age and 33½ per cent. were children, probably under 12 years of age. Whilst no similar statistics are available in Australia, the trend here could certainly be quite comparable. I ask members of the Committee whether a child of 18 years of age, if he were short of a few cents in his pockets, would refuse work. I say that, in the vast majority of cases, he would not. Would children of 12 years of age or under be shiftless—no good—something to be discarded?

I said that similar official figures would not be available in this country. This is because official endorsement is not given to the gathering of such figures as they would reveal some very stark facts relative to this problem. A large percentage of our people are trapped by these conditions. Numbers of them cannot join contributory health schemes. Fortunately, in this State we have a free hospitals scheme which assists these people, in sharp contrast to conditions in the "good old days" of years ago when a man could lie in hospital with his bed bearing a sign such as, "John Thomas Brown, pauper." Such conditions inspired early Labour legislators to do something about the position and to try to correct many of the indignities that were then forced upon their fellow human beings.

Unfortunately, many of the young people caught up in this problem come from families that are not well versed in assisting their children in studies at home, with the result that university scholarships are not available to them. They are thrown on the labour market at an early age. They live within the narrow confines of cities and towns, having come into the world and lived, as their parents did before them, victims of a serious financial crisis. Their parents, who were probably victims of the financial depression of years ago, are consequently unable to assist them and they accordingly come into the world and go through life virtually unseeing and unknowing.

In the United States of America, an attempt was made to rectify this problem and this could also be done in Australia. The

head-start programme in the United States was instituted in the days of President Johnson. It aimed at giving underprivileged children a better basis for learning by methods ranging from teaching them how to hold a pencil to giving them a few square meals. Admittedly, the scheme is of very recent origin but it certainly calls for attention in this country. It calls for more experimentation and research.

The expense of helping these people and resolving this problem would be immense in Australia, but, when one considers the vast amounts paid out in social services through various Government agencies and the amount spent on defence, the cost, by comparison, would be negligible and the results achieved very worth while.

I urge the Government to take notice of this very important matter. I believe that many people in Queensland, as in other States, are faced with serious problems in regard to their earnings. The problem exists particularly in towns throughout Queensland and I ask the Government to make an earnest endeavour, in the years ahead, to examine it and come up with a solution. I firmly believe that a very good starting point would be for the Government to assist to a far greater degree the numerous welfare organisations operating in the State. Assistance by the Government to collect and collate the true statistics relative to the matter would be a start. The establishment of a greater number of kindergartens would assist in guiding children towards becoming good citizens. The payment of subsidies to meet the wages bills of those institutions is desirable and should be the Government's concern. I hope to see the day when attendance at kindergartens is made compulsory so that every pre-school child will be given guidance in his or her formative years.

Mr. Baldwin: We won't need compulsion, as there is such a crying need for it.

Mr. HANSON: There certainly is. The Government should undertake the intensive training of young workers to fit them for the role of youth leaders in their employment circles, and it should provide a greater number of sporting amenities and other wholesome activities in the community. It should provide far greater assistance to youth libraries, and, as well, it should channel additional funds into the Vote for the Education Department to induce young people to enter skilled trades and to dissuade others from entering dead-end occupations.

I have referred to the necessity to start early on the construction of a super power station at Gladstone. I hope the Treasurer will quicken his present slow pace and will urge his officers to launch that enterprise in the very near future. If this State can provide cheap power it will reap a huge benefit from the many industries that will come to it. Only nine months ago the

Treasurer returned from an overseas visit and said that he had made a deal with the Dow Chemical Co. Unfortunately, however, the company has not signed on the dotted line, although I should imagine that it will do so shortly. That company will come to Gladstone as soon as we can provide it with cheap power. Many industries depend completely upon electrical power; therefore, I suggest that the expected capacity of the power-house of 1,100 mW is too small.

Mr. Chalk: What capacity do you suggest?

Mr. HANSON: Twice that.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (12.29 p.m.): I sympathise with the Treasurer, who has endeavoured in his Budget to do the best he can for the State. In the face of very difficult conditions he has done a wonderful job.

The hon. member for Port Curtis and many other members of the Opposition spoke about the gloom and pessimism caused by the continuing drought and the accent that has been placed upon it; however, the Treasurer has been realistic. The effects of drought must be taken into consideration. I am quite sure that members of the Opposition who represent western electorates do not regard the drought as a joke. They are conscious of the difficulties associated with it and are aware of its terrible effects upon people who live in the West and also upon the State as a whole. It is hypocritical for the Leader of the Opposition to lead an attack upon a Budget that emphasises drought and for other members of the Opposition to join in that attack. By doing so, they are saying to the people of the West, "We do not believe what you tell us." Members on this side of the Chamber are aware of the serious effects of drought. We know full well that it is having an impact on the State as a whole. The Treasurer has had to consider the situation, as it exists. In the circumstances an excellent set of figures has been produced, with accent placed on the right spots, namely, education and health services. We know that all departments will suffer; all will require much more than they will get, but they will be able to manage. I sympathise with them. Because of their forward planning, they know what is needed to develop this State, yet they will be unable to carry out their full plans.

The day-by-day education of our young people cannot be delayed; we must do our best for them. In this debate many Opposition members have talked about how money can be spent, but none has presented a solution whereby more money can be obtained to permit the services to be carried out. It has been said that we should demand more money from the Commonwealth. In the past, I have spoken about Commonwealth-State financial relations; I am not happy with them.

Improvements in the last agreement were very acceptable, as the Treasurer said in his Financial Statement. If we are to provide increased services, accepting that we cannot keep asking the Commonwealth for more money, we must do something in the State field. Is there any way of doing so? I imagine that this matter has been fully discussed in the Treasury in an effort to find increased revenue, but it seems that we have very few untouched fields of income in the State.

Some two or three years ago I suggested to the appropriate Minister that if we implemented a form of education tax, it would be acceptable to the people. Any member of Parliament who suggests increased taxation puts his head on the block. I do not mind doing so on this occasion because I think we must determine what we can do in our own area. Over two years ago I suggested that the vacated area of entertainment tax should be investigated. A tax of 1c or 2c a seat throughout the State would not drive people from their entertainment. In talking to many groups of people who say that more money is required for this and that, I have asked, "Would you be willing to pay?" They have said, "Yes, we would be willing to pay if the money went to education." The average person thinks like that. On that basis, I suggested some considerable time ago that we should investigate the possibility of an education tax based on the old system of entertainment tax. Before the war I worked in a chartered accountant's office in Victoria, and I had to fill in the entertainment tax form. I know a little about it and I do not think the tax would be harmful. I hate additional taxes, but I think this area could be investigated.

Mr. Hanlon: I do not think it would amount to a big sum for education, but it might be helpful to local authorities.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The hon. member for Baroona may be right, but when I see the amount of entertainment available today, with all the theatres, Festival Hall shows, and so on, where people pay high prices for tickets, I think that a tax of a couple of cents a ticket would not be harmful to the individual. This area should be investigated. The proceeds should not go to Consolidated Revenue, but should be used specifically as additional money for education. This is an area in which we cannot delay.

Mr. Lloyd: They are reeling under the burden of taxation now.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The hon. member for Kedron will be making his speech, and if he cares to express that thought, good enough.

This would not restrict the opportunity to enjoy entertainment, and it would do a good deal for education. An investigation would be necessary. I do not know the amount involved, but I do know that we are in urgent need of more equipment in

our schools. There are many things that we need today, not tomorrow. The parents and citizens' associations are carrying a big load willingly, but a move into this sort of area would be appreciated, and I do not think there would be any great problems associated with it.

Naturally, hon. members cannot hear all of this debate, and what I have not heard I have read. The Leader of the Opposition commenced on a strange note. He said that federation is a good system, and I was delighted to hear this because Government members are federalists whereas the A.L.P. members are centralists. Many Opposition speakers, including the hon. member for Port Curtis, complained about the centralist attitude of the present Federal Government, whereas on A.L.P. philosophy he should be applauding it, because the A.L.P. platform, which was referred to by the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha—

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Yes, the hon. member knows it, but he is not playing the part so far as his Federal Leader is concerned. The hon. member has forsaken him, and I want to show him how he is out of step.

On page 9 of the Australian Labour Party platform and policy, under "Methods", this appears—

"Amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution—

"(a) (i) to clothe the Commonwealth Parliament with unlimited powers and with the duty and authority to create States possessing delegated Constitutional powers;"

That is stated quite clearly. Centralism is the main plank of the platform.

In addition, the policy also contains the following aim—

"Abolition of the State Legislative Councils and of the office of State Governor."

It was not very long ago that Opposition members voted in favour of an increase in the Governor's salary. They did not mention then that they are against having such an office in this State. They went along with the idea, to create an air of decency with the people. Not one Opposition member stood up and said, "Our philosophy is to abolish the office of State Governor." They would not face up to that.

Mr. Murray: Mock respectability.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Mock respectability, as the hon. member for Clayfield points out.

These are the matters that disturb me. It is an endeavour to create an air of decency. These matters are never mentioned until the Labour Party gains power. The people of Queensland do not realise that they exist. This is the terrible thing. Opposition members were quite happy to vote in favour

of an increase in the Governor's salary, yet their platform states that State Governors must go because they are doing no good.

The Leader of the Opposition then dealt with the increase in prices of frozen foods. This was mentioned by one or two Government members, including the hon. member for Landsborough, who covered the subject thoroughly. In fact, on 14 October, that hon. member directed a question on this subject to the Minister for Labour and Tourism. The Minister's answer contained the minimum wholesale price per dozen for certain frozen-food packs at various dates from October, 1964, to July, 1970, and also the plan price, and from those amounts I extract the following—

	Oct. 1964	Plan Price
	\$	\$
Peas—		
8 oz. pack ..	1.40	1.38
16 oz. pack ..	2.65	2.52
Beans—		
8 oz. pack ..	1.70	1.56
16 oz. pack ..	2.80	2.88

Mr. Abern: They are less now than they were 10 years ago.

Mr. CHINCHEN: That is right. As the hon. member for Landsborough says, they are less now than they were 10 years ago.

The point I make is that I do not agree with manufacturers getting together to decide prices, and I hope that the restrictive trade practices legislation will be effective in preventing such activities. A free-enterprise system can survive only by competition. But I also say that there must be some understanding of what happened in this industry. Competition being what it was, manufacturers were foolish enough to go below an economic price. Then who was hurt? The grower—he was not paid. That was a shocking state of affairs, and, although I do not like the way in which the manufacturers have rectified the situation by taking action together (in my opinion, that is entirely wrong), I will say that today's prices are realistic.

The hon. member for Logan put his head in a noose in saying what he did about these price increases. He did not think of the growers in his area, and those in mine which adjoins his, whom the price increase will assist. It is very important that this story be known. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Logan did not know it. They know it now, and I hope they remember it.

The next thing that the Leader of the Opposition said was that wage increases are justified. That is a fairly bald statement; he did not say how they are justified. I put it this way: what the people want—you, I, and the ordinary workers—is greater purchasing power, not increased wages. That

has to be understood. Constant wage rises one after another merely increase the inflationary tendency and make things difficult for pensioners and others on fixed incomes. That has to be realised—and it is not being realised. Increases granted without greater production represent inflationary money, and everybody pays for it. Those who receive increases are getting by because, as I pointed out during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, over a number of years wage increases have exceeded price increases. Hon. members opposite cannot query that assertion.

Mr. Bromley: What about the Government's promise to put value back into the dollar?

Mr. CHINCHEN: I ask the hon. member for Norman to keep quiet. He has made his speech; I am making mine now. Wages are constantly keeping ahead of the Consumer Price Index.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I ask the hon. member to use a little intelligence. I should like some protection, Mr. Houghton, from these persistent interjections. I am trying to convey some understanding of what is taking place. At present, wages are increasing at a slightly greater rate than the Consumer Price Index figures.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! I ask hon. members to refrain from persistent interjections across the Chamber. If any member continues to do so, I shall name him.

Mr. Bromley: I would give the Treasurer the "123A" if I were you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the hon. member for Norman under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. Bromley: I am glad I gave you the suggestion.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Norman to leave the Chamber, under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. Bromley: Is that a request or a threat?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! It is an order from the Chair to leave the Chamber, under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. Bromley: I will leave under my own steam, not under 123A.

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

Mr. CHINCHEN: I was endeavouring to explain, when I was rudely interrupted, that there must be an understanding of what is happening. The grasping for money by union after union is creating a situation that nobody but the unions themselves can control. They are the ones who are complaining

about inflation and the problems that it brings for pensioners and others on fixed incomes. But unless there is an increase in production, any increases granted become inflationary money. That is all there is to it. There is a percentage each year.

As hon. members know, in the United States of America President Lyndon Johnson and President Nixon, on one occasion, used guide-lines. With productivity increasing by 3.7 per cent., they said that the increase in wages should be somewhere within that field. But there should not be a situation in which a trade union can demand 12½ per cent. overnight, without any justification. It is a nice round figure, and because it was given in one area it must be granted in another. It will be demanded, in effect, by blackmail in the future, and that will create a very nasty situation. There will then be demands for 15 per cent. and 20 per cent. and we will soon be running ourselves into trouble. That must be thoroughly understood.

The next strange statement made by the Leader of the Opposition was that "private enterprise is allowed to run wild in fixing its own higher price levels". That is obviously a statement by someone who has never been part of the free-enterprise system and does not know what it is about. In fact, very few hon. members opposite have been involved in that hard, cruel, competitive world, yet they are prepared to stand up in this Chamber and criticise what takes place in it. Under the free-enterprise system manufacturers and retailers are in opposition to each other and people are not compelled to shop in one particular place. The consumer is placed in a position of enormous power, because he makes up his mind who is going to stay in business and who is not.

If prices go sufficiently high and contain a large profit margin, what happens? Do hon. members opposite think everybody sits back and leaves it to the people? Someone will come in and plug up the hole in order to get a few dollars, and that will bring prices down again. That is the way the system works. Let hon. members opposite try to manufacture pots and pans and see how long they survive. Unless they use new methods and improve management and efficiency continuously—that is what makes the dollar go further, because better products come onto the market as a result of the use of improved methods—they will quickly go out of business. The system works in this country, and nowhere in the world is there a better system from the point of view of the consumer. He has a completely free choice. He—nobody else—dictates what products go onto the market. I cannot build something and put it on the market and demand a certain price for it. No-one is compelled to buy it. The consumer decides who shall stay in business.

I completely agree that the Restrictive Trade Practices Act must be effective, because I am opposed to anyone who endeavours

to break down the free-enterprise system. It must be a competitive system. If cartels are formed, they must be broken—provided, of course, they are not in the interests of the public. That is a very important point to remember. It is possible for two or three organisations to be working on bedrock prices. To ask them to reduce prices further would not be in the interests of the public, because those organisations would then go out of business. However, provided the free-enterprise system works properly—and there is no question that, generally speaking, it does—it is the best protection in the world that a consumer can have.

Mr. Hanson: Have you ever heard of collusive tendering?

Mr. CHINCHEN: Yes. If one is right down in the bottom area, how far does one go? I say to the hon. member for Port Curtis that if I called tenders today in Brisbane for 1,000 10-gallon kegs of beer, I would be quoted the same price by each tenderer. That is the type of business in which the hon. member is engaged. Earlier today he was guilty of hypocrisy. He was talking about Hamersley Holdings Ltd. and said, "Look at its profit. Isn't it awful!" He suggested that wealth should be distributed more equitably. If he is speaking of profit-sharing and more money going from capital to labour, I ask him to tell the Committee what happens in his own business. It is all very well to refer to someone else's business and to point the finger and ask, "What are you doing for the worker?"

The hon. member has become wealthy on the profit motive—the free-enterprise system. I do not blame him—good luck to him. I am pleased he has done this—but he should not come in here and make a speech which, although it may be suitable for his electors, is completely foreign to his own thinking.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. I resent the hon. member's remarks about me. I am not ashamed of what I did when I was in business. I was the first hotel-keeper in Queensland to give employees three weeks' annual leave.

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

Mr. CHINCHEN: I should like to explain that I think the hon. member for Port Curtis is an excellent man in every way. I cast no doubts upon his business ability. I think it is exceptional. I think he worked according to the free-enterprise system, and I admire him for this. He is an excellent man in his profession and I cast no aspersions upon him, but I cannot see why he should speak about things being equitable in larger organisations only; it must also apply to smaller organisations.

Mr. Hanson: You do not believe there is collusion in tendering by large organisations?

Mr. CHINCHEN: If there is such a thing, then the Restrictive Trade Practices Act takes care of it. I do not believe in collusive tendering, but I have seen cases where a manufacturer has gone so low on a particular product that everybody has hit the base-line and they have all ended up in the same spot.

Mr. Marginson: Tenders, these days, all seem to be identical.

Mr. CHINCHEN: It is very obvious, now that Mr. Egerton has declared that we must have price control, that this call has gradually crept into this Chamber through the mouths of hon. members opposite. I do not know whether these people think that price control means lower prices; I am inclined to think that that is what they really feel. But why should price control necessarily mean lower prices? As hon. members know, price control is operated on a cost-plus basis. This includes not only the efficient but also the inefficient. No Government, Labour or otherwise, wants to stop business and put people out of work, so a cost-plus basis is found and a price is established on that. The highly efficient employer with new machinery will make more out of such a system. The competitive system brings one down to the level of the other, but hon. members opposite want the price to be based on the inefficient man's results. This is what I cannot understand. In fact, it is the catchcry of many housewives, picked up by hon. members opposite. It is a political gimmick, but it will not work. The people want a free choice, in a free-enterprise system.

I now want to mention a matter that has given me a great deal of worry over a long period. It is the question of individual responsibility. In accordance with our philosophy, members of my party believe in the dignity of the individual; we believe in the ability of the individual and the enterprise of the individual. To us, these things are more important than the machinery of State or any machinery set up by Governments. We believe that, given a free and open go, the individual can take care of his own situation. Naturally, we must have government—we must have local government—but in my opinion, the less we have of this the better. The point I am getting at is that today, in this State in particular, the thinking seems to be that an authority exists somewhere that can be blamed for everything that happens. Irrespective of what is raised, the query is, "Why doesn't the Government do something about it?" or "Why doesn't the city council do something about it?" Individuals today are inclined to think—this must be due to the attitude engendered by almost 40 years of Labour Government—"I need not worry about myself or my family; hand them over to some authority."

This feeling has spread throughout the community, and it worries me. When faced with any problem, the public ask, "What is the Government doing about it?" and quite often the problem can be overcome by individual responsibility. For example, on the important subject of carnage on the roads, one person will hold the view that bad roads are the cause; another alleges that defective motor vehicles are the cause; and yet another blames bad street signs. The public raise 101 matters as being the cause of road deaths, but no-one says that the individual carries a great responsibility. The common factor in road accidents is the human being.

Mr. Aikens: The "nut" at the wheel.

Mr. CHINCHEN: That is right. I suggest that 95 per cent. of road accidents are caused by the human being. However, if we allow people to say, "Don't worry about the problem; let the Government handle it," we will be creating a problem for the people themselves, so we must be diplomatic and go out of our way to make the individual feel that he has a responsibility.

Very recently I attended a State school fete and observed art works exhibited by students from either Grade 3 or Grade 4. The theme of the display was litter. One very crude drawing carried the caption, in childish writing, "People cause litter. People can stop litter." What a wonderful message that is. A child of tender years had worked out that people are responsible for litter and can prevent it. But people ask, "What are the Government and local authorities doing to stop it?" That sort of thinking will not overcome the problem of litter. The Government can introduce the necessary legislation, it can appoint additional inspectors and prosecute offenders; but surely the solution to the problem lies in the hands of the people. Those of us in public life must emphasise to the people that they possess enormous control over their environment.

On the matter of drugs, the Government has a great responsibility in controlling their use and penalising pedlars; yet many people think, "If something happens to my child I can blame the Government." I am sure that, like me, many hon. members have been asked by their constituents, "What are you doing about the problem?" However, when we ask those parents, "What are you doing about it? Have you discussed it with your child?" they say, "No, I have not." They look for someone in authority to blame. First they look at the schools, and then they turn to the Government. They blame everybody but themselves. I am inclined to think that this attitude becomes dangerous to the interests of the people. I would like to think that all of us adopt a sensible attitude and say to our constituents, "You have a big responsibility." We cannot continue to be answerable for everything that happens; the individual must accept his share of the responsibility.

I was interested to hear the hon. member for Chatsworth speak about the padding of speeches. He is not in the Chamber, but I suggest that perhaps he should have beamed his searchlight onto prepared speeches.

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

Mr. CHINCHEN: Before lunch I was speaking about the hon. member for Chatsworth and his reference to the padding of speeches. I said that perhaps he should turn his searchlight onto those hon. members who come into this Chamber with fully prepared speeches and read every word of them. When a speech that is polished and honed to the finest degree is read by an hon. member and he finds that it falls short of his time limit by a few minutes, in goes the padding.

I am fully aware that it is accepted that, in presenting the Budget, which must be printed, the Treasurer acts quite validly in reading it. Similarly, every Minister who introduces a Bill has to outline certain policy matters that must be expressed word perfect, and a number of administrative matters may also have to be explained in this way. In such circumstances the reading of a speech is legitimate. However, when back-bench members are replying it is reasonable to expect them, with the aid of notes, to express their thoughts. In this instance the Leader of the Opposition set a bad example by reading every word of his speech, without any ad-libbing whatever. That was remarkable, because my mind goes back to the days when Jack Duggan was Leader of the Opposition. He could make a magnificent speech, straight off the cuff. Now, however, every word of some speeches is read. When this happens, one recognises the voice, but not the author.

I turn now to one or two matters referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in reply to the Treasurer's presentation of the Financial Statement. He complained about the efficiency of Government departments being investigated. I was surprised at that, because members of Parliament are responsible for ensuring that their constituents' money is spent in the best possible way. As we do not have a parliamentary public accounts committee, I am always worried, as I am sure are other hon. members, that I am not fully involved in the expenditure of Government money.

I am quite pleased that the Government has decided to get efficiency experts to examine departmental operations. This is the only way to investigate them properly. It is the method normally used by private enterprise. All big businesses have their internal efficiency methods, but methods, operations and thinking are continually changing. Therefore, major firms periodically employ efficiency experts to run the rule over their operations. This always results in savings and increased efficiency. I quite agree that it should be done in Government

departments because, as members of Parliament, we should do our best to ensure that all public money is spent in the best possible way. At present, we rely on Government departments to do the job for us. We know that the Auditor-General audits the public accounts.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The hon. member has had his say; I am having mine now.

The Auditor-General is not asked to state whether all expenditure is wise. He is asked to check on moneys coming into and out of an account to see that it is approved by the proper authority. That is all that he does. Although he points out defalcations, he has no authority to say whether money is spent wisely. This is where a public accounts committee plays a part and, normally, Governments have such a committee.

I am quite happy to have independent investigations into Government departments to ensure that efficiency is improved, and I am sure that the average member of the Public Service is quite happy to know that he is working in an efficient department.

The Leader of the Opposition also complained about profits. He read out a long list of major companies and their profits. However, he gave no indication of the investment in those firms, or the percentage of profit against sales. He simply referred to the profits, and, in the minds of the socialists, "profits" is a dirty word. It is rather strange that the Federal Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Whitlam) says, "Why don't Australian firms put more money into research?" This money comes out of profits—that is the only place it can come from. Therefore, it is the efficient firm, the one that is making higher profits in a competitive field, that can afford to put money into research. But the State Leader of the Opposition says, "Look at this. Isn't it awful?" This is hoodwinking the average person, because the Leader of the Opposition quotes profits of \$1,250,000 and \$2,500,000 without giving any explanation for them.

Mr. Houston: And \$9,000,000.

Mr. CHINCHEN: On what investment was the \$9,000,000 profit made? The Leader of the Opposition does not know. What was the percentage on sales? He does not know, because he has not been trained in this field. I suggest that he speak to the hon. member for Baroona, who will explain the method to him in simple words. Then he will have some understanding of the subject and will enter the Chamber and explain what is meant by the figures he is given before speaking here.

It is also strange that the famous Mr. Hawke wants to use company profits to increase wages. It is only from profits that increased wages and other benefits can flow. Yet this dirty word "profits" is an anathema to the socialists. Why this should be so, I

do not know. I cannot understand this. If a firm operates in a competitive field and makes a profit, it is comparatively efficient in its operation. It is these firms that will be able to pay higher salaries and wages and grant improved conditions for the workers and provide more money for research.

Another strange subject raised by the Leader of the Opposition was advertising. He said, "This is a bad thing, a horrible thing." He mentioned soap powders. If he had read what went on overseas during the leadership of his colleague in Great Britain, Mr. Harold Wilson, he would know that one of the first moves of the Labour Government in Great Britain was to stop the advertising of soap powders. What happened? There was complete chaos. The manufacturing industries put off thousands of employees, and advertising firms, newspapers, television companies, radio stations and transport were all affected adversely. It was not long before Harold Wilson admitted that he was wrong and said, "You can have a free go with advertising." This actually happened.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The Leader of the Opposition comes in with this old idea from socialist countries, namely, that advertising is bad. He picks it up and throws it around, but he should remember that Harold Wilson learnt the error of his ways.

Industry has been built on sound principles, and advertising plays its part in this. It must do so. It stimulates the economy and creates job opportunities. It cannot be stopped by any artificial means. Our industries are based soundly, and Government members hope that industry makes a profit so that the workers can share more in those profits and enjoy better conditions. That is our attitude.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! Hon. members will refrain from persistent interjections and allow the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt to conclude his speech in silence.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I should now like to deal with our environment. Recently I had a situation in my electorate where the council advertised—(Opposition laughter.)

Hon. members can laugh, but this is a very important matter. It is not a reflection on the council. If anything, it is a reflection on the Government. The Brisbane City Council placed an advertisement on a property in Kloske Road, Rochedale, calling for objections to an extractive industry being established on the site. This was disturbing to many people in the district, because it will eventually become a first-class residential area. At present much fruit and vegetable-growing takes place there, and dust from a quarry would create problems for the growers and inhibit plant growth. In addition, there would be transport problems, and, as

this area is only 11 miles from the Brisbane G.P.O., dust from the quarry could float over the whole city. If this had been approved by the council, I feel that the Government should have intervened. As it happened, it was not approved by the council, and in my column in the local newspaper in my area I expressed thanks to the Brisbane City Council and complimented it on not approving this extractive industry.

My view is that, as the State Government has accepted responsibility for environmental control, particularly control of air pollution, it should formulate a policy in regard to quarries in residential areas. The Minister for Local Government has authority in this field, and he does not have to sanction everything approved by the council. I feel that, as it is the Government's responsibility to make sure that environmental quality is maintained, the Government must start at the grass roots by preventing air pollution before it starts. My remarks apply equally to The Gap quarry and any other quarry that might have an effect upon environmental quality.

I pay a compliment to the Brisbane City Council in this matter, and say that the Government must accept the responsibility of seeing that things detrimental to environmental quality are prevented. In the case to which I have referred Government action was not necessary, but a case may arise tomorrow in which the Government may have to take action in regard to an extractive industry close to urban development.

I should also like to make reference to the new Opal hostel, known as the Joyce Wilding Hostel, which was opened not very long ago at Eight Mile Plains. Before it opened, concern was expressed at its establishment. I was not concerned at any time, because I know Mrs. Joyce Wilding very well and I knew that if the hostel was to be under her control there would be no problems. She is a magnificent administrator. At present there are a number of mothers and a large number of children at the hostel, and no problems whatever are being created. Residents of the area are extremely happy with this development. The mothers and children are housed in first-class conditions. Everything about the hostel is beautifully clean. The children are happy, and they are doing well at school. In addition, some of them did well at the recent zone sports meeting. I should like the public to know that, given the conditions to be found at this hostel, Aborigines behave as perfectly normal citizens. Those at the hostel are a credit to their race.

In conclusion, I compliment the Treasurer on this year's Budget, which has been prepared under exceedingly difficult conditions. I feel that the accent has been placed in the right places. The State is in very sound hands, and we look forward to the return of normal conditions which will make the financial pressures on the State much easier.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (2.28 p.m.): After a close reading of the Budget, which would be without doubt the most horrible Budget presented to this Parliament in the last decade, one can only accept that the Treasurer must have been suffering from financial and economic delirium tremens when he prepared it. He has acted like the proverbial drunken sailor, and the only thing that has saved the Budget, if anything at all can be said to have saved it, is the State's mineral resources. In fact, the Treasurer has been worse than the drunken sailor; he has not only thrown away his spare cash, but he has also pawned his assets to overseas interests.

The Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Baroona have dealt in some detail with the economic aspects of the Budget; but as the legal profession gets very little opportunity to express itself in this Chamber, I wish first to say something that might be of more concern to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General than it is to the Treasurer.

I believe that when the Minister for Justice introduced and constituted the Law Reform Commission on 14 February, 1969, he did so not only with the approval of the Opposition but also as a result of submissions made by me and others over the years.

Mr. Hughes: You know it was Ray Smith's idea.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly concede that Ray Smith made some little effort relative to the constitution of the Law Reform Commission. Perhaps he was less objective and detached than I was, because he engineered himself into a part-time job that carries with it a salary equivalent to that of a District Court Judge. I believe also that the present hon. member for Windsor was sabotaging Ray Smith in that electorate, and it looked as if Ray Smith would get his head cut off there as Peter Connolly had his head cut off in Kurilpa some years ago by the present member, Clive Hughes.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Ray Smith is a mate of mine, and you know it.

Mr. BENNETT: If he is a mate of the hon. member's, I do not know why he kept stabbing him in the back while he was representing Windsor in this Chamber. Ray Smith got so heartily sick of the Liberal Party and its activities relative to political representation that he, as did Peter Connolly, sought the more dignified position of the practice of the law. Of course, in Ray Smith's case he had the additional lucrative side-line of being a member of the Law Reform Commission.

The concept of the Law Reform Commission is certainly a very good one. There is only one difficulty and handicap related to its activities, and that was underlined and exposed by the Labour Opposition when the legislation constituting the commission passed

through this Chamber. In fact, at that stage the hon. member for Baroona moved an amendment to make provision for the recommendations of the commission to be tabled in this Chamber, and I remind the Committee that the amendment was defeated by only five votes and that there was almost a majority expression of opinion by hon. members that the reports should be tabled. The hon. member also moved a further amendment relative to the requisition from the commission of an annual report to be tabled in the same way as are reports from other authorities and boards such as the Licensing Commission and other instrumentalities. Of course, the Government, wishing to conceal its inadequacies and knowing that its policies would not be approved by a detached, fair and objective Law Reform Commission, decided that any reports to come from the commission should be withheld from the scrutiny and examination of parliamentarians. Therefore, although the commission was constituted and appointed on 14 February, 1969, this Parliament knows nothing of its activities.

I do not propose this afternoon to castigate the Law Reform Commission. Indeed, I am not in a position to do so, because I do not know what it has done, what its recommendations (if any) are, or what its achievements have been over a period of nearly two years that it has been operating, at great expense to the taxpayers of this State.

I underline the point and remind hon. members that, with the exception of the president and chairman, His Honour Mr. Justice W. B. Campbell, part-time operators, including a former parliamentarian, are earning lucrative incomes in addition to receiving the salary of a District Court judge for a part-time occupation. Therefore, in these circumstances, we would expect that within a period of two years we would receive some substantial recommendations from these people. Unfortunately I cannot deal with them in a fair and equitable fashion because the Attorney-General saw fit, when introducing the legislation, to make provision that their meetings be held in camera and that their recommendations be held secretive. They are virtually a Star Chamber not because of their own recommendations but because of the policy of this Government, so I can only turn to the Government and ask what has been happening with our Law Reform Commission. Although it was heralded with much fanfare and cacophony, what has it done?

Certainly, we have been told by the Attorney-General that at one stage it recommended the abolition of the difference in the Criminal Code between wilful murder and murder, but I could have told Parliament that that was necessary. Any junior lawyer could have told Parliament that that was necessary. We do not need a highly expensive Law Reform Commission to tell

our medico Attorney-General that the differentiation and distinction was no longer appropriate in this modern community. Of course, the difference will be eliminated in due course, but when are we going to hear something substantial from members of the Law Reform Commission? What have they to say about prisons?

Incidentally, do prisons, in our modern day community, serve any useful purpose? It may be argued quite properly that the psychopath, the maniac killer, or the mentally disturbed must necessarily be kept in confinement for the protection of the community; but is the community being well served by keeping others in gaol under what might be regarded in many instances as barbaric conditions, when imprisonment serves no corrective purpose but costs the community a tremendous sum of money and when otherwise respectable members of the community, committed for traffic offences and so on, are forced to rub shoulders with sexual deviates, hardened killers and others who can only encourage them to a life of vice.

As the system of imprisonment and penalties is a controversial matter and encourages and incites many arguments amongst lay people and legal men alike, one would expect that by now the Law Reform Commission would have some recommendations for us. Only recently we read that the Attorney-General proposes to allow prisoners out of gaol over week-ends, to be escorted home by warders, allowed to live the week-end with their wives and then collected and taken back to prison. That might be a humanitarian attitude; it might well be desirable, but it would seem to me that, if such a man was trustworthy enough, if he had shown sufficient character, and if he had reached the stage of correctiveness where he could be safely trusted to spend the week-end at home, there would seem to be no real purpose in keeping him in gaol at the expense of the taxpayer. I am voicing my own opinion and I could well be wrong, but in any case we are entitled to have from those paid to do the necessary research the results of their investigations into penology in other parts of the world.

I wish to quote from a recent judgment of the Court of Criminal Appeal which was constituted by fairly strong judges and presided over by one of the colleagues of members of the Liberal Party—a gentleman who is performing a worth-while task on the Bench—Mr. Justice Hart, who asked Mr. Justice Hoare to deliver the judgment of the court on an appeal against sentence. The most recent appointee to the Supreme Court Bench agreed with the written judgment that was prepared by Mr. Justice Hoare, who has had considerable experience with prisoners, not only in his legal career but also as president of the Parole Board.

Mr. Hughes: You said Mr. Justice Hart was hopeless when he was in Parliament.

Mr. BENNETT: I am not conceding that he was a good politician. I am talking about him as a lawyer.

Mr. Hughes: What sort of a judge has he made?

Mr. BENNETT: He has made a very good judge. He cuts a lot of red tape; he does justice; he tries to get to the kernel of the case; and he endeavours to ensure that fairness, equity and good conscience prevail. It would be fair to say that he is able to do that because judges are independent and detached and are required to obey only the dictates of the law and their own conscience. They are so different from members of the Liberal Party, and I should imagine it is for that reason that Mr. Justice Hart was severely handicapped as a politician and did not do as well as he is now doing on the Bench. He was subject to the dictates of leaders of the Liberal Party in this Chamber, whose directions would be most questionable, to say the least.

Mr. Justice Hart, whom I respect as a judge, agreed with the judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Hoare. It was an interesting and important judgment on penology in this State and on the desirability of sending people to gaol—leaving aside the issue of homosexuality, to which prisoners are exposed, in spite of the Minister's denial. The Government does not wish to obtain evidence about homosexuality in prisons, because, if it did, it would not know what to do about it. Obviously it is practised, and I say that quite advisedly.

In speaking for the three judges who constituted this State's top court, which binds every other judge, whether on the Bench of the Supreme Court or the District Court, and every magistrate, Mr. Justice Hoare said—

"This type of case presents particularly difficult problems. The offender has previously borne a good character and is a hard-working man. One cannot fail to have sympathy for a man who has not previously offended. There is also the circumstance that the evidence disclosed that the offence was committed on one occasion only. With our present penal system short sentences are regarded as useless at best"—

I emphasise that point; it was said by the top court in the State, composed of judges appointed by this Government (so when I appear on television and elsewhere, let people not criticise me lightly, because I am echoing the opinions expressed by the top court in the State)—

"and in most cases are positively harmful.

"One strong argument against the imposition of short prison sentences, which is of particular application to younger offenders, is that there is a considerable fear of the unknown in all of us. So long as an individual without prison

experience has the threat of possibly being sent to prison it is reasonable to expect that there will be some deterrents from that threat. However, if the fear of the unknown is removed by sending him to prison for a short term, the benefits of the threat are lost for all time.

"Another matter well known to persons acquainted with the present prison administration is that while long sentence prisoners may have some discipline instilled into them and receive some corrective training, these benefits are entirely lost in the case of short sentence prisoners.

"It is worthy of note that the New Zealand Parliament has given legislative effect to the now widely recognised recognition of the undesirability of imposing short prison sentences."

I should like to hear what the Law Reform Commission has to say on this, because His Honour Mr. Justice Hoare pointed out, in relation to New Zealand, that the New Zealand Criminal Justice Amendment Act of 1967 expressly provided in these words—

"No Court shall sentence any person to imprisonment for a term of less than six months unless, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, including the nature of the person's offence and his character and personal history, the Court has formed the opinion that no way of dealing with him other than imprisonment is appropriate."

Mr. Justice Hoare then said—

"It is now generally recognised by penologists that it is far better both in the interests of reformation of the offender and in the interests of the community that the Courts should if possible avoid sending an offender to prison. However, if it is necessary to adopt this course the sentence should not be so short that all the benefits of imprisonment will be lost."

Later on, he said—

"In view of the parole provisions of the Offenders Probation and Parole Acts, 1959 to 1968, it would seem that the administration of justice in this State would be improved if judges were to bear in mind these provisions, rather than provide for the mandatory release of prisoners under the proviso to s. 19 (7) of the Criminal Code."

That proviso puts them on a bond.

Unfortunately the Attorney-General is not present. In any case, he would not understand. I exhort him to refer to the Law Reform Commission the possibility of some amendment of the Parole Act, as the Court of Criminal Appeal in this State has said—

"Possibly some amendment of the Parole Act would be desirable to enable the Parole Board to grant parole before the expiration of half the sentence in cases where that course has been recommended by the trial Judge."

Enough has been said about sentencing people to gaol for short periods. What strategies are most successful to deter crime? Is it necessary, desirable or effective to lock them up like animals merely because they have committed one offence? Should some form of alternative corrective treatment be given in this modern community? We should remember that the system of imprisonment in cold cells is historically archaic and relates back to the days when men were cast into prison because society was not sufficiently skilled or scientific to deal with them otherwise.

I know that some men would prefer gaol to the hardship of facing up to the responsibilities of life outside. Others like going to gaol because it is an easy existence for them and, because of the modern-day accommodation provided, it is rather comfortable for some of them. Others choose to go there rather than face up to their civic responsibilities. Should there not be some system whereby society insists that these men face up to their obligations to the community and to their families? After all, what is the purpose of punishment? I certainly believe that, in relation to those offences where individuals are hurt, maimed and disfigured, society and, for that matter, the offender, should, so far as reasonably possible, compensate the injured. I do not think anyone would dispute that contention. But, having made provision for that facet of punishment, is any purpose served by sending a man to gaol and relieving him of his obligations to the community? I think not.

It is high time we had some information and material from the Law Reform Commission so that it could be considered and debated and, if necessary, legislative amendments could be enacted in this Parliament. Is it right or justifiable to embarrass or embitter persons merely because the Government wants an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth or because it wants its pound of flesh? Is it right that they, particularly the younger ones, should be submitted to impressions which have indelible adverse reactions on their minds and their mental fibre and outlook in life?

What suggestions, if any, have been made by the Law Reform Commission to protect the public from future mining booms, for instance? We have seen, in recent times, the rocketing of the share market. We have even seen Cabinet Ministers encouraging members of the community to invest in mining companies by the example of their own dealings in shares, granted either *ex gratia* or at a reduced rate, thereby giving the community some feeling of confidence in the investment. But the Government, having encouraged members of the community to invest in what is very often a bogus share-mining deal, does nothing to protect them if they are caught, and it is high time that the Law Reform Commission made some recommendations in that direction. They

could be widows, pensioners, or public servants who have received their superannuation benefits. Because of the Government's encouragement, they invest their savings in mining shares, only to find that they fall flat on their face because they have been deceived by the technical reports or by the skilled advertisements published in the Press by paid public-relations officers. What is the Government doing to protect those people?

The Minister also said that the commission, by virtue of its mandate, had to study the statutes and eliminate antiquated and disused laws. There are many of them. Time does not permit me to run through them this afternoon but, if I believed that the Government would take advantage of my legal ability, I could sit down and in one day indicate several statutes that could be corrected or eliminated because of their antiquated verbiage, or because many of their provisions have fallen into disuse. It does not take two years' research to discover them. Any practising lawyer has them at his fingertips. How many Acts have been introduced into Parliament in the past two years to eliminate or update legislation as a result of the activities of the Law Reform Commission?

The Minister said that one of the obligations of the commission would be to simplify the wording of laws. Bills have been introduced, even in this session, since then. Could it be suggested truthfully that there has been any simplification of the wording of those Bills? Incidentally, it may well be argued that it is impossible to simplify legal phraseology in our statutes and still have them tight and sound. I well remember a significant occasion many years ago when a former Labour Attorney-General, the Hon. Bill Power, attended a dinner for High Court judges. He told the judges that, as Attorney-General, he proposed to simplify the wording of the various Acts so that they could be understood by the ordinary person. If the judges did not sneer and scoff at him outright, they surreptitiously lifted their serviettes to their faces so that he would not be embarrassed by their amusement. By their reaction and demeanour, they did not think that such simplification was possible. The proposal by the Law Reform Commission to simplify the wording and verbiage of legislation and legal phraseology is therefore no new concept. The Honourable Bill Power, a former Attorney-General, said that years ago at a dinner for High Court judges.

It seems to me that the Law Reform Commission is, because of the restrictions placed on the publication of its activities, similar to the rather powerless committee appointed to investigate certain disturbances and infringements of the law on the university campus. The Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Zelman Cowen, specifically appointed what appeared to be a very impressive committee, but its findings, decisions, and recommendations have been kept secret. In this modern community, why

should these things be kept secret? The cost of that committee's investigations was borne by the taxpayers, and they are entitled to know the result of their investment.

The Law Reform Commission could well make known its attitude to legislative provision for the appointment of an ombudsman. I know that the Lord Mayor of Brisbane has publicly denounced the appointment of an ombudsman, but I firmly stress that such an appointment is A.L.P. policy and, whether the Lord Mayor likes it or not, he will have to put up with it. As a very responsible political party in this State and nation has as part of its policy the appointment of an ombudsman, I feel that the Law Reform Commission should at least make some recommendation either for or against it, so that parliamentarians generally will understand the legal concepts involved. I personally support such an appointment.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think the City Council should appoint one?

Mr. BENNETT: The position is that this Government fails even to discuss the appointment of an ombudsman, and will not state whether such an appointment is legislatively practicable. I firmly believe it is.

I challenge the Government to indicate its attitude to what are regarded as stopper writs, namely, writs for libel and defamation. I have been battling against them in this Chamber for many years. So often have we seen various bodies, authorities and institutions attempting to prevent free discussion and expression in this Chamber by the issue of such writs. I think that any laws that allow such action are wanting, and I also feel that most of those who issue such writs are insincere, very often dishonest, and at no time intend going to court. I could mention names, but it is not necessary for me to do so because most members know of many such writs that have been issued over the years. Why does not the Law Reform Commission make some recommendation for amendment to the law so that only genuine plaintiffs are able to issue writs for libel or defamation?

With modern facilities available for international movement and communication, Queenslanders in increasing numbers are now engaged in international commercial activities. The law of this State relating to international contracts is gravely wanting. It should be readjusted in that field of commercial activity because of modern methods of communication, because people move round so quickly, and because there is easy communication with the outside world.

What has been done by this Government or its Law Reform Commission relative to international contracts for the sale of goods, bearing in mind that it is necessary to do something to protect the consumers of Queensland when goods are manufactured in an overseas country and sold in bulk in this State? Do we intend—and we should

seek the advice of the Law Reform Commission about this—to adhere to the 1964 Hague convention on the international sale of goods, or do we intend to enact legislation that will set up a code of our own relative to these important dealings? I assure the Committee that it will be tremendously expensive if the law remains vague, as it is now, and to some extent unprotective to the citizens of Queensland, as it is now. If legislative provision is not made for the modern concept of the international sale of goods and to give protection to consumers in Queensland, there will come a time when this Assembly will be very sorry for it.

Both economically and from the point of view of regional security, we must provide in our legal system for more dealings with our near-northern Asian neighbours. I know that in this Parliament, even during this debate, and in the Federal Parliament hon. members have taken the opportunity to castigate A.L.P. parliamentarians, politicians and supporters for their advocacy of trade dealings with our near-northern Asian confreres. Because members of the A.L.P. advocate that, both from the point of view of the economy of the nation and from the point of view of Australia's regional security, they are branded as Communists or Left-wing thinkers, treacherous to the country, and traitors to the traditions of the land. Nevertheless, when it suits the Federal Government to do so, it does have dealings with our near-northern Asian neighbours, and it is time it was recognised that that will be not only automatic in the near future but also necessary and obligatory, particularly when the European Economic Community has its full force and effect on the world. We will find that much, if not the majority, of our legislation must make provision for contractual dealings and for other types of dealings, both from a point of view of security and otherwise, with Asian countries, and it is high time that we received recommendations in that direction from the Law Reform Commission.

I could deal not only with some of the major items of legislation that are crying out for attention but also, perhaps, with some of the less important and more mundane types of legislation, such as the laws relating to dogs. In order to determine that a dog is wild by nature—to use the legal expression, *ferae naturae*—it has to be proved that he has bitten someone. Until he does, he is not regarded as being a savage dog.

Mr. R. Jones: That is only fair to the dog.

Mr. BENNETT: I know some members of the Government parties who are so savage that they would bite the dog as they bite their mates in this Chamber. However, I do not think that a dog should have to bite first before he is declared savage.

I do not propose to take up the time of the Committee in arguing again the question of liability in running-down cases. As hon. members know, running-down cases are those that find their way into the courts as a result of road accidents involving motor vehicles.

Incidentally, if time permits, I shall deal with the criminal responsibility of motorists, such as their culpability in civil actions according to civil law. Anyone injured on the road is unlike a person who has been injured as a result of other types of offences and crimes. He can, and does, get adequate compensation if the injury is not due to his own negligence. As a matter of fact, as everyone comes under a compulsory system of insurance that makes provision for him to be adequately compensated for damages if he is injured, I have argued for years, and I hope the time will come—it must come—when a person should not have to go to court to prove liability in an accident case.

After all, when injury is the result of an accident it surely must be conceded that except for the exceptional suicidal person, nobody tries to get himself injured on the highway. If he is injured, because of the large amount of insurance paid to indemnify him against such injuries, he should not have to waste the time of the courts and go to tremendous expense arguing whose fault it was. When an accident occurs on a highway, if two vehicles are involved, normally both motorists are at fault. If a pedestrian and a motorist are involved, to some extent both are at fault and the court has to waste tedious hours and many expensive days finding out what percentage of blame attaches to each. That, to me, is a senseless waste of the court's time and adds tremendously to the cost of litigation.

If it was decided that if anyone was injured on the highway the only question in dispute should be the amount or quantum of damages, I think it would prove very much less expensive to the various insurance companies involved. It certainly would be much less expensive to the ordinary citizen. It would save the time of the courts and therefore the cost of court-sitting time, and the community generally would profit considerably from a financial point of view.

Why we should still have to go through the painful procedure of proving liability, I would not know, except that from a lawyer's point of view, of course, it is a very lucrative occupation. I know that all fair-minded lawyers and counsel would agree with me that, if it were possible to remove from the plaintiff in running-down cases the provision for proving liability—and it is—considerable expense would be saved and justice would still be done.

I now pass on to another matter that, in my submission, should have been engaging the attention of the Law Reform Commission. It is the Jury Act. Here again, we heard so much from the Attorney-General

about juries. He aimed particularly at encouraging the women's vote for the Liberal Party by making provision for women to sit on juries. Up to the present, the old system virtually prevails in Brisbane. The metropolitan area is the largest Supreme Court and District Court district in the State, but women only sit on juries here under the old system because no toilets are provided for them in the courts. They cannot be brought in in large numbers, or in any numbers at all.

If I might digress a little in regard to the courts, I must say that even our newest and most ornate court building, the District Court building, already has its limitations. If two juries are sitting in neighbouring courts there is no accommodation for one of them. The jurymen have to be taken to a jury room on another floor, which is completely unsatisfactory. Recently I made a rather forceful address to the jury and, within half an hour of their retirement, they were bashing on the door. I thought, "This is good; they are coming out with a 'Not guilty' verdict." They were bashing so hard I thought they would knock the door down, but it was discovered that because of the lateness of the day the air-conditioning had been turned off. They were shut off in an enclosed room and were suffocating. They had knocked only to save their lives and not because they had reached a verdict.

A system of uniform laws should be introduced throughout the Commonwealth. At present the laws are applied under 6½ systems, that is, the systems of the six States and of the Australian Capital Territory. As well, the right of appeal to the Privy Council should be abolished.

A good deal has been said about what should be done for modern youth and how young people should be treated in court. But what is being done about the use of teenagers on juries? I suggest it is fair that a sprinkling of teenagers should be permitted to sit on juries. It is the policy and object of the Australian Labour Party, when it becomes the Government after the next election, to introduce legislation to provide for teenage voting, and, consistent with that policy, no doubt it will introduce legislation to enable 18-year-olds and older teenagers to sit on juries. Such a provision will enable a teenager to be tried by a cross-section of the community, including people of his own age group.

On the matter of law reform, I wonder how the Minister for Justice can justify the harsh and adverse comments that he made about jurors. After all, people who serve on juries sacrifice their time and, in many instances, lose money.

On 6 July, 1969, the Minister for Justice said—

"Jury service is not an occupation for which one is paid. Rather it is a community duty which citizens are called on

from time to time to provide. It is one of the responsibilities of free citizens. The allowance is mere out-of-pocket expenses."

In other words, the Minister said that jurors should not be paid for their service but should be reimbursed only for their out-of-pocket expenses. What a lot of balderdash! Jurors perform a very important and worthwhile public duty. The great majority of people who can afford to lose money are exempt from jury service, whereas the ordinary workers, of whom a large number receive no more than the basic wage, are called upon to sacrifice both their time and their money in the performance of jury service. They find it difficult to apply for temporary exemption from service on jury panels.

Surely the Minister should reconsider his decision when rejecting out of hand the applications by workers, made through the trade unions, for adequate pay when performing jury service. At least jurors are entitled to be reimbursed for the wages they lose while performing jury service. I repeat that those people who can well afford to lose money are exempted, whereas those who can ill afford it are required to serve.

The Minister also said—

"Everybody who serves on a jury loses income. Some lose more than others, depending on their pay."

I believe that, in order to preserve the high standard set by juries, those members of the community who are required to serve should be paid a sum greater than that received by them as wages.

Finally, on the matter of conditions for jurors, I suggest that coffee-dispensers be installed in jury rooms. They would provide a desirable service to the jury when they are asked to retire while judges and counsel have morning or afternoon tea in their chambers.

I notice that the Minister for Health is in the Chamber. I could speak for two hours on the deficiencies that exist in this State's hospital system. I could refer to overcrowded wards, inadequate staff, and the Government's failure to attract a sufficient number of nurses owing to its policy of paying them low wages and requiring them to work long hours under arduous conditions.

It is seemingly strange that we have as Attorney-General a doctor who knows nothing about the law and that as Minister for Health (although there are two doctors in the House) we have foisted on us a person who might know a little about education. In the education of nurses he has even failed to set a standard desired by the Nursing Federation and by the doctors who train them and work with them.

I should like to deal specifically with our hospital system. Because of the various pronouncements made in the Press, I believe there is great substance in what the hon. member for Wavell has said. The Minister

for Health therefore has a duty and an obligation to say something in defence of himself, if he can, relative to the inadequate and poor standard of hospitalisation in Queensland.

I commend the contribution by the hon. member for Wavell relative to abortion. I have a contribution which I prepared, and which I hope to be able to present here at some time, relative to the lawyer's attitude to abortion. I have prepared an argument which I believe should be the lawyer's attitude towards safeguarding human life. I believe that I could add considerable strength to the submissions made by the hon. member for Wavell about the high respect for human life that should exist in the community.

I now wish to deal with a statement made by the retiring Commissioner of Police which has been supported by the Government, defended by the Minister for Justice and acquiesced in by the Minister for Transport. An article appeared in "The Courier-Mail" of 2 October, 1970, in which Mr. Bauer was reported as follows:—

"Queenslanders are not getting proper support from the courts in police attempts to combat the road toll," the retiring Police Commissioner said last night.

'It appears to me this is regarded more as a social offence than a criminal offence.'

Fancy a man who has spent his whole life in the Queensland Police Force not knowing the difference between a social offence and a criminal offence, and what might also be a traffic offence. He also said that the Magistrates Courts heard evidence and committed people for trial. Magistrates Courts commit people for trial only if there is a prima facie case, or if there is some evidence that could go before a jury. They do not even have to decide whether a case should or should not go before a jury, nor do they decide on the admissibility of evidence. If objection is taken to the admissibility of evidence all that a magistrate says is, "Your objection is noted," and, in effect, makes no adjudication on the point. It is an administrative, preliminary procedure.

The article continues—

"However, in the top courts it is very rare that a person is convicted," he said.

'And when he is, it is very rarely that he receives a proper sentence.'

What a shocking statement for a former Commissioner of Police to make! Does the Police Force desire, expect or demand that everybody who appears in the dock in the Supreme Court, or any other court, should be automatically convicted? I remind hon. members, and the community, that in this modern age, with the lethal weapon, the motor-car, it is easy to get into difficulties. A person need have only one accident to get into trouble. It is a truism to say that a person can be in court one

day as a juror, and in the dock the next day, defending himself against a charge resulting from a traffic accident. People have a misconception about dangerous driving. The law on it is codified law, set by this Government.

Mr. Dean: It is pretty weak, too.

Mr. BENNETT: It is pretty weak in that this Government at one stage, in the early part of its career, tried to compromise with the law and also with people's lives. I can prove that statement. It is this Government that is at fault in the road toll, because it introduced legislation which invited juries to compromise. Therefore, let us not blame the courts or the juries; let us blame the Government, which enacted the amendment to section 328A of the Criminal Code of Queensland by inserting the following words—

"If the offender causes the death of or grievous bodily harm to another person he is liable upon conviction upon indictment to imprisonment with hard labour for five years."

Prior to that amendment, it was either black or white; it was either manslaughter, which is unlawful killing involving no intent, or simply dangerous driving. The amendment or addendum inserted into section 328A did not create any new offence; it merely added an aggravated circumstance to dangerous driving by making provision for a person convicted on a dangerous driving charge to be penalised more severely if he caused death. His offence was no greater, but the result was more severe.

The Government introduced that amendment with the debased intention of endeavouring to secure convictions of people who were, on the evidence, not guilty of manslaughter. However, it has worked in reverse; it has been flung in the face of the Government. In my opinion, a jury's verdict is inscrutable. Nobody knows what a jury decides or what deliberations it has in the jury room. However, I am firmly of the opinion, because this compromise verdict has been provided and because this Government dishonestly invited juries to convict of dangerous driving causing death a man who is genuinely not guilty of manslaughter, that even in cases where manslaughter is involved and there is evidence to support it, juries prefer to choose the compromise verdict and convict of dangerous driving causing death. If the Government has any guts at all, if it is sincere in its protestations about the road toll, and if it wants to do something to improve the standard of driving and the decisions that are arrived at, it will eliminate that compromise verdict which is contained in section 328A of the Criminal Code.

Any hon. member, whether he is reliable or irresponsible, can very easily be convicted of dangerous driving, because it is an objective test. The courts have held that driving at a speed of 70 miles an hour

does not necessarily constitute dangerous driving. Therefore, trying to trap a speeding driver under the relevant section does not work.

A leading High Court authority that has stood the test of time since 1938, is the *King v. Coventry*, reported in 59 Commonwealth Law Reports, page 633. It sets out the law applicable to dangerous driving. The High Court, comprising Sir John Latham, Mr. Justice Rich, Mr. Justice Dixon and Mr. Justice McTiernan, said—

“The driver may have honestly believed that he was driving very carefully, and yet may be guilty of driving in a manner which is dangerous to the public. The jury is to determine, not whether the accused was in fact, as a matter of psychology, indifferent or not to the public safety, but whether he has driven in a manner which was dangerous to the public. The standard is an objective standard.”

It has been held that a momentary lapse of concentration can constitute dangerous driving. Many reputable and responsible citizens can be guilty of dangerous driving, and that is no reason, in my opinion, why they should be sent to gaol and incarcerated with seasoned criminals. It could happen to you, Mr. Ramsden, and to any one of us.

The High Court went on to say—

“No doubt the language of the section does not exclude a defence of mistake of fact on reasonable grounds or of involuntariness . . .”

The High Court continued later—

“We think that a ‘manner of driving’ involves more than a casual or transitory act or omission. . . . It is, in our opinion, wrong to exclude an act or omission from ‘manner of driving’ because it is casual or transitory in some senses in which these somewhat flexible words may be understood. Such an exclusion may even suggest that carelessness or inattention may constitute a defence to a charge under the relevant provisions of the section. Sudden, even though mistaken, action in a critical situation may not, in all the circumstances of a case, constitute driving to the danger of the public. But casual behaviour on the roads and momentary lapses of attention, if they result in danger to the public, are not outside the prohibition of that provision merely because they are casual or momentary.”

That case went on to state that a driver can be driving at his incompetent best and be guilty of dangerous driving. Such is the test of dangerous driving that a most esteemed person, perhaps one of Her Majesty’s knights, could be driving at his incompetent best, and be convicted of dangerous driving. There is no necessity to send people of that type to gaol. That is merely sanctimonious clap-trap in which some parliamentarians engage in the belief that it will win them votes. There are some members of the community,

such as the hon. member for Townsville South, who, not having heard the evidence and not understanding the law, raise their eyebrows in horror, and want to incarcerate everybody concerned in such cases, provided they are not their relatives. I think it is a great shame that the community is not made fully aware of the standards involved and the obligations of courts to both the injured and the one who caused the injury. Courts also have an obligation to the community consistent with the fabric and framework of the law.

Before I conclude my speech, I want to say that it is shocking that the Minister has as yet done nothing about the Thargomindah scandal. From a reading of the sworn police evidence, it is manifestly obvious that this case calls for the levelling of many charges against at least one of the policemen who gave sworn testimony, if not the three of them. In his findings the magistrate said of one police witness, “I have never before heard evidence so replete with equivocation and prevarication.” From that, it is quite obvious that the policeman concerned had committed perjury.

(Time expired.)

Mr. R. JONES (Cairns) (3.28 p.m.): It appears that Government members have retired hurt and will take no further part in this debate. The fact that I, and not a Government member, am following my colleague the hon. member for South Brisbane makes it abundantly clear that members on this side of the Chamber are making this an unrestricted debate, as it should be, whilst those on the Government side, both Liberal and Country Party members, have, as it were, taken their bats home.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! My attention has been drawn to the fact that the hon. member for Norman is in the Chamber. I understand that he was asked earlier to leave the Chamber under Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. Bromley: I was only asked.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: In that case, I again ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. Bromley: Don’t you want any life in this Parliament?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member was asked by another Temporary Chairman to retire from the Chamber. I now ask him to withdraw immediately, or I shall name him.

Mr. Bromley: It was Chalkie’s fault in the first place.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bromley: Do you want me to go?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will withdraw immediately.

Mr. Bromley: You have no sense of humour.

The **TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I will name the honourable member.

Mr. Bromley: You can't name me. I am going. Everything is under control.

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

Mr. R. JONES: The scope of the debate on the Financial Statement is unrestricted, so it gives all hon. members a very wide opportunity to deal with the problems of their constituency. The contributions to the debate by hon. members opposite since 24 September—obviously the spring has now run down—make it obvious that their constituents have no problems, and so a heavy duty falls upon the Opposition.

The financial policies of Governments do not always come within the category of functional relations. Rather, it is the whims, folly or intelligence exhibited by those who control the policies that determine the economic theories held by administrators or officials and influences economic events through the effects on their own private behaviour. Hon. members opposite would not, as administrators in Government, be prepared to admit that, or that they entertain certain economic theories that influence their decisions.

I refer the Committee to the words of the Treasurer, who was then a back-bencher, in volume 206 of "Hansard" at page 389. In September 1953, when referring to railwaymen, he said—

“. . . when it comes to the administration of the Railway Department, let him (meaning the then Minister for Transport) face up to his responsibilities.”

Further on he said—

“Today there is too much appeasement of the railway employees by this Government.”

Of course, his interest in those days—this is evident if one reads his speeches—was not in finance but rather in castigating railway employees. Today the hon. gentleman is not so keen to face up to his responsibilities. As for appeasement, this Budget is appeasement to end all appeasement.

The Treasurer's Financial Statement offers nothing futuristic. It rather lamely and apologetically says, “We will just have to jog along. We have been having a drought for seven years, you know.” I cannot understand why such enlightened gentlemen as those sitting on the ministerial benches did not wake up to the fact that if they had offered up prayers seven years ago the whole position would have been rectified. That seems to be the solution that is being put forward at present. Ominously, the Budget as presented is only a 21-day Budget. The Treasurer did not make any forecast in it for rain during this financial year; he referred only to future increases in State taxation.

The hon. gentleman made the pertinent point, to which I draw the attention of Queenslanders—and in this instance, like Inigo Jones, he made a bit of a forecast—that if Queensland wished to approach the Grants Commission, the Commonwealth Government had left the door open for it to do so. Subsequent events have not made it evident whether or not Queensland should follow that line of action. However, as I said earlier, administrators are wont to have preconceived ideas that affect their economic decisions. Practical men are more inclined to recognise their own limitations, but it is very difficult indeed to change underlying attitudes.

Before the Treasurer went prancing off to Canberra and, as the hon. member for Baroona, I think, said, came jiggling back, he confirmed his economic theories when replying to a question without notice by the hon. member for Chatsworth. The unvarying association of ideas simply reflected the fact that factors influencing the approach rarely differ in differing situations.

With railwaymen being pampered, as he said—I think the word was “pandered” in 1953—by a Labour Government, he unwittingly encompassed on this occasion the people of Queensland as being spoilt by obtaining a free hospitalisation scheme from a Labour Government. He stated that Queensland's free hospitals system could be endangered if this State applied for financial assistance from the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

As far as I am concerned, as far as the people of Queensland are concerned—in fact, as far as any thinking man is concerned—this is a lot of tommy rot. The Grants Commission does not operate in such a wildcat fashion. It does not attach provisos to how it distributes grants. We, as Queenslanders, believe that our free hospitalisation scheme is an inherent right and woe betide anybody, Government or otherwise, who chooses to reduce this service, or interfere with it or endanger it. Surely this is purely a decision for the Queensland Government and, if the Treasurer is contemplating not maintaining our free hospitals system, he should not blame the Commonwealth Grants Commission for his failure. Surely any application for a special grant would be assessed on the needs of the State taking into consideration the relevant factors for maintaining all Government facilities, calculated on a study of taxing and budgetary needs.

South Australia, under Labour Premier Don Dunstan, has already acquired a preliminary grant of \$5,000,000 for 1970-71 with a promise of more to come. Surely the Treasurer does not expect us to be hoodwinked into believing that Queensland could not argue for and receive funds to which we are rightfully entitled. It has been said that on a similar per capita assessment to that applied to South Australia a special Federal grant of \$25,000,000 could come

our way. Does not the Treasurer want this money? Can't he spend it? Or are we, from our painfully weak bargaining position, relying on the patronage of our political big brother?

As the Federal Government alone has access to the necessary finance, surely we could sustain a successful application to the Grants Commission. We surely cannot do any worse. The matter rests on Queensland's decision alone. Since 1957 the Government has maintained our free hospitalisation scheme, so the Treasurer should not blame somebody else if he intends to reduce any aspect of it.

Mr. Chalk: I thought you were the shadow Minister for Transport and that the hon. member for Nudgee was the shadow Minister for Health.

Mr. R. JONES: Whether I am the shadow Minister for Transport and the hon. member for Nudgee is the shadow Minister for Health, this matter is of importance to all. All Queenslanders, particularly those in my area, are greatly concerned about their free hospital's scheme. We do not want to retract one iota from the scheme as it presently operates; in fact, we want to go forward. The Minister for Health is in the Chamber at the moment, and I am sure he will agree with my sentiments.

Mr. Tooth: You are making great progress in Cairns.

Mr. R. JONES: We are making great progress in Cairns, I am quite pleased to say. That is because of good representation and other factors, health-wise, in this State, but mainly because the whole set-up and concept of free hospitalisation was inaugurated by a Labour Government.

Reverting to the money angle, we will not get any more by going further down the drain in our deficit. There is no hole in the ground from which money can be pulled, and if we go further down the drain the Grants Commission will not cover it. Likewise, if we improve our position—I do not know how the Treasurer will do that—the Grants Commission will not make any special cut-back in any special grant that Queensland has already received. If the Treasurer does not want this money, or if he does not know how he can spend it, I will give him a tip: come to North Queensland, and I will certainly show him how to spend it.

We have seen previous statements from the Treasurer. Under date 11 March, 1970, there appeared in "The Cairns Post" an article headed, "State is Losing Control." The Treasurer was reported as follows:—

"The Treasurer (Mr. Chalk) warned last night that Queensland was losing more and more control over its own affairs to the Commonwealth.

"In a major statement on Commonwealth-State relations he said the present undesirable trend could only lead to stronger central Government and weaker State Governments.

"We must have more control over our own affairs, and that means the cutting of the strings which the Commonwealth is so readily inclined to attach to money which is available."

The Commonwealth Grants Commission does not attach any strings to the money that it makes available.

On the other side of the ledger we find a statement by the Premier on 28 June, 1970, in which he said he was satisfied with the State revenue grant. He said that Queensland had done very well out of the Premiers' Conference and he was completely satisfied with the results.

He is reported as follows—

"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 . . .

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

I want to know why. The report continues—

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

We know what happened to the receipt duty legislation and of the need to recall the Premiers to Canberra.

As the fiscal doctor, the Treasurer diagnosed the ills of the Railway Department and prescribed treatment in small doses. The patient has complained that it wants its ailment cured. I know that the Treasurer cannot prolong the patient's life and that he cannot work miracles. I know, too, that he has diagnosed the complaint and prescribed certain remedies, but perhaps the facts that are relevant to the patient's illness are not known to the Treasurer. I do not think the Treasurer believes that he has the right treatment for the ailment. Of course, the behaviour of the patient will be paramount, and its behaviour may react violently to the Treasurer's prescription. I suggest that the Treasurer should call in a consultant. I refer, of course, to the Opposition's shadow Treasurer, the hon. member for Baroona. I am sure he could give the Treasurer some good advice. The hon. member for Baroona specialises not only in finance but also in human relations. The Treasurer must consult the specialist to whom I have referred if he does not want to lose his patient and his practice as well.

I turn now to other features of the Budget. I am concerned about local government

finance. In "The Cairns Post" of 2 July, 1970, the Minister for Local Government was reported as follows—

"The Minister for Local Government, Mr. Rae, urged the council to be strong enough to throw some of the financial burdens on the generations to come. It could be that aldermen were afraid of being 'thrown out on their ear' at the next election if they put the community to too much expense, but if they were strong enough they would ride the storm and be returned at the next election."

That is quite a forecast by the Minister; however, I feel when he made that statement he was not au fait with the finances of local authorities. I hope he is now. No doubt the Minister endeavoured to reply to a statement that was made by the Leader of the Opposition, and reported in the same newspaper on the previous day, in which he said that rate revenue was disappearing and shire authorities were becoming greatly concerned at the high percentage of their rate revenue that was now required for loan redemption and interest payments.

That is true, and it is reflected in the Federal Government's recognition of the alarming increase in the State's public debt compared with the fall in the Commonwealth debt. Under the new financial arrangements agreed to at the Premiers' Conference in June, a formula was agreed upon whereby the financial assistance grants provide for a continuation of the method of escalation and improvements, and a continuation of a special additional \$2,000,000, in addition to the \$6,300,000 for an estimated five-year period, giving a total of approximately \$38,500,000. That will serve to arrest the rate of interest by taking over an agreed level of the State debt, and provision has been made for the State works programme to be financed from capital grants rather than from loan funds.

No doubt, the State Government's application for additional funds at the Premiers' Conference was based on the inadequacy of the State's resources. In the circumstances it is very unlikely indeed that additional Federal assistance will be granted to local authorities. The point I wish to emphasise is that the over-all financial situation of local authorities is perplexing and of grave concern to all sections of local government in Queensland. It should be emphasised that the continued demand on ratepayers is imposing a harsh burden on them because they have to pay for additional services and improved facilities. Assistance to local government from the State Government by way of subsidy has been reviewed from time to time, to the detriment of councils, particularly since 1957, when this Government came to office. As figures to bear out that statement are readily available, I will not bore hon. members with them.

The result has been a diminution in finance for local authorities. The councils' avenues

of raising revenue are very limited. Rising costs and increased works programmes can be financed only by rate levies, which are limited by the ability of ratepayers to pay. They are increasingly finding the burden much too heavy. An appraisal of the immense loan indebtedness incurred by local authorities should be undertaken in both the Federal and State spheres.

Following a notice of amendment to the Local Authorities Act that appeared on the Business Sheet, I asked a question in the House on 14 November, 1969, about the loan indebtedness of local authorities and semi-governmental authorities in these terms—

"What was Queensland's total outstanding debt, the annual interest payable, and the amount provided for redemption payments in the last year for which figures are available for (a) local governmental authorities and (b) semi-governmental authorities?"

The Treasurer said in reply—

"The term 'semi-governmental authorities' is used with varying meanings in different contexts and its meaning in this context is not clear to me."

He then referred me to the Auditor-General's Report without producing the figures. Later, he said that the debt-servicing expenditure for cities and towns was shown in the various publications.

I now wish to refer to an answer to a subsequent question relative to the debt outstanding, annual interest payable, and funds provided for redemption of local and semi-governmental authority debts, which appeared in Federal "Hansard", with the figures given in toto, of 26 September, 1969. I will quote the figures in table form for Queensland so that the people of this State, who are interested enough to read "Hansard" will see the growing problems that face local authorities in relation to their indebtedness.

The latest available figures for Queensland are—

	Local Government Authorities	Semi-Government Authorities
	\$	\$
Total debt outstanding at 30 June, 1967	351,186,000	349,284,000
Annual interest payable on debt outstanding at 30 June, 1967	18,973,000	18,489,000
Funds provided for redemption during the year ended 30 June, 1967 ..	17,272,000	10,493,000

In an answer given in the Federal House on 25 February, 1969, the following local government authority figures were quoted—

Year	Total Revenue	Debt Charges	Percentage: Debt Charges to Revenue
	\$	\$	
1949-50 ..	19,194,000	6,093,000	31.74
1954-55 ..	34,140,000	10,156,000	29.75
1959-60 ..	59,264,000	18,506,000	31.23
1964-65 ..	83,447,000	30,233,000	36.23

Both the State and the Federal Governments should look closely at local authority indebtedness. In addition, something must be done quickly to provide local authorities with finance to overcome their loan indebtedness. Treasury officials should be requested to conduct an exhaustive examination into sources of finance for local government. In the local sphere, I suggest that there is a case for differential rating and for land valuation related to land usage and actual profits derived from the site. Consideration should be given to types of business and the possibility of a prosperity rating at the local level. The cost structure of business enterprises should be looked at in the light of local authority rating.

I refer now to a situation that seems to arise in the latter half of each financial year. The Department of Works grants contracts en masse during the early part of the calendar year, which is the latter part of the financial year, and demands that all work be completed by the end of the financial year.

Contracts granted during the first quarter ending in March are required to be completed by June. The reason for that is a desire to spend all Votes before the end of the financial year. If a successful tenderer cannot meet that requirement, the job goes to the next lowest accredited tenderer. This practice has, over a long time, cost the Government vast sums of money in the difference between the tenders originally accepted and those subsequently accepted because of inability of the original tenderer to complete the job in the time specified. I feel that this procedure should be considered with a view to correcting the situation.

I notice, too, that various Ministers engage in quite a lot of kite-flying in Press statements. Today's "Courier-Mail" contains a statement by the Premier, no doubt released by the public relations officer of the Premier's Department, that the Queensland railways have already acted to adjust inconsistencies revealed by the rail-freight investigation. It is pertinent to point out that that statement follows the disclosure last week that the consultants' report criticised the rail-freight structure as it discouraged decentralisation and contained many anomalies. I recall that during the last election campaign, when the problem of rail freights was raised, the Premier said in Mareeba that he was the Lone Ranger in Cabinet in the matter of freight rates, and no-one else agreed with him that there should be a review of the freights structure. I want to know whether the position has changed now. I want to know whether the Premier has found Tonto in the Cabinet, or whether this is merely a piece of kite-flying.

The Carlton United Brewery and Northern Australian Breweries Ltd. were instrumental in having the North Queensland freight study made by Scott & Co. One of their publications is "Tavern Trader", and I propose to

quote from the editorial appearing in volume 9, No. 1, of June, 1969. It gives concisely what these people were seeking, and what they were trying to assess. It reads—

"The forty days and forty nights wanderings by the Tribes of Israel in the wilderness of the deserts of Sinai pale into insignificance when compared with the years of wanderings by the peoples of North Queensland in the wilderness of the political desert of Northern Development and Decentralisation of Industry—particularly secondary industry.

"For years they have striven and wrought to establish secondary industry in provincial areas to give balance and stability to the local economy, and to provide the jobs and careers required for their sons and daughters and so check the southern migration of this youth in search of a future wherein their latent talents can be developed to the full.

"It is with concern and despair that they watch the success of their efforts sabotaged by transport policies which, either by design or accident, effectively limit the growth of these industries or force them to either cease operations or move to the capital city to enable them to meet competitors on an equal footing in their chosen provincial markets.

"Undaunted by the dilatory attitude of their State and Federal Governments to take any positive action, they have endeavoured to change this through their Chambers of Commerce and other Associations of trade and business and have created and privately financed their own Regional Development Bureaux to research and promote their 'parochial' demands for decentralisation of industry, but still receive the same old promises—to consider—to review—to look into—to investigate, etc. etc. ad nauseum. In fact, every promise to do everything but take some definite positive action.

"For years they have listened to the State Government proclaiming its avowed policy of decentralisation, and watched bemused as the State railways adopted an iniquitous policy of rail freight discrimination against provincial industry, which can only be interpreted as a policy of greater centralisation of the State's secondary industry (apart from the extractive industries) and as such, diametrically opposed to the Government's avowed policy.

"Earlier this year the State Premier, in acknowledging that some corrective action appeared necessary, indicated his willingness to place the whole problem under close scrutiny to see if some relief could be effected, and in late June a press report stated that the State Government 'promised rail freight subsidies on export goods manufactured by industrial concerns situated beyond a 25 mile radius of the nearest port'—a big deal when most

of the industrial concerns capable of export action are grouped around Brisbane—big deal when North Queensland Ports find it near impossible to establish and maintain a regular overseas shipping service—”

Let me digress for a moment to remind hon. members of the situation that has evolved from the rationalisation of meat-export ports in this State and the Government's attitude to it. The editorial continues—

“big deal when it appears Brisbane will be the only export container terminal port in Queensland.

“North Queenslanders expect better than this.”

Then it goes on to refer to the needs of secondary industry in North Queensland.

I think that is quite sufficient to clarify the point I am making. I believe that a good deal of kite-flying is going on in this field, particularly when the Railway Department is giving contract rates to individuals and firms such as F. H. Stephens which are contracting to Townsville. In that case, the maximum rate is \$460 a wagon, with a minimum load of 20 tons. As the Treasurer knows, that is much less than the average maximum load on wagons such as these, which would be 26 tons. In effect, therefore, the company is having six tons carried free of charge.

Using the ordinary classified freight rates, a consignment of that type would cost in the vicinity of \$1,026 a wagon from Brisbane to Townsville. The company is paying less than half what it would pay on classified rates charged by the Railway Department. I know, too, that East-West Transport in Rockhampton is quoting \$33 a ton to contractors for bringing material to Rockhampton, and it must be making a profit.

As hon. members know, over a long period the Railway Department has been blamed for its high freight charges. In effect, it is losing both freight and revenue today and private enterprise is sopping up many profitable operations. I know that quite a number of private firms are doing very well by carrying freight that the railways have lost.

I turn now to a Press report of the disaster on the Lower Yarra Crossing Authority's West Gate Bridge. It says—

“The West Gate bridge disaster is the worst in Australian industry since 75 men died in a mine explosion at Mt. Mulligan, Queensland, in 1921.”

Having served in the Mt. Mulligan area, I can tell anyone who wishes to go to the site—incidentally, a Country-Liberal Government closed the mine at Mt. Mulligan—where he can see the figure “1921” cut into the rock face as a reminder of the disaster. It is only a whim of nature that it has remained there on the bluff, just above the mine.

The toll from the West Gate Bridge disaster is the worst in Victoria since a train smash at Sunshine in 1908 resulted in 44 passengers being killed. It is the worst Australian industrial accident since an explosion in 1902 at the Mt. Kembla coal mine in New South Wales took the lives of 95 men, and the worst accident since, on 10 February, 1964, 82 sailors died when the aircraft carrier “Melbourne” collided with a destroyer off the New South Wales coast.

The first stage of this bridge construction was finished last October. The bridge will be the biggest in Australia and will provide a gateway between Melbourne's western suburbs and the city. Of course, it is the proud boast of Melburnians that the completed bridge will have a surface area 2½ times that of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Apparently they derive some satisfaction from those figures.

The point I want to make is that the latest figures available, taken from “The Courier-Mail” last Saturday, show that the identified dead from this tragedy numbered 27, there were four unidentified dead, seven missing and 18 injured. We all sympathise with the relatives of the deceased, but I draw the Committee's attention to the publicity given to this type of tragedy and the amount of visible sorrow it causes in the community. We read the Press reports of a tragedy such as this from beginning to end. We do not miss a point of the very sensational reporting of such a tragedy, yet we virtually ignore other reports such as that appearing in yesterday's “Courier-Mail” disclosing that the death toll on the roads of Queensland for the preceding week-end was eight.

Accidents on Queensland roads for the whole of 1968-69 resulted in 525 persons being killed and 10,252 seriously injured. The provisional figures for 1969-70 were 527 killed and 10,299 seriously injured. I shall quote the monthly figures for 1970 and I should like hon. members to compare them with the 31 killed, seven missing and 18 injured in the West Gate Bridge disaster. The figures, month by month, of persons killed and injured on Queensland roads for 1970 are as follows—

Month	Killed	Seriously injured
January	34	730
February	27	678
March	45	903
April	40	778
May	57	1,060
June	40	789

Although I am not sure of it, I believe that I heard somewhere the other day that in September there were 45 people killed. The carnage that occurs on the roads today is ghastly.

Mr. R. E. Moore: What is the answer?

Mr. R. JONES: Let us start to do something about it. I intend to make a suggestion. I do not think I have the solution to the problem, but surely a disaster plan can be evolved. The inquiry into the West Gate Bridge disaster will be conducted by a royal commission, by an investigating body appointed by the unions, by one appointed by the contractors, and by one instituted by somebody else. Four inquiries will be held into the disaster. It was a tragedy, but so are deaths on the road.

Some form of disaster plan should be evolved in an endeavour to avert future tragedies on the road. It is not beyond the capabilities of this Government and the Federal Government to appoint a royal commission into road deaths. In the 1950's a Senate Select Committee was set up to inquire into road deaths, but whether or not that committee's recommendations have been implemented, I would not know. Of course, since that time the Federal Government has been a Liberal-Country Party Government.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Give us your opinion.

Mr. R. JONES: Oh, be quiet. Don't do what you did at the strike meetings, namely, vote for it and not against it. Sit quietly while I explain the matter.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order!

Mr. R. JONES: The Government should appoint either a royal commission or other form of inquiry to evaluate information relative to road accidents. If the Government does not desire to appoint a royal commission it should assess all traffic accidents with a view to preventing them and, ultimately, eliminating them. I visualise the appointment of a body that will enjoy the powers, prestige and reverence of the Department of Civil Aviation and the awe in which it is held.

Mr. Hughes: This is carried out daily at police headquarters.

Mr. R. JONES: Obviously, reports are made out and lodged by very busy police officers, but then they are put to one side and not acted upon. I suggest that the criterion is whether or not a prosecution is lodged against any particular person. I am sure that no evaluation is made of road accidents with a view to preventing them.

Mr. Hughes: What about the Road Safety Council?

Mr. R. JONES: I commend those bodies that have taken action in the past, but the steps that have been taken have not reduced the road toll. Although "P" plates and breathalysers have been introduced, the steps taken have been inadequate.

If in one fell swoop those people who died on the roads were killed in an accident either on the railways, at sea, or in the air, their deaths would be regarded as a national disaster. Everybody would be running round

and asking what the Government was going to do about it. We have become blasé about road fatalities, whereas we should front up to the increasing road toll. We cannot let it continue; as representatives of the people we must accept our responsibility. If I were to ask any hon. member the number of people who lost their lives in the West Gate disaster, I would be given the answer very quickly, but I suggest that no hon. member is aware of the figures that I have disclosed or that eight people died on our roads over the week-end. We tend to accept death on the road as inevitable. Road deaths have become mere statistics, and we should be condemned for allowing the public to accept them as a fact of life. It is utterly disgusting to allow loss of human lives—mostly young lives—to be blatantly ignored. It is a blot on our civilisation.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Would you say that speed was a factor?

Mr. R. JONES: It is not for me to say, but I suggest that speed, coupled with carelessness, is a factor.

I was surprised to learn that Mr. Speaker was a "Wall of Death" rider. I used to dabble in speedway riding myself, clad in old leather drawers. In my young day I was a bikie, and I used to take as many risks as anybody else on the road. Maybe that is why I am so concerned about this matter now. It became very pertinent, and poignant, to me when I got off my motor-bike one night and found that my best mate had been killed on the road. That is when the dangers became very obvious to me; in such circumstances, one becomes very concerned about road safety.

On Sunday, I attended a motor sports programme staged by the Cairns Competition Car Club. I was asked to open the meeting, and a comment that I made could well be repeated in this Assembly. I said that these people are working in the right way by teaching boys how to handle their motor-cycles and cars with judgment, skill and ability. They place emphasis on skill. Most of our road users would do well to get on a speedway and see how good they are. They could try themselves out there, if they want to have a go.

We cannot let the public generally accept as a fact of life that people must die on the roads. Death on the road is a blot on our civilised conscience; the toll of the road is an open wound that, if not remedied, will scar us like an affliction.

A body should be established on a basis comparable with that of D.C.A., with equivalent powers. If necessary, a legal body should be established with power to undertake flying-squad or on-the-spot investigations of accidents, particularly fatal accidents. I do not know whether its members could have status parallel to that of industrial commissioners; I leave the legal implications of the matter to the Opposition's shadow

Minister for Justice, the member for South Brisbane. A tribunal should be established with wide powers, perhaps of a Supreme Court judge. It should have all the power in the world to make recommendations to a central council that, in turn, had the power to institute remedial action.

In the lower grade, I want an initial tribunal, on a local basis, or an investigatory body vested with court power, or legal power, to recommend minor penalties against culprits. It could also make recommendations to the higher body on remedial action. It would have a primary function, which would then flow to the higher body to give considered opinions on cause, prevention and cure. The secondary function of the higher council would be to evaluate the submissions and act upon them, or make sure that they were acted on.

I do not know what sort of an exercise that would be, but we have to meet the road-toll phenomenon, with its wide ramifications. If we do not act immediately, it will become even more gross. I do not say that my concept is not without fault. Perhaps many holes could be shot through it, but at least it is my considered, honest attempt to put forward some constructive suggestions, and to bring to the attention of this Chamber, and the people of Queensland, something that has been troubling me for some time. It is only the germ of an idea. However, it bears investigation and action. The D.C.A. has done a good deal towards air safety. The safe working of other forms of transport, namely sea, rail, air and land, is similarly guarded. Nobody would deprecate the work done by those bodies. The D.C.A. is held in the highest regard, and I do not think it is impossible to set up such a body relative to road safety. The D.C.A. is an investigatory body. If a body is set up relative to road safety, I hope that, in addition to being recognised as an investigatory body, it will be treated with respect and held in the highest regard. The D.C.A. won its reputation over a long period of accuracy and efficiency. Setting up a similar organisation in Queensland is the only way we will reduce our road toll, the figures for which strike fear in the heart. If there is any other way to stop the road toll, let us have it now. If ever a disaster plan was necessary, it is necessary now, and we must set up a body to save the lives of our young Queenslanders.

We are not assisted in this matter by the advertising of the power and speed of motor-cars. "The Cairns Post" of Monday, 19 October, said, in headlines, that the car of the Bathurst victor was no family sedan. A person would only need to drive such a high-powered car to know that. If it was allowed to slow down to 60 miles an hour, it would pig root.

Mr. R. E. Moore: You want to take your spurs off.

Mr. R. JONES: If I put my spurs on, I would give the hon. member the ride of his life.

Public servants in Far North Queensland and in many other country areas are confronted with many problems, particularly when they are on transfer. "The Cairns Post" of Thursday, 2 July, reports that doctors in Rockhampton and from there to Far North Queensland were openly defying the Commonwealth Government by refusing to charge the common fee for medical services. They are charging \$3 to \$3.70 and \$4 in some isolated cases, for general practitioner services at their surgeries. They are defying the common-fee scale of the Queensland branch of the Australian Medical Association, which recommended \$2.85 for a surgery visit. The doctors said that the fee used by the Federal Department of Health as the basis for the common fee was ridiculous in North Queensland.

The following day, 3 July, 1970, the doctors in North Queensland were reported in "The Cairns Post" as saying that increased staff costs and the generally higher costs of living forced them to charge rates higher than the common fee. You know, Mr. Ramsden, as I do, that the Australian Medical Association is the strongest union in Australia today. Without any referral to a tribunal, its view was accepted. If that is to be so, I argue that the view of all North Queenslanders is cogent. If it is good enough for doctors to have their fees increased in North Queensland because of the conditions operating there, it is good enough for all Queenslanders living north of the Tropic of Capricorn to be given extra consideration in wages, allowances and facilities.

I wish to refer also to rentals in country centres for Government servants. The cost of such housing, although a major problem, is certainly not the most important problem. To my mind, the most important one is the lack of Government housing for public servants, teachers and police in country areas. In Cairns there are approximately 40 houses for public servants, teachers and police officers. That is a very small number compared with the number of such officers in Cairns. Although some departments are reasonably well off for houses, others have very few. For example, the Department of Lands has four houses allocated to it, and at present it has four married officers accommodated. In comparison, the Public Curator Office, which has seven married officers, has an allocation of only two houses. In addition, the Public Curator Office has only four houses allocated in rural areas, and to my knowledge it has approximately 30 married officers in the country.

The position has now been reached where officers in Brisbane will not move to country centres, simply because there are no houses available for them. This, of course, means that country areas are deprived of their experience. Of course, an officer cannot

be blamed for not wanting to go to Far North Queensland where he knows that his cost of living would rise by about \$10 a week, thus cancelling out any salary rise he may receive by transferring to a higher position. The whole position of housing rentals must be looked at in conjunction with sustenance allowances payable to public servants in country areas.

Let us consider the position of an officer in Brisbane who decided to accept an appointment in Cairns. If he owned his own home, he would possibly have to sell it on a forced market. His house payments would, under normal circumstances, be approximately \$44 to \$60 a month. On arrival in Cairns, if he did not wish to buy a house he would have to rent one, and rentals in Cairns are geared to the tourist trade. Most likely he would not be able to obtain a suitable rental home for less than \$22 a week.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (4.29 p.m.): The Treasurer has brought down another Budget against a background of drought, which he has used as his excuse for making it a deficit Budget. I think the real background to the present position is the Government's failure to capitalise properly on the resources of the State. It is true that this State, and Australia in general, have ridden on the sheep's back for many years. Now, as a result of the conditions that have broken the sheep's back, we are no longer in receipt of the income normally obtained from the sale of wool, wheat, and perhaps cattle. However, it should have been possible to sustain the economy with the other resources that the State possesses.

I refer particularly to Queensland's mineral resources. When the economy of the State rode on the sheep's back, the returns from the sale of wool came back to Queensland and this State received the value of its produce. That does not apply in the case of minerals, which are being sold very cheaply. They are being extracted by overseas companies, not by Queenslanders, and those companies are gaining the benefit of the resources of this State. We did not have a large number of overseas companies running sheep properties in Queensland. In the majority of cases the properties were run by Queenslanders and, as I said, the returns came back to Queensland. All that is being received from the sale of the State's mineral resources is rail freights and the benefit of certain payments that are made to the workers. Such payments, of course, are for labour only and do not represent any profit on the minerals themselves. The Government is receiving also a certain amount in royalties, but this in no way compares with the royalties being obtained by other Australian States for their minerals.

In my opinion, Queensland has been left out on a limb as far as the real reward from the production of minerals is concerned. I do not know whether or not the Government

intends to continue its present policy, but apparently in recent weeks the Treasurer has acknowledged the inadequacy of the return from minerals and has in fact put his foot down and demanded higher royalties for a nickel find that is to be developed. It is a pity he did not do it earlier.

I was very interested to note a remark in the Financial Statement relative to the receipts tax issue. The Treasurer commented that the failure of Queensland to receive the receipts tax would perhaps result in the suspension of the free hospitals system in this State. There was no suggestion that the Premier's charter flights should be reduced or that the extraneous expenses incurred by the various Ministers should be limited in any way. It was rather surprising to find that the Treasurer suggested that it may be necessary first to clamp down on the free hospitals system if revenue from receipts tax did not come to Queensland.

The Budget as a whole has been dealt with very extensively by the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members on this side of the Chamber, but I wish to deal with several matters that perhaps may not be dealt with in the debate on the Estimates. First let me deal with road safety, which is an ever-increasing problem in Queensland.

As was pointed out very recently by the hon. member for Cairns, the problem of road safety is not being tackled by the Government in the manner in which it should be and the number of deaths on Queensland roads is increasing every year. There must be some means of impressing on the motorist who is reckless and has very little regard for the safety of pedestrians and other road users the need for greater care. I say that, when dealing with these offenders—speedsters and drunken drivers—the penalty should be gaol without the option. This I think, would bring home to these people the seriousness of their actions. I know it might impose drastic economic problems on the families of those concerned, but this is a very serious problem, and, as such, it must be dealt with drastically, particularly in the case of motorists who are drinking and driving or speeding. If they did not have the option of buying their way out of punishment—that is what it amounts to now because those who are able to do so can then proceed with their normal lives—and if the penalty was gaol without an option, I am sure many speedsters and drunken drivers would have second thoughts.

On the matter of suspension of driving licences for traffic offences, I think that the registration of the car should also be suspended. This again will probably bring forth the opinion that this would impose restrictions on and cause difficulties for other members of the family who would be able to use the car, but we have reached the stage when drastic action must be taken to reduce these offences. These are the things that must be considered if road fatalities continue

to grow. More drastic penalties must be imposed and more drastic action taken against those who violate the traffic laws of this State.

While dealing with penalties for speeding, on many roads it is very difficult at times to remain aware of the actual speed limit on a particular section of road. At various points signs indicate that the speed limit is 45, 50 or 60 miles an hour. But in between those signs the motorist has a tendency to lose awareness of what the actual speed limit is. I suggest that perhaps one of the solutions to this matter could be the placing of coloured posts at the roadside indicating the speed limit in any particular section. These posts could be placed at intervals of 50 or 100 yards and painted in various colours to indicate various speed limits. Motorists would then know at any point what the speed limit was on that section of the road.

Mr. Murray: What happens to those rare colour-blind motorists?

Mr. MELLOY: It is true that these motorists would be exceptions, but the colour-blind driver is not now aware of the actual speed limit between signposts. My suggestion may not help him, but it would help many others who are not colour-blind. The posts could be coloured, say, green for a 60-m.p.h. limit and through various colours to red for a limit of 35-m.p.h. Drivers would soon learn what the various colours meant and they could determine the speed limit merely by glancing at the posts on the side of the road.

As the Estimates for the Department of Health will not be debated, I wish to deal with several matters associated with health and dental services. In earlier debates I have dealt at length with health services, but I do not think any point is lost by referring again to the situation that exists in our hospitals. I shall refer again to staff accommodation and the provision of facilities for patients. The Government must pay greater attention to these matters, because many medical and nursing authorities have indicated that unless conditions in hospitals are improved chaos will result within a period of 10 years. I feel that the Government either is not aware of the situation or is not prepared to acknowledge the difficulties and problems that exist in our hospitals. It has not provided adequate hospital services for the public.

The stage has been reached where patients are discharged from hospital too early. As soon as a patient can be induced to get on his or her feet and move round the ward the patient is discharged. That is not always in the interests of the patient. I acknowledge that early ambulation may be a modern concept in the treatment of patients, but I point out that patients have to go through a certain convalescent period, during which relapses may occur and require medical supervision. It is not in the interests of patients

to discharge them immediately after they can get out of bed and walk round the wards. That matter must be looked at closely.

The Government should provide hospitals in which patients can convalesce. There is a need for hospitalisation during convalescence because many homes to which patients return after discharge from hospital are not suitable in such circumstances. On returning to their homes patients are not always in the company of people who can attend to their needs during convalescence.

On a previous occasion I referred to a lady who told me that she was discharged from hospital and on her return home had only the company of her husband, who was deaf and partly blind. She said that she had been returned to her home with a head injury after she had been hospitalised for only 14 hours. As she pointed out to me, her husband was in no condition to cope with any situation that may have arisen.

I turn now to the provision of homes for aged people. The problem of housing aged persons will be aggravated by increases in charges for accommodation in private convalescent homes which have been brought about, to a certain extent, by increases in salaries and wages. The increased fees will result in an exodus of aged people from private convalescent homes to "Eventide" and other institutions that are provided by the Government. Unless the Government provides additional homes for the aged, with hospital attention attached, a disastrous situation will confront the community. An insistent demand exists throughout the State for increased accommodation in homes for the aged.

We are faced with a severe shortage of dentists in Queensland and a reduction in enrolment of dental students. In reply to a recent question, the Minister indicated that only 35 dentists are expected to graduate this year, and only 28 in 1971 and a similar number in 1972. Those figures are not good enough in the light of the situation in dental clinics. The number of graduates will not meet the demand for dentists in clinics, quite apart from the demand for dental treatment in the private sector.

Mr. Hughes: What can be done about that?

Mr. MELLOY: I will deal with that at the right time.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Do you think water should be fluoridated?

Mr. MELLOY: I will deal with that at the right time, too.

The failure to increase the number of dentists in the community presents serious problems. There are only 21 dentists in the school dental health service, despite the greater demand for dental treatment, the growing population, and the waiting lists at dental clinics. The other day the Minister indicated

that there are delays at all dental clinics in getting treatment, and at the Wynnum clinic there is an 11-month delay. This is a serious problem, but it can be solved in several ways that I will elaborate on shortly.

The seriousness of the dental situation is emphasised by a statement by Brigadier Dean, Director of Dental Services in the Australian Army, who said that 80 per cent. of the intake of National Service trainees were dentally unfit, and that their mouths were in a shocking state.

Mr. Davies: That is shameful.

Mr. MELLOY: It is a shameful state of affairs.

The Government has failed to face up to the situation. One answer to it would cost money, but in view of the shocking state of our dental services, it must be faced up to. The Minister said in reply to a question that only nine dental fellowships will be awarded this year. That will not make any contribution to improving Queensland's dental service. As it is not easy to get students who do not win fellowships to take up dentistry, the number of fellowships must be increased and the dental service generally made more attractive. We must also be prepared to meet the cost of providing more dentists in dental clinics and school dental services. Dental health is the gateway to general health.

On 7 October, I suggested to the Minister for Health that a statement made by Brigadier Dean was an indictment of the dental health service of this State. The Minister replied—

“ . . . the Department of Health is not responsible for the dental care of the total population of Queensland, though it does provide a service for people of limited financial resources who are unable to afford private dental treatment.”

Those who are dentally fit are in the upper-income bracket, whereas most of those who are dentally unfit cannot afford to pay the high cost of private dental treatment, but are precluded by the means test, from obtaining treatment at our dental clinics.

I have made this point frequently and it is pertinent. It is because so many people are not receiving dental treatment that 80 per cent. of young men entering National Service are dentally unfit. It is the Government's responsibility to ensure that those who cannot afford private dental treatment—and they would represent 80 per cent. of the community—are able to avail themselves of the service available at dental clinics. The means test should be reviewed to make this possible. Time and time again we receive complaints from people in receipt of a moderate income, who have been refused treatment at our clinics.

To my mind, there are three possible answers to this deterioration in our dental services, and, although they are not complete answers, they would go a long way towards alleviating the situation. Firstly, there is the provision of skilled dental nurses, which is the position in Tasmania and New Zealand. This scheme was considered by the late Dr. Noble, but was not introduced. These young girls provide a very comprehensive service for children up to 16 years of age, and those are the important years in dental health because, if a child is trained to guard his teeth, and his teeth are examined regularly, the idea of dental health is instilled in his mind, and he will maintain his dental health.

I want to point out to the Committee some of the provisions of the school dental service. Incidentally, the Australian Dental Association has its own scheme for the training of dental assistants, but these assistants are not permitted to carry out any dental services on the public. They are able to carry out prophylaxis and minor operations of that type, but even that type of work is not legal under the Dental Act. Under the legislation, I do not think that any person other than a qualified dentist is allowed to perform any operation on the mouth of a person in a dental surgery.

Under this scheme of the Australian Dental Association, girls are trained to carry out the type of work that I have mentioned, and I feel that one of the reasons for introducing this training is that the assistants provide a form of cheap labour for dentists. Whereas a dentist might have to spend perhaps three, four, or five hours a week on prophylaxis work in his surgery, he is able to have this work done by his dental assistant whilst he himself is able to earn more from more remunerative work. I do not think that the use of such assistants is very desirable. It is true that once they finish their training and pass their tests these girls are paid additional salary, but what they receive is in no way comparable with the earnings of dentists.

The scheme in operation in Tasmania is very well founded, well considered, and well set up. In Tasmania, girls complete a training course of two years' duration. Matriculation is required for enrolment, and they have to be aged between 17 and 25 years. They are accommodated at a hostel adjacent to the training school in Hobart. They are given very comprehensive training which enables them to do extractions and minor fillings, and impart dental health education to school children.

In the first six months of the course, subjects of a theoretical nature are covered, such as anatomy, physiology, and several other subjects pertaining to tooth formation and construction. The second six months they spend attending lectures relating more directly to the actual dental work that they will be carrying out. During the first 12

months of the course, they absorb a knowledge of dental treatment generally in assisting senior dental students or nurses who are working on patients by carrying out such duties as mixing fillings and making up patients' cards. In the second year they are promoted to their own chair in the college, and they attend and work on their own group of patients. They are then at the stage of carrying out actual dental treatment which prepares them for their work in the schools.

Training in dental education is given during the first year of the course, and they are able to lecture the students in the schools to which they are attached on dental hygiene and other subjects related to the care of the teeth. On completion of two years at the dental college, they are appointed to schools in various districts of the State. In some areas one nurse may be allotted to three or four small schools.

They work on the children on a progressive age basis, beginning when the child is first enrolled at the school and continuing each year thereafter. They are not allowed to take X-rays or to do extractions under general anaesthetics. However, that is the basis on which a scheme could be instituted in Queensland to alleviate the demand on existing dental services for young children. The basis of dental health is established in the first 16 years of a person's life, and it is very important that the children of Queensland should have adequate treatment available to them. They certainly do not at present.

The Queensland branch of the Australian Dental Association recently undertook a survey relative to the dental health of school children up to the age of 14 years in this State, and it arrived at some very interesting conclusions. The survey, which was supported by the Minister for Health, established that 295,000 children aged between six and 14 possessed an estimated 2,180,500 teeth affected by dental decay. Of these, 997,300 had been treated, and 1,183,200 still needed to be treated, and 962,000 fillings and 221,000 extractions were required. It was established that an additional 394 dentists would be required to do that work and to catch up with existing deficiencies, and it was estimated that the cost would be \$5,000,000. I point out to the Committee that that was established by a reliable, conservative committee. At the age of 14 years, 97 per cent. of children have one or more permanent teeth affected by decay, the average being 10.7 teeth out of 28 in each child.

In the survey, the mouths of 3,251 children in 20 towns in Queensland were examined. It was believed that this gave an excellent coverage to assess the dental health of children in this State, and the results again emphasise the lack of adequate dental services because the Government has not increased, over the last 10 years, the number of dentists servicing various centres. Of the

children under 14 years of age who were examined, 45, or 1.4 per cent., were either wearing or required some form of dental prosthesis, usually partial dentures in the upper jaw. This again emphasises the state of dental health in Queensland.

Dental health of the gums and mouths of children, apart from the teeth themselves, is also rather tragic, because 2,666 children or 82 per cent. of those examined showed evidence of gingivitis, which is infection of the gums. That is a further illustration of the condition of our children's health in Queensland, and a further indictment of the service presently provided by the Government.

These extracts from the report are very relevant—

"The estimates for all children aged 6 through 14 inclusive show that of an estimated 2,180,500 teeth affected by caries, 997,300 have already been treated and 1,183,200 still require to be treated.

In this connection it is interesting to note that in New Zealand the ratio of dental nurses to the child population aged 2½-13 years is 1:431 and each nurse averages 72 extractions and 2,224 fillings per year in addition to her other duties such as prophylaxes, health education, etc. In Queensland the present ratio of extractions to fillings in the permanent dentition is 1:5.3 or 18.7 to 100 compared with the present ratio in New Zealand of 3.4 to 100.

The outstanding conclusion which can be drawn from the results of this survey is that the existing dental services—both public and private—are able to provide less than half the treatment required for dental caries alone and much less than this for other conditions.

The results of the survey have established that there is a very large back-log of treatment required and that because of this dentists are not being used to the best advantage. A great deal of their limited operating time is devoted to routine treatment of dental caries—duties which could be performed just as satisfactorily by well-trained auxiliary personnel who work under their supervision. At least three other States in Australia have already adopted plans for the employment of operative auxiliaries with duties and responsibilities similar to those of New Zealand School Dental Nurses."

Mr. Hanlon: Has the Government given any reason why it did not proceed with this after Dr. Noble endorsed it?

Mr. MELLOY: No. I think it is just a change of policy. Dr. Noble was very much in favour of it. He had been to New Zealand and was very impressed with what operated there. He came back with the idea of instituting this scheme in Queensland. On

one occasion, I queried him on it, and he told me that he thought the scheme could be in operation in Queensland within two years of his formulating it.

Mr. Hanlon: That is a few years ago now.

Mr. MELLOY: That was in 1962, I think. Of course, due to a change of policy and the passing of Dr. Noble, the scheme was not implemented.

Another subject that is very controversial is fluoridation. Argument has waged back and forth through many countries about the efficacy of fluoridation in checking dental caries—argument as to its side effects and the desirability or otherwise of mass medication. The views I am about to express on it are, at this stage, my personal views. They are in some contrast to views that I have previously expressed.

My belief now is that fluoridation is one of the solutions to the dental health of children in this State. It is acknowledged that fluoridation may be effective only until a child reaches 14 years of age. Even so, the effect would be tremendous. It would ensure in a child's early years a sufficient measure of dental health. Both those who support fluoridation and those who oppose it have used statistics to bolster their arguments. I have only my own personal experience of fluoridation as a result of a visit I made to Tasmania. As I have said, previously I was opposed to mass medication, but I feel sure that medication, whether voluntary or compulsory, is sometimes desirable. Many people who come to Australia object to vaccination and inoculation, but whether or not they like it they are required to have it. If it can be established that medication is good for the people as a whole, we must approve of it.

During my visit to Tasmania I was able to inspect the teeth of children who had lived in areas where fluoridation was provided as well as those of children who lived in areas where it had not been introduced into water supplies. The difference in the condition of those children's teeth was remarkable, to say the least. At a dental clinic in Tasmania I was able to examine the mouths of approximately 120 children, who made up two groups of either 50 or 60. In the mouths of the group of children who lived in fluoridated areas dental caries and fillings were almost completely absent, whereas in the mouths of the children who lived in non-fluoridated areas caries was rampant very few teeth had not been filled. As well, many of those children had lost certain teeth owing to the lack of early dental treatment. I am convinced now that fluoridation could be one means of preventing tooth decay.

It is true that a number of towns have fluoridated water supplies. The report compiled by the Australian Dental Association reveals that in those towns a marked

decrease has occurred in dental decay. However, I do not believe that fluoridation should be left to individual local authorities; rather it should be Government policy to fluoridate water supplies. If the Government adopts the policy of fluoridating water supplies, it will contribute appreciably to the dental health of Queensland children. I am convinced that fluoridation is desirable.

Dr. Crawford: Before you leave that subject, make the point that it is necessary to have the fluoride from birth, and therefore the only way to do this is to place it in the water. Tablets alone are not good enough.

Mr. MELLOY: That is a very pertinent point, because the means of introducing it to the human system can create a problem with very young babies. Tablets cannot be given to a month-old baby. It is also desirable that mothers should have a fluoride intake to improve the dental health of their children.

It has been said that if people want fluoride they can get it in tablet form. Tablets are available, but they are a very unreliable source of fluoride because people forget to take them. A continual intake is necessary to obtain the desired effect on children's teeth. Sometimes parental supervision is not enough to ensure that tablets are taken, while, if children are left to themselves, frequently they will not bother to take them.

Dr. Crawford: All that is necessary is one part per million in water.

Mr. MELLOY: One part per million is what should be introduced at the source of water reticulation. That is a very minor introduction of fluoride, but it is sufficient to provide protection against dental decay.

The hon. member for Kurilpa spent considerable time in attacking the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, particularly on his methods of acquiring and resuming property. However, I point out that land being acquired now, although it may not be put to immediate use, could cost five or 10 times as much in 10 years' time, when it may be used. It is very wise to acquire land that may be wanted in 10 years' time at a relatively low figure now.

The hon. member for Kurilpa also said that the people of Brisbane were intensely critical of the Lord Mayor and his aldermen, and said they did not have the support of the people of Brisbane because of his administration of the city. I point out that at the last municipal election the Lord Mayor and his aldermen were returned with a greater majority than they obtained at the 1967 election. That indicates the measure of support that the Lord Mayor enjoys in this city. Despite the efforts of many people to detract from his reputation and downgrade him, I think he has shown more initiative, more enthusiasm and more enterprise than

any other Lord Mayor in this city's history. That is acknowledged by most members of the community, and it ill behoves the hon. member for Kurilpa to try to detract from the reputation that the Lord Mayor has established and the work he has done in developing the city to ensure that in future, even though he may not be Lord Mayor, provision is made for much more development.

Mr. BLAKE (Isis) (5.20 p.m.): I rise to support the remarks of Opposition members in this debate. I am particularly concerned at the outlook for rural communities and the financial position of local government. I was interested to hear the hon. member for Mackay point out that the percentage of subsidy paid by the State Government to local authorities is continually falling, and, to illustrate this, I quote the following figures which show the State Government subsidy as a percentage of the total expenditure of local authorities—

Year	Percentage
1956-57	6.30
1966-67	5.93
1967-68	5.70

I am very concerned at that downward trend because local authorities are affected stringently by lack of finance. A resolution was passed at the recent local government conference that individual local authorities approach their members of Parliament to see if more financial assistance can be obtained from the Government. I can well understand their concern, because their situation is well-nigh hopeless.

Some local authorities are in trouble with their immediate finance because, owing to the drought, they are not able to gather rates, and many are operating, shall I say, with a reduced income from that source. Others are affected because of their humane action in allowing rate rebates or concessions to pensioners. This is one of the reasons why the Commonwealth financial position continues to improve and why the State debt does not increase at the same rate as the local authorities' debt, because, in giving pensioners a rate rebate, the local authorities are carrying some, or perhaps all, of the financial burden which should be carried by the Commonwealth in granting pensions in keeping with rising costs.

Mr. Hanlon: It is very difficult for them to extend this concession to new pensioners under the present means test.

Mr. BLAKE: It is exceedingly difficult, and this must be measured, not against the willingness, but against the ability, of local residents to pay their rates.

It is in the light of this deteriorating financial situation that I should like to know what deal the local authorities are getting or will get out of the new financial arrangements between the State and the Commonwealth. The Treasurer informs us that the

Commonwealth was impressed by the alarming increase in the States' public debts compared with the fall in the Commonwealth's debt. The Commonwealth should be impressed. It has agreed to slow down the rate of increase in the States' debts by taking over an agreed amount of them and by providing finance from capital grants rather than from loans for a number of State works programmes.

It was agreed, the Treasurer said, that the Commonwealth would take over progressively debt service charges of \$200,000,000 of the combined States' debt each year for five years, or, in all, a total of \$1,000 million of the combined States' debts for a period of five years to June, 1975. We are informed that the benefit accruing to Queensland will be \$1,500,000 for 1970-71, and \$22,800,000 in the five-year period. Consequently, the capital grant will commence in the current year, with \$200,000,000 of the States' new capital funds being received as grants, not loans.

This arrangement should have been arrived at long ago. If it had been, the State and its local authorities might not have found themselves in such a hopeless position. The State and its local authorities have been allowed to carry the burden till the Commonwealth feared that the State's back would be broken beyond remedy. The present action has come not, I hope, too late, but far too belatedly.

We are told that over a five-year period the benefit from capital grants will be worth an estimated \$18,700,000 to the State of Queensland. All told, over the next five years this will be of considerable benefit to Queensland, but, if there has been any indication by the Treasurer or the Government of just how local authorities will benefit, I must admit that I have not understood it or heard it in detail. Local authorities throughout Queensland, knowing that there will be some financial relief from the Commonwealth, want to know just what increased financial benefits they will get from this allocation to help them out with their present crippling burdens.

Mr. Hanlon: It would have been an appropriate time for the States to seek an addition to that amount to cover local authorities.

Mr. BLAKE: It definitely would have been. It is a pity the opportunity was not taken to do that.

I am very concerned, as are local authorities, at the state of rural communities. By "rural communities", I mean all non-metropolitan communities, and even provincial cities that are servicing, and existing on, rural enterprise. This concern is heightened by figures released by the Minister for Primary Industries which reveal that rural incomes fell by \$218,000,000 in 1969-70 compared with the previous year, a decrease of approximately 27 per cent. That in itself must be very

frightening when it is realised that not only will that amount of money not be in circulation, but that repayment schedules on overdrafts, which producers were hoping to capitalise to at least the mentioned amount, are hanging over the heads of primary producers and, indeed, over the heads of those who service primary industries.

Recently I read with interest that Thiess Bros. were going out of the White trucks business. I am afraid I cannot be more specific, as I do not know the registered name of the company. The directors stated in their report that they were getting out of the business of providing machinery for primary industry because that industry was in such a depressed state and they could not honestly see any great improvement in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Casey: They are getting such a good deal from the Government in their coal-mining activities that they are putting all their capital into that.

Mr. BLAKE: That may be so. That may be a more profitable enterprise. However, the rural producers and the workers who are dependent upon rural industry for their livelihood have no similar alternative.

In looking for hopes of improvement in the rural sector, naturally I went through the Financial Statement to see whether or not the amount being allocated for rural resurrection had been increased greatly. The first matter that I came upon may involve only a minor amount of money but its effect could be quite significant. I noticed that the amount allocated for the hiring of cloud-seeding aircraft for 1969-70 was \$25,000 and that \$21,611 had been spent to try to take advantage of cloud that had been present in drought areas on certain occasions. I have no fault to find with that. However, there is no allocation for the current year.

Mr. Chalk: One does not allocate money for that purpose in the Budget.

Mr. BLAKE: In that case, I hope it is only a temporary omission and that the money will be forthcoming.

I have asked the Premier for how long C.S.I.R.O. aircraft have been in Queensland during the last 12 months of drought, whether there are any here at present, and whether he will make urgent representations for them to be brought here. In fairness to him, I should state that he has not had an opportunity to answer my questions, but I mention the matter because, whatever the scientific results of cloud-seeding, people in rural areas believe, and have been led to believe, that the seeding of clouds can be very successful under certain conditions and circumstances. Many people without scientific knowledge have claimed to me—they may be wrong—that on many occasions there have been cloud formations on which seeding could have successfully precipitated at least some relief rain.

Mr. O'Donnell: It could have been attempted.

Mr. BLAKE: Yes. I do not claim to be an expert in this field, but when one thinks of the huge cost of the drought, and, for that matter, of drought relief, it behoves the Government to see that such attempts are made, even for the psychological benefit that will flow to rural producers from the knowledge that somebody is trying to capitalise on existing cloud formations.

Mr. O'Donnell: They raise another difficulty, too: that although the cloud may be there, the temperature is not right.

Mr. BLAKE: I do not doubt that at times the temperature is not right; but the point is that the C.S.I.R.O. has indicated it has had reasonable success, and it cannot take advantage of the conditions when they are right if no aircraft is available.

The question of farm water supplies assistance is occupying the minds of many primary producers. I accept that there are vast areas of the State in which little can be done by way of conserving water supplies to mitigate the effects of drought. However, reasonable amounts of finance would make a terrific difference in many areas. Realising the difficulties under which the finances of the State are at present operating, I believe that the importance of this matter is such that more money should be made available under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Act. During the present drought it has been realised that opportunities can be taken and particular sites utilised—particularly while those sites are dry—to build up storages that in the future will relieve the anxiety and possible bankruptcy that face these people at present. I urge the Government to consider the allocation of more money to this very deserving programme.

I have been asked by very concerned parents to speak in support of others who have complained to the Treasurer about the lack of funds for pre-school education and affiliated kindergartens. I agree with previous speakers who have said that for at least one year of pre-school training, kindergarten services should be absolutely free. I think kindergartens are an essential part of our education system, and this should be the ideal.

The subsidy to affiliated kindergartens was lifted from \$1,250 to \$1,500 from 1 January, 1970, and there will be a further increase from 1 January, 1971, from \$1,500 to \$1,700 per single unit. It is reasonable to assume that, with the cost of living going up, as evidenced in today's Press, wages will also rise. No-one would suggest that kindergarten teachers should be exempted from compensation for this regrettable but undeniable presence of inflation, and the \$200 extra that will be allocated to affiliated kindergartens from 1971 onwards

will have very little benefit because it could conceivably be swallowed up in the increased salary of a kindergarten teacher.

No-one, by any stretch of imagination, could say that kindergarten teachers are favoured in salaries by comparison with their counterparts in the Education Department. It is an unfortunate fact that when they have qualified through training their salary is approximately \$1,000 a year below that of other teachers in the Education Department. And the terms and conditions of their training are such that the cost must be borne to a much greater degree by them than by primary or other school teachers. Added to this is the fact that in many cases their activities are not limited to what they have trained for as specialists and they have to assist, to a great extent, in raising finance to ensure that their kindergartens can operate effectively.

Mr. Casey interjected.

Mr. BLAKE: They certainly need better accommodation, and this is a burden that is being carried increasingly by the community. I know from experience that members of the community must be very dedicated in order to maintain kindergartens at a satisfactory standard. Although the Budget does not make adequate provision for kindergartens, I hope that the Government will look with kinder eyes on them in the future.

In the planning of many enterprises the matter of co-ordination is vital; however, it would appear that between certain Government departments co-ordination could be improved. In the Hervey Bay area several schemes are at the planning stage. I almost said "developmental", but there has not been much development. The residents of that area have asked me to assist in bringing about some co-ordination between Government departments that are involved in those schemes. Those people feel that at present co-ordination is lacking.

One project that is envisaged is the development of Fraser Island as a tourist resort. All of us are aware of the sad fatalities that occurred recently owing to the fact that there are no dedicated roads on the island. The least that other hon. members and I can do is to learn from the sorry events that have occurred and ensure that they do not occur again. In view of the increasing popularity of the island, it is necessary that roads be provided and that the limited finance available for the development of roads be used in the best possible way. It is important that roads are constructed in the most suitable locations.

The Maryborough and District Promotion Bureau is taking an active interest in the development of Fraser Island. It has attempted to get various Government departments together in a conference to draw up a realistic plan and, after considering the problems that will arise, to look for their solution. The Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs has suggested that the best

site for a jetty on Fraser Island is Moon Point. The Director-General of Tourist Services has indicated that he is aware of the potential of the island and the need to develop its tourist facilities, and he has expressed his willingness to attend a conference if it can be arranged. The Maryborough and District Promotion Bureau has written several letters to the Minister for Labour and Tourism about holding such a conference, and the Minister has replied that he realises the wisdom of it and has pointed out that as the matter concerns some of his colleagues it still has to be arranged.

I have here certain correspondence that has passed between the bureau and the Minister.

The first letter reads—

"Dear Mr. Jurss,

"I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 29th September, 1970, in relation to your previous letter to me of the 11th August, 1970, regarding the future development of Fraser Island.

"Consideration has been given to the contents of your letter of the 11th August but, as this is a matter which involves a number of my colleagues, it is necessary that I seek their views before furnishing advice to you."

That is quite a reasonable approach, but, as some time has passed since then, people in the area, particularly those who have invested large sums of money in tourist development on the island, are hoping that such a conference can be arranged in the very near future so that efforts can be co-ordinated and a realistic plan to capitalise on the potential of this paradise can be drawn up. The Maryborough and District Promotion Bureau said—

"It is felt that in the light of existing circumstances, some steps should be taken to define the areas of development which will take place on Fraser Island. To this end, my committee has suggested that a conference should be called of leaseholders of the Island (there is an organisation in existence), tourist operators to and on the Island, this Bureau, Burrum Shire Council and yourself, and/or senior members of your staff."

I do not need to emphasise that a lot of good could flow from such a conference. If the parties and organisations who should be interested do not get together on this matter soon, it follows that urgently needed development will not take place at the desired rate.

While on the subject of allocation of money, I should like to make a plea for financial support for the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade. To a great extent the situation has altered since ambulance brigades were formed. It could be said that, originally, they served, very effectively and faithfully, the communities in which they were established. In turn,

they were supported, in most cases, very effectively by the communities. However, the whole function of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade has changed with today's motorised transport. Hon. members probably know, if they represent centres outside Brisbane, that a great deal of the work of the brigades is performed in the interests of the travelling public.

It could be argued that, at some time, most of us form part of the travelling public and that therefore we get some reciprocal service for our support in local areas. But that is not strictly true in a large number of cases. I know of the financial difficulties of the Childers centre, which I use as an illustration. It is in a dire financial position, although it is supported by the community at large, by the cane-growers, and by service organisations. I do not know where its financial situation will lead it if something is not done to rectify its situation. Of the patients treated at the centre from January, 1969, to September, 1970, 85 were domiciled outside the State of Queensland.

It is not cheap for any organisation to provide a service for 85 people, in many cases major accident victims. Of them, 23 required treatment as a direct result of road accidents and were treated on location. Fees were recovered from five of them. The other 62 required treatment as a result of road accidents and other causes and were treated at the centre. Fees were recovered from 21 of them. The other fees were written off as bad debts because the legal process of recovering them was too involved. Hon. members, acting for their constituents, find quite often that the price of justice is too high and that it costs too much to recover small amounts. This is a case in point.

I feel perfectly justified in suggesting, in view of the wonderful service these brigades give, that the State Government investigate the possibility of increasing—indeed the very need to increase—the financial assistance given to all ambulance brigades throughout Queensland. If such assistance is not given, they will have to cease operating, at least under the present effective system which is giving such a wonderful service to everyone in the community.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Tablelands) (5.52 p.m.): Queensland's economy should always be uppermost in our minds, and I think it is. The present Government, when dealing with State finance, refers to drought, increased wages, the unfair financial arrangement with the Commonwealth, and, quite often, industrial unrest which can very quickly affect adversely the economy of the State or of any business concern. I intend to spend a little time on this matter because it is important and because Government members continually charge the A.L.P. with the responsibility for industrial unrest.

Mr. P. Wood: It is the other way round.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: That is quite so, and I shall prove it in no uncertain manner.

On 16 September, the hon. member for Clayfield went to a great deal of trouble in an effort to expose the A.L.P. as a party which encourages industrial unrest. He said—

“Let us examine industrial unrest for a moment. Time and time again the A.L.P. encourages industrial unrest in one way or the other. It encourages people and union after union to break the law, and it goes along with it.”

He then dealt with civic hardship and other matters.

“Industrial unrest” is a very unpopular term, and Government members, particularly those of the Liberal Party, continually link it with the A.L.P. When I see the ministerial benches fully occupied in the mornings, I well remember how four or five of their occupants served a very good apprenticeship by delivering speech after speech on this subject. We on this side of the Chamber have been accused of Communist domination, foreign domination, disloyalty, treason, and the like. Now industrial unrest seems to be one of the things for which we are said to be responsible. We know of many people who have been embarrassed and inconvenienced, and who at times have had their means of livelihood threatened, by allegations of this type from the Government benches.

I intend to give the Committee a very glaring example of the provoking of industrial unrest by a Minister. I refer to the introduction of railway by-laws 994 and 995. The Treasurer is in no position to laugh. He may have been responsible for giving the danger signal to the Minister for Transport by saying, “Get on to another line or there will be a head-on collision.” I believe that could well have happened. I intend to place on record details of events leading up to the gazettal of those by-laws, and, later, the deletion of these clauses when I asked for their reconsideration. The Minister for Transport is the Minister whom I intend to charge with provoking industrial unrest that could have brought about a complete stoppage of the railway system in Queensland.

A deputation from the Combined Railway Unions—not one union only—met the Minister on 12 August, 1970. He then indicated that railway sick leave provisions would be brought into line with Public Service Regulation 63. He later sent a letter dated 14 August, 1970, to Mr. Dunne, Secretary of the Combined Railway Unions. I intend to read that letter, sent over the Minister's signature, so that there can be no argument about what was meant and what was not meant. It reads—

“Dear Mr. Dunne,

“I refer to discussions with representatives of the Combined Railway Unions

relative to the question of sick leave provisions of the State Public Service being extended to employees of the Railway Department.

"It is approved that from 1st October, 1970, the sick leave entitlement of all Railway Personnel be two (2) working weeks on full pay and one (1) working week without pay for each year of service. Any half pay sick leave accumulated prior to 1st October, 1970, will be converted to full pay sick leave on the basis of one day's sick leave on full pay for each two days sick leave on half pay, and upon such conversion no sick leave on half pay shall be due or payable to an employee.

"As intimated at the deputation on 11th August it is proposed to amend the regulations in respect of the lodgment of Doctor's certificates.

"It will be a requirement that a certificate be supplied when an employee is off duty through illness and the absence (i) exceeds three (3) days or (ii) exceeds three (3) days in the aggregate in any one calendar year; in the case of (i) on the third day of his illness, and in the case of (ii) on the fourth day of his illness and for subsequent days.

"Yours faithfully,

"W. E. Knox,

Minister for Transport."

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

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: In reply to the Minister's letter, on 26 August, 1970, the Secretary of the Combined Railway Unions, Mr. Dunne, wrote to the Minister as follows—

"Dear Mr. Knox,

"I refer to your letter of the 14th August, 1970, in which you indicate the proposed amendment to Sick Leave provisions for Queensland Railway employees, operative from 1st October 1970.

"The Executive of the State Committee, Combined Railway Unions, has met and considered the contents of your letter.

"As a result, I am instructed to request that you meet a Deputation from the Combined Railway Unions to enable submissions to be put to you in relation to the proposed amendment to By-Law 690 covering sick leave entitlements.

"It will be submitted that the proposed conditions relating to sick leave for railwaymen are not comparable with the conditions applied in the State Public Service and in many instances, are not practicable.

"Your agreement to an early meeting would be appreciated.

"Yours faithfully,

"E. E. Dunne,

"State Secretary, C.R.U."

I think you will agree, Mr. Ramsden, that the C.R.U. showed a very tolerant and logical approach to the question. They were trying to bring the Minister to the conference table and to prevent, as I said earlier, industrial unrest that could have crippled the railway service throughout Queensland. It is often said that union leaders dominate the workers. Here the very union leaders whom hon. members opposite despise and criticise are telling the Minister for Transport that they want at all costs to get him to the conference table to consider matters before it is too late.

On 31 August, 1970, the Minister wrote in reply—

"I acknowledge your letters of 26 August and wish to advise I am prepared to meet representatives of the State Committee to discuss matters in relation to the payment of service allowance and the new sick leave entitlement for railway employees.

"Provided the arrangement is suitable, I shall meet this deputation at 12 noon on Wednesday, 16 September, 1970, at Parliament House."

That looked very good to everybody, but unfortunately the matter did not end successfully. On 31 August the letter was acknowledged and arrangements were made by the C.R.U. to meet the Minister on 16 September. However, the Minister's secretary rang on 14 September seeking a deferment to 25 September on the ground that the Minister had to be on hand in Parliament for questions with notice.

Mr. Ramsden, you heard me say that the Minister mentioned the time of 12 noon. You know full well that question time concludes at 12 noon. In looking for a way out, the Minister said that he had to be on hand to answer questions without notice and therefore could not meet the deputation. I ask you: do you think that was the best excuse he could find? Do you think it was real? Do you think it was sincere? I do not. When we realised that question time was over at 12 noon, I and everyone in the Combined Railway Unions necessarily concluded that something was happening. It was. The Minister wanted the deputation put off until it was too late for any action to be taken. It was for this reason that it was put off from 16 September to 25 September.

I might mention here that the amendment was gazetted on 12 September and was to come into operation on 1 October. Knowing this, I came into the picture at the request of the Combined Railway Unions and asked the Minister for a deferment of one month so that the proposed by-law could be discussed in Parliament. The Minister's answer was his usual one word—"No". Yet, at the very moment he said "No", he knew full well that a further amendment had been compiled, to be issued in the weekly notice on 1 October, cancelling the clauses that were causing all the trouble.

I say sincerely and without fear of contradiction that this was a flagrant example of a Minister provoking industrial unrest of State-wide proportions. I have worked in the railways and I know how the men feel about this. The hon. member for Toowoomba West has told the Committee in detail what it means, but I intend to repeat it. Had the proposed by-law been allowed to go into the regulations it would have meant that after being sick for three days, whether the three days were consecutive or not—so long as it was an aggregate of three days—then from that time on every time a man was off sick he would have been required to submit a doctor's certificate. Many men suffer from recurring illnesses that force them to have a day off at a time, and they would have had to consult a doctor on every occasion. I am speaking not of men who are stationed at Sandgate, Ipswich, or some other place where plenty of medical aid is available, but of men stationed at outback places who can be anything up to 100 miles from a doctor. It would be absolutely impossible for them to get a medical certificate. The only implication open to us is that the proposed by-law was to be introduced to tighten up a lack of administration in some other area. If an objective has to be achieved by risking the possibility, and even the probability, of a State-wide industrial upheaval, it is very poor administration indeed.

On 1 October the by-law was tabled by the Minister, who in effect said, "By-laws 996 and 997 have now come into the picture, cancelling by-laws 994 and 995." So, by-laws are in force for less than a month and then cancelled.

I advise the hon. member for Clayfield to look in the mirror and at his own Ministers if he wants to see who is provoking industrial unrest. Let him look at the reason given to the Combined Railway Unions for the failure to meet them—that the Minister had to answer questions, although the deputa- tion was not set down until 12 noon. Today I introduced deputations to two Ministers, one at 12 noon and the other at 12.30 p.m., and no problem was posed by question time. The Minister's excuse was insincere and untruthful in the extreme. As I say, the hon. member for Clayfield should take a close look at his own party and his Ministers if he wants to find who is provoking industrial unrest.

I am not finished with the Minister for Transport. Time and time again he replies to hon. members' questions in an arrogant and offhand manner. He does not act in a statesmanlike way. It is time he said to himself, "I should do my homework so that I will know what I am talking about." His stock answers are either "No" or "I will give the matter consideration." In reply to one hon. member he said, "If the hon. member has any ideas concerning griddle cars he should send them to the Commissioner."

Hon. members know that this sort of thing happens in the Railway Department. A board known as the Suggestions and Inven- tions Board has been set up to receive ideas submitted by railway workers. Quite often the implementation of those ideas saves the Government a lot of money.

Mr. R. Jones: What about the stock answer, "The amount of work involved, etc.?"

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: As the hon. mem- ber has said, another stock answer is, "The amount of work involved does not warrant an investigation being made." Answers of that type would not come from an efficient Minister. The Minister's approach to the job is wrong. It is all right for him to be photographed beside a locomotive that has travelled 1,500,000 miles; but does that get him anywhere? Of course not. As a matter of fact, he would not have the right to ride in the engine.

Mr. R. Jones: He just wants to hit the headlines.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! The hon. member for Cairns will hit the headlines in a moment.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: It is all very well to have statistics dealing with the long dis- tances being run by trains and the heaviest trains, but the success of the railway system depends upon the improvement of working conditions, and as I know a good deal about working conditions of railwaymen I intend to deal with them.

Frequently railwaymen employed at out- stations are unable to obtain leave, either because of seasonal work or the inability to obtain relief. The reply to their request for leave is a plain and simple "No." Those men look forward to travelling to the metropolitan area, one of the provincial cities or the seaside, and at the last moment they are forced to make other arrangements. With good administration that would not occur. A contented railwayman in a remote area is a great asset to the Railway Depart- ment. To relieve him in an emergency often involves the expenditure of a large sum of money on allowances and the granting of special leave.

The housing provided for railway workers has come under fire from all sections of the work-force—the fettlers, the gangers, the station-masters, and other employees who live in railway houses. All of them have complained about their accommodation. When they ask for alterations and repairs to their houses they are charged increased rentals. Before long they are on the move and relief men have to be sent out on special allowances because they are relieving. Thus, departmental costs are increased. The trouble could have been overcome simply by giving sympathetic consideration to these people in the first place.

The guarantee charge for electricity is driving many good railwaymen from their stations. Recently, a power line was constructed close to a small siding named Koah, situated between Kuranda and Mareeba. The ganger at Koah is an Aboriginal who has been there for six or seven years. He has an Aboriginal fettler in his gang who occupies a railway house. When electricity was being connected the ganger and the fettler asked if they would only have to pay for the power they used. They were told that that was so, but they did not sign any documents. However, they finally received notice that their guarantee had not been met. The ganger, who has four or five children was debited \$21 a pay for four pays, and the fettler, who has six children, had \$15 taken from his pay for six pays. Any man, when asked what he would do in such circumstances, would simply say, "The guarantee I received has not been carried out that I would only pay for the electricity I used. They can have their job." The result is that we now have more dissatisfied men in the service.

I do not place Aborigines in a position different from anyone else. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs should know that these families will be set back for many years. After they had climbed to the top of the ladder, it was pulled away from under them and down they came. These things should be examined by a Minister who is indeed a Minister, not one who is arrogant and who, without any consideration, simply pushes away people who wish to improve conditions for others.

I leave those matters with the Minister for Transport in the hope that in the near future he will look closely at his attitude towards unions, towards members on this side of the Chamber who ask questions about railway matters, and towards the administration of his department.

Mr. Rae: Are those two men you talked about from Mareeba, or near Mareeba?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I told the Committee that they live between Mareeba and Kuranda.

Mr. Rae: I saw those men and I think you will find that we ironed the matter out very satisfactorily.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: The Minister for Local Government says that the matter has been ironed out. When I wrote a letter I found that the provision was in the Act and that nothing could be done about it: I was there when the pays were handed out and they showed me their pay packets.

Mr. Rae: How long ago was that?

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Three months ago.

Mr. Rae: I think you will find that something has happened since then.

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: I had the deductions extended over six pays instead of four.

Mr. Rae: I was very concerned, because I thought it was unjust. I tried to unravel it, and I hope that I did a better job than the hon. member did.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order!

Mr. WALLIS-SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Ramsden.

I am specially interested in housing in the far distant areas of the State. As hon. members know, the Budget allocates money to each department, and we know that departments budget for certain expenditure. From those amounts, allocations are made to various areas where buildings have to be erected and where alterations and improvements have to be carried out. I refer particularly to houses in the far distant areas where it is difficult to get local tradesmen to undertake this work.

Recently, a new wing was added to the large school at Normanton. It is on high blocks. Only one carpenter and one labourer worked on this project and, after several months had elapsed, they had not achieved very much, although they were both good workers. Hon. members can imagine what is necessary in the building of a large wing on blocks about 20 feet high, and how many men it would be necessary to have working on such a project safely and efficiently. There should be at least half a dozen, whereas only two were working on this school. This went on and on, and it became obvious that the improvements were not being made quickly enough. A good deal of money was spent on allowances which were paid to these men, who had travelled 500 miles from Cairns. On some week-ends they returned to Cairns, and a good deal of time would be taken to do that.

Time went on until the people began saying that they would be lucky if their children were in the new wing by 1972, and this would have been the case had I not asked a question in the House. Subsequently, I learnt from the people in Normanton that, within three days of my asking the question, four additional workmen arrived.

Government members could claim that I am a "knocker" and that I should name the remedy. The Government has the remedy in its hands; it should expand the work-force in the Department of Works. The Government could employ many men and build up a very good work-force. The Government is being asked more and more to erect new buildings, remodel old buildings, make additions to buildings, and to transfer buildings.

I do not want the amount of money spent in these areas to be used as the measuring stick. It could be claimed that \$60,000 has been spent on education in Normanton, but the actual price of that extension should

have been \$30,000, because it is only one classroom. The Government pays double the normal price for work done in areas like that. I am not saying that, by building up its work-force, the Government would necessarily halve its costs. However, material has to be transported a long way to those areas and stored. Quite often, when the materials are required it is found that they have been mislaid or that someone has "borrowed" them or thought that they were of more use to him than to the Department of Works. It is then a matter of obtaining the same material from 500 miles away and waiting for it to be transported.

These are some of the problems that beset the building of Government houses and dwellings in the Outback. However, it does not stop there. If a house is built at a high cost, it follows that the rent will be high. Therefore, the Government should make itself conversant with the requirements of the area and ensure that the necessary materials and an ample work-force are in the area.

Another tactic often used by the Government is comparing the amount of money spent on certain projects with the amount spent by A.L.P. Governments. The amount of money spent is no longer a measuring stick of governmental activity. What counts is the result achieved, not the amount of money spent. Far too much importance is being placed on expenditure figures when what really matters is the number of houses or buildings constructed.

I mentioned that the rent charged is coupled with the cost of construction of the building. It is also coupled with the cost of additions to the building. A glaring example of this was brought to the notice of Parliament by a question asked concerning teachers' accommodation at Ravenshoe. This place was singled out by the Queensland Teachers' Union as an example, in the first place, of gross inefficiency and, in the second place, of very unfair treatment of teachers. The Minister stated at that time that these teachers' flats at Ravenshoe did not provide hot water throughout but only to the bathroom, and the department was not prepared to make improvements to the flats unless the rent was increased. Here is another instance of people who will no longer be contented in the service because, having put up for so long with antiquated accommodation, they suddenly find that if their living conditions are improved they will have to pay more in rental.

I say that the answer to the problem is to strengthen the Department of Works, to use local labour where possible, and to ensure continuity of building supplies on the site. In addition, departmental employees should live in the areas in which they have to work. Quite often workers live some distance from job sites. I know of one man who was stationed at Forsyth and who was able, without any assistance at all, to keep a

number of schools, hospitals, police stations and other Government buildings in a fair state of repair. He was able to do this because he was a handyman, and was centrally situated.

That is the type of help that people in outback areas want, for the simple reason that the time factor is of the greatest importance. They will wait for many months after writing a letter to the department asking for improvements only to find, when the answer is received, that workmen are not available in that area and that it will be some time before they are.

There is one matter that I intended to raise when the Estimates for the Department of Primary Industries were being debated. However, as there are so many other matters that I wish to deal with in that debate, I shall raise it now.

As recently as yesterday I visited the six tobacco farms that were allocated on 3 July, and I found that not one of those farms is growing tobacco. Those who were successful in the ballot have spent many thousands of dollars in obtaining equipment and in paying contractors to clear the land, rip it, collect the dead roots remaining in the soil and heap them into long rows. That has all been done, but not one tobacco plant is being grown.

I ask the Minister, through the Treasurer, what can be done to assist these people who are spending large sums of money but receiving no income for the first 12 months. In addition, of course, they have to pay rates to the Mareeba Shire Council, water charges to the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and high interest rates to the bankers on the loans that they needed to carry out the work. Up to the present there is no sign of a house, a barn or curing or equipment sheds on the farms. All these will have to be obtained after the first 12 months and after all the work to which I referred earlier has been done. In my opinion, the Government stands indicted for having delayed the ballot—I use the word "delayed" deliberately; the Minister for Primary Industries may try to talk his way out of it if he can—until such time as it was impossible to grow a crop. It could very well be that many of the farms will be uneconomic when the planting has actually been carried out, because of the large overdrafts that the farmers have to carry and the delay in receiving some return.

I know that the Minister will say that they can grow the crop elsewhere. The idea of having a ballot was not that the crop should be grown elsewhere. It was to attach a quota of seven tons of leaf to each farm—42 tons for the six farms—and to have a crop grown in the current year. Contractors owning clearing equipment could ask exorbitant contract rates for clearing because they knew the urgent need for the work to be done; workmen who were asked

to work on the farm also knew the story. I say to the Minister and to the Government: if you intend to expand an industry, expand it in a sane and logical fashion. Do not merely say, "Well, we will have a ballot. We will get rid of the six farms and that will be to our credit." It is to the Government's discredit that the present state of affairs exists.

It is becoming very difficult to obtain labour on the tobacco fields, and last night several tobacco farmers told me that they are paying as much as \$150 a week for labour. That figure is simply fantastic. But labour has to be obtained and, in the circumstances, a certain amount of bartering takes place. Those offering for work are able to obtain higher and higher wages, with the result that farmers who can afford what is sought obtain labour while those who cannot are left without assistance.

A grower cannot do without labour in the tobacco industry, because with a crop about half grown, as it is at present, he usually faces an onset of disease, insect infestation and other trials that beset him. Labour is needed to combat these things and it is needed at a precise time. Only two days ago a departmental officer issued a statement over the radio that 21 October was the dead-line for spraying of the looper grub in the tobacco fields. Those who cannot obtain labour by that time will suffer an infestation of these pests and diseases. If we are going to sustain all sections of this industry, I think it is high time that ballots were conducted by 1 April. I recently asked a question about how many more farms were available and was informed that there were quite a number. If the ballot was conducted by 1 April, it would allow two extra months for preparation of the land and sowing of the crop. The Minister will say that these men are growing the crop this year; but where are they growing it? They are growing it on land on which they have been share-farmers for a number of years. This is just what we do not want to happen. They could be over-taxed the old land by growing an additional six or seven tons on it. It could be an area where there is insufficient good soil, and, last but not least, there could be some complications as between the owner of the land and the owner of the quota as to the sharing of proceeds and other conditions.

The quota is recognised now as being worth many thousands of dollars a ton. One of the leading men in the Department of Irrigation said, "Today, these fellows are each winning a casket." This is far from the fact. If they are winning a casket they are certainly waiting a long time to get any benefit from it. They are waiting at least 18 months to receive any return whatever, and still have no house, no sheds, no barn and no equipment. They are starting from behind scratch. This position could have been avoided completely if the Federal Government had been asked to release the quota earlier and pass

it on to the Tobacco Board and the Irrigation Department, which conducts these ballots. As I say this would allow the farmers an extra two months to grow this crop that is so urgently needed for the economy of North Queensland.

Before very long there will be insufficient water. This could be another problem for the Irrigation Department to look into. Hon. members know only too well the number of times I have asked questions about the amount of water available for this area. They will also know that the last answer from the Minister was that this was being published every week in "The Cairns Post". It is good that it is published in "The Cairns Post", but that does not overcome the need to regulate it; it does not overcome the need to conserve it. In fact, it is only lip-service to say that there is so much water that there is no need to worry. If there is no need to worry, why has water been curtailed for other rural pursuits such as pasture improvement and other crops? No water quota has been placed on tobacco farms, and that is just as well, but crops other than tobacco can be grown in that area. It has been proved that rice can be grown. However, sufficient water is not available, and the farmers are afraid that they will be faced with water shortages.

The same remarks can be made of Koombooloomba, where insufficient water is available to guarantee the full output of the Kareeya Power House. This shows that research and investigation can sometimes be a little out.

In addition to the construction of the Tinaroo Falls Dam, the Labour Government provided a dam at Flaggy Creek to supply water for the generation of hydroelectricity. However, that scheme was scrapped by this Government. Instead of building the proposed Flaggy Creek dam it turned a valve at Tinaroo to divert water to the Barron River and, in turn, to the hydroelectric power-station at the Barron Gorge. The generation of electricity takes four times the amount of water used for irrigation, and that was not the intention under the plan drawn up originally by the Labour Government. This Government's short-sighted policy to use the Barron River as a channel for water to the hydroelectric station and to use four times the amount of water used for irrigation as a means of providing hydroelectricity shows that it believes that anything at all will do so long as it can get out of paying for work that should have been done in the first place.

In addition to that, the Government has displaced 300 to 400 Aborigines from the Mona Mona mission, which is now partly overgrown. It has been obtained again by the Aborigines, who are endeavouring to restore the area and to create work for their own people. They are renting the area, and this is altogether wrong. It was not intended that that land would lie idle, but it has done so simply because this Government did not

see fit to provide a supplementary water supply to generate electricity in North Queensland and, at the same time, to conserve water for irrigation projects.

I wish to refer now to the research areas throughout the State. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that they would be extended. I was also pleased to hear him say that Parada research station, in the Dimbulah-Mareeba Irrigation Area, will be retained for a number of years. I should like to see it retained for all time, for the simple reason that it has proved to be an outstanding success. On a recent visit to that station I saw seven-month-old beasts weighing as much as 700 lb. When I mentioned this to the Minister he said he thought it was a world record. So why is that research station to be scrapped, when we have officers with the know-how, we have the water, and we have the land? Why not expand it instead of closing it down? In the past it has proved itself, and I am sure it will continue to do so. Recently there was a move to the Southedge experimental station, and that could be necessary for the tobacco industry. However, Parada should be retained and enlarged for pasture research.

I pay tribute to the officers in charge of Parada and to other experiment station officers throughout Queensland. The Minister promised to list experiment stations in the "Queensland Agricultural Journal" to demonstrate that we have enough of them to provide answers for anyone requiring information about the potential of any area in Queensland.

In last year's Budget debate I pointed out what could be possible in the year 2000, which is not many years hence. At a recent speech night two guest speakers enlarged on the theme of the year 2000, when it is estimated that world population figures will be so great that at the present rate of production there will be no possible hope of feeding all the people poorly, let alone reasonably well. Research stations can show us how to get the maximum production from the land. They are essential to Australia, which is one of the few countries in the world with vacant areas available for the production of meat as a protein food.

Last year I referred to an expressed opinion that in a very short time we would have to turn to other sources of protein to take the place of meat because there would be insufficient land on which to graze enough cattle to supply the world's protein needs. It is pointed out that Cape York Peninsula could support 4,000,000 cattle north of the 14th parallel. That is one reason I have for trying to have expanding research stations situated in areas in which cattle and crops are to be raised. It is unusual to find country with a regular rainfall and a year-round growing season that can produce without a lull. Would it not be far better to have research stations located in that area rather than in a suburb of Brisbane, or

in some other far-away area where the conditions are so different from those in the Peninsula?

I am certain that we can recruit in our schools the necessary staff for research stations once it is known that such opportunities are available. It was heartening to see in the Minister's annual report that every departmental head is in possession of a degree. That proves that the old idea about the ability of good, knowledgeable men has given way to the realisation that it is necessary to have men with academic qualifications who can apply their knowledge to the betterment of Queensland's rural industries.

These research stations will provide another outlet for young people in country areas. Better-quality articles are being demanded in every sphere and by all people throughout the world. The beef industry has to provide the high-quality product that is demanded by America and that will also be demanded by other countries. I am certain that markets are available and I am equally certain that we have the ability to produce what is necessary. Could we not earmark sufficient land for research stations and thus help to meet the demand?

I am sounding this note of warning in respect of the Gulf and Cape York Peninsula areas mainly because of the intrusion of various companies into Crown land. Only a fortnight or so ago, I was horrified to learn from an answer given to a question in this Chamber that only 420 square miles of Crown land is left in Queensland above the 16th parallel. If that is all the Crown land that we can muster at this time above the 16th parallel on Cape York Peninsula, somebody has got in under the counter and has made his lot good by acquiring much of the very good land similar to that which I have been speaking about, with regular rainfall, a 12-month growing season and everything else that is required to give a 100 per cent. result in pastures, crops, or beef production. Before it is too late, let us stop further intrusion into our land.

Recently, 1,400 square miles went on the east coast of Cape York Peninsula so that an aluminium company could investigate the possibility of entering the cattle industry. That is all very well, but I think that many of our own people, given the opportunity and the land, would not require such a large area. They would simply need a sympathetic Government to ensure that they got their just deserts. A mining company or a syndicate of any kind enters another field of operation for two reasons: firstly, to avoid taxation, and secondly, to become a monopoly in another field, to the detriment of the people of this State.

I conclude by saying that some provision should be made for a research station on Cape York Peninsula, particularly in the area

above the 14th parallel, so that no mistakes will be made by people who are able to go onto the land in that part of the State.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (8.8 p.m.): Since I left school 36 years ago, I have spent all my life in this building, the past 20 years as a member of Parliament and all my working life prior to that associated in one way or another with Parliament. During that time I have had the privilege of hearing many State Treasurers and financial spokesmen, including Sir Arthur Fadden, who was quite a colourful character; the late James Larcombe, with his three-inch white starched collar, a colourful little character who often quoted Bobby Burns and other poets to illustrate his financial arguments, which generally were very sound; Ted Walsh and Vince Gair, with their idiosyncrasies; and Tom Hiley, who perhaps had one weakness, namely, an unjustified belief in his own infallibility. He was a ruthless man who seldom gave credit to Opposition speakers for any worth-while financial ideas.

I can recall one very important point which changed local authority borrowing and expenditure in this State. In 1957, I noticed that most of the money held in reserve by the State Government Insurance Office was invested, to the extent of almost 90 per cent., in Commonwealth Government securities at a time when we were crying out for money for internal expenditure in this State to build up the level of State works for employment purposes. These suggestions, which were made by other Opposition members and me, were not acknowledged by Mr. Hiley. However, as was often the case, within a short space of time enabling legislation was introduced into this Parliament to bring about exactly what we suggested.

Perhaps the Treasurer who has impressed me most is the present one. He is a "crash" Treasurer, and for pure political temerity he would leave much more capable men for dead. He believes in meeting all political opposition head-on, and in many ways he seems to get away with it. I never thought the time would arrive when a State Treasurer would bring down a Budget while saying in effect, "We will do this if the Commonwealth Government allows us to tax the people to a greater extent than they are being taxed now," and then be very indignant when opposition to receipt duty or stamp duty, call it what you will, in the Commonwealth Parliament prevented the introduction of such taxation on an Australia-wide basis. That taxation was to be another imposition on the people of Australia, who are already crying out under a very heavy burden of State, Federal and local authority taxation.

We also find that the Treasurer, who represents the Government in negotiations with mining companies in Queensland, has become a shareholder in those very same mining companies. In fact, I believe that

he has convinced many of the people of Queensland that what he has done is completely correct. That shareholding, and the shareholdings of other Ministers, should, I think, cast some doubt on their positions when they are negotiating matters of such great importance to the people of this State.

We have also listened on a number of occasions to speakers on the Government benches who, with many others, including Labour Treasurers and Premiers of past years, have spoken very jealously of State rights and the necessity to retain the sovereign powers of the States. They have been quite indignant—and rightly so—when the Commonwealth has not given the State sufficient finance to enable it to maintain its level of social service expenditure. This is not a new complaint from the States. Ever since the introduction of uniform taxation, whether the Treasurer was Ted Walsh, Vince Gair, or any other Labour man, the story was always the same.

Spokesmen for the more conservative elements of the community are continually referring to this matter. If I may say so, the hon. member for Toowong is one of the most eloquent and easy-to-listen-to speakers in this Chamber, and perhaps one of the most convincing on the necessity to retain the present Federal system against all opposition. I have been wondering whether the hon. member for Toowong, the Treasurer, or any other Government members have ever considered that the present chaotic conditions that exist in State budgeting are directly attributable to a very dogmatic Constitution framed in 1900 or prior to that—an adamant, indestructible document which has been the greatest handicap to national progress in Australia.

Perhaps it is the quite unnecessary fear that socialism will be introduced into this country that has motivated conservatives such as the hon. member for Toowong, the Premier and other Government members, in their endeavours to perpetuate this document. Perhaps it is their knowledge of the impossibility of any central Government, under the present Federal system, nationalising any important Australian industry without a challenge in the High Court or the Privy Council (and such challenges have in the past usually been upheld) that provides their reason for perpetuating an ancient system which is handicapping progress and development in this country.

I wonder how long the people of Australia will continue to groan under the present form of Government, with six separate State Governments and a Federal Government; with a geographical line drawn on a map separating me in Queensland from my brother in New South Wales; with a Constitution which states that because I graduated from a Queensland university and I am a barrister in Queensland, I cannot practice law in New South Wales; that because I am 18 I can drink in hotels at Tweed Heads in New

South Wales, and, two yards away, at Coolangatta, I am put into gaol for doing the same thing.

I remind the Committee that at Gove, which is in Federal territory, it is possible for a Federal Government to stipulate that any overseas mining company must have an element of Australian ownership before the bauxite deposits in that area can be developed, whereas in Queensland a State Government is allowing, and even encouraging, the same companies to come to this State on a competitive basis of bidding and engage in a similar industry without any Australian ownership. These are some of the things that have been handicapping Australian development in recent years.

Mr. Murray: Are you seriously saying that we should have one great uniform world for Australia?

Mr. LLOYD: I say that we are one nation, with a common language, a common environment, and common knowledge; that no line drawn on a map can divide me from my brother in another State; that I should not be educated under one system in Queensland when my brother is educated under another system in New South Wales; and that I, as a representative of the Government of Queensland, should not have opinions about national development that violate completely any laws that the Commonwealth may introduce, simply because the Government of Queensland has certain powers under a system of Federation. The division of powers as such under the Commonwealth Constitution gives me, in Queensland, the power to allow the ownership of all the resources of Queensland to be transferred into foreign hands, whilst the Government of the Commonwealth can say, on the other hand, "We will not allow that to be done in Commonwealth territory." That is what is happening in Australia at present.

Mr. Murray: Are you saying that Queensland sovereignty must be the same as New South Wales sovereignty?

Mr. LLOYD: I am saying that the sovereignty of this country belongs to the people of Australia, not to the people of Queensland or to the Government of Queensland. If the hon. member is asking me whether I am a unificationist, I say to him, "Yes, I most certainly am a unificationist." I do not hide that. I believe in decentralised power flowing from a centralised Government; decentralised power disbanding, if necessary, the State Governments. Certainly I am in favour of that. The number of Government institutions created from the trinity of government in Australia has been the country's greatest handicap. We are groaning under an overbearing burden of taxation at three levels. We are over-governed.

Mr. Porter: That is not because of the Federal system, surely.

Mr. LLOYD: It is because of the written dogmatic Constitution that was introduced as a compromise between the States in 1900 because the founders of Federation could not get any agreement among the States. They introduced a dogmatic Constitution that is indestructible. Time after time the Federal Government has gone to the people. It went to the people in 1942, as hon. members will recall, and recent events have proved how indestructible it is financially. In Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte is protesting about payroll tax. I think that the present Treasurer will admit that, over many years, payroll tax has been the weapon used by State Governments against the Commonwealth Government to force it to make more generous tax reimbursements, and that the States, under a general agreement, will not challenge the validity of payroll tax payments by State Governments if the Commonwealth Government will do something for them.

The very fact that these things are occurring proves very definitely that we cannot continue under a system that is so indefinite. The States have not the opportunity to carry out their sovereign powers to the utmost or to obtain sufficient money to supply the social services the people expect.

Mr. Murray: Do you want to see Gorton continue to destroy it?

Mr. LLOYD: I think Gorton would destroy anything he touches. In recent months he has tried to completely destroy the economy of Australia, firstly by his introduction of increased interest rates. He has increased costs in an attempt to destroy inflation. The main effect of the increase in interest rates in recent months has been increased cost of production. High-priced money will always do this. With increased cost of production, wages and prices have risen in sympathy, and this trend will continue under this artificial system of destroying inflation.

I do not intend, and nor does any member of the Labour Party, to allow Mr. Gorton to continue to destroy the national economy. He is a centralist in some ways but only in so far as the financial powers of the Commonwealth are concerned. But in this respect he is no more a centralist than Sir Robert Menzies.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: I think the hon. member for Clayfield and the hon. member for Toowong and some of their friends on the back benches probably would show a great deal more intelligence and possibly one could trust them because they are sincere in their conservative beliefs. We know what they are; they are Tories, and they can be trusted because we know exactly what they are and what they are going to do. If there is any pool of brain-power on the Government benches at the present time, it is mostly on the back-benches on my left-hand

side. I do not agree with all their views, but I do think that many of these men who talk so glibly about the protection of federation and the sovereign powers of the State should realise and become aware of the very dangers they are endeavouring to perpetuate.

This country should have developed much more rapidly in the post-war years than it has. There is a reason for the lag. There is a reason for the lack of speed in its development. When we have such massive resources of mineral wealth—the coal and iron ore that Japan wants—why is it that Japan, a defeated nation in 1946, is today the foremost industrial nation in the world? It gets its resources from Australia.

Another parallel is the massive resurgence of Germany as an industrial nation. In the Ruhr Valley Germany has iron ore and coal, and with those resources has rebuilt its industries, yet Australia, for some unknown reason has lagged far behind. We have allowed other nations of the world to take control of our industries. We have succumbed to an economic invasion whereas we were able to repel war-time physical invasion. This has been possible only because the people cannot understand that, while true Government must be pragmatic, it must also be able to adapt its parliamentary and Government institutions to the needs of the times. Many past leaders of the Federal Government have attempted this. In 1942 the late John Curtin saw the need for it and called together a commission of State Premiers and Leaders of Oppositions to consider amendments to the Australian Constitution. After some period of debate, disputation and agreement all the Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition representing—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I notice that the hon. member for Norman has re-entered the Chamber. I remind him that he should not be in the Chamber at this time. I understand that this is his second reappearance since he was asked to vacate the Chamber under Standing Order 123A. The hon. member knows quite well that he should not be here. I ask him now to leave, otherwise I will have no alternative other than to name him, and I do not want to do that.

Mr. Bromley: I don't want you to get upset.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must remain out of the Chamber. His suspension is completed when the House rises tonight.

Mr. Bromley: This is a new day.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is not a new day.

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

Mr. LLOYD: I am sorry you took such a firm stand, Mr. Hooper. The hon. member

for Norman is an excellent member of this Committee. I did not agree entirely with his dismissal this morning.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LLOYD: You were not in the chair at that time, Mr. Hooper.

Eventually, we in Australia must face up to the moment of truth. If the Commonwealth Constitution hinders national development, it is time that the people of Australia realised the great necessity for a revision of it. As I have said, John Curtin attempted to have it revised in 1942. Unanimity was reached among all State Premiers and Leaders of the Opposition on the suggested changes. When that commission disbanded all the State Governments, with all political parties unanimous in their view, were to go to the people of Australia and have the proposed changes introduced into the Constitution by a referendum. However, Sir Robert Menzies re-entered the political arena with a new political party and took over from the late Billie Hughes as Leader of the U.A.P. and challenged the proposed referendum. He created a doubt in the minds of the people, and eventually they were convinced that they should vote "No". In other words, when the Australian people are in doubt about any proposed change to the Constitution they will vote "No". That has been an unfortunate feature of our political history since 1901, and I have no doubt that it will continue. I am just as frustrated in my suggestions and ideas as are the hon. member for Toowong and the Treasurer. We are not getting a fair go, to enable this State to introduce a balanced Budget and provide the people with adequate social services.

It is somewhat useless to debate State Budgets. That is proved by the fact that during the three years prior to 1967 the Australian States showed deficit budgeting to the extent of \$46,500,000. Regardless of the limitation placed on their budgeting by grants from the Commonwealth Government, the States still spent \$46,500,000 more than they were able to prise from the people by State taxation and from the Commonwealth by way of grants and taxation reimbursements. I have no doubt that since 1967 that figure has increased by approximately \$15,000,000 each year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. LLOYD: State budgeting is purely and simply the way in which the Government distributes the money that is available to it. In this regard, the present Treasurer and Sir Thomas Hiley have something in common. They both realised the intricacies and difficulties of understanding the State Budget and the public accounts, and on that basis they manipulated much of the money

from one fund to another until eventually it reached Consolidated Revenue and was used to pay off some tiresome old deficits.

Sir Thomas Hiley started the practice of using the Loan Funds Suspense Account. He built up the credit balances in certain Trust and Special Funds such as the Harbours Dues Fund, the Queensland Housing Commission Fund, and one or two other funds for one or two years by underspending allocations from the Loan Account. When challenged, he said that contracts were in existence and no doubt the money would be spent within the next few months. A year later he took \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000 from the Trust and Special Funds and transferred it to Consolidated Revenue to pay off a tiresome deficit hanging over him.

The present State Treasurer is in no way different from Sir Thomas Hiley. He has adopted the same practice. Both have claimed that money is very short; that the small allocation from the Loan Council is a legacy from Queensland Labour Governments; that we cannot get enough loan money; that we must rely on debenture loan raisings to meet the requirements of local authorities and semi-government bodies which have to pay a high price for money; and that this legacy means that we cannot get sufficient loan money. Yet both had sufficient money to divert it from Loan Fund to certain Trust and Special Funds over a few years, at a low rate of interest (not funded at 11 per cent., as it would be if taken from Loan Funds) and, a year or so later, when everything was quiet, they grabbed it from the credit balances in the Trust and Special Funds and threw it into Consolidated Revenue to pay off a deficit.

The same practices are being used in the construction of railway lines and the provision of housing and a harbour at Weipa for mining companies. We were told that in one year we would divert \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000 from Loan Funds for, say, the Moura-Gladstone Railway Project Fund; that the railway line would be built and that we would get a great advantage from increased railway revenue. Of course we are getting the advantage of that revenue, but we do not know the freight charged to the mining companies as the Government will not disclose it. The freights are tied up in confidential agreements with the mining companies, which we are told are beyond reproach. Opposition members cannot challenge them, although we do know that the over-all revenue derived by the Railway Department from carting coal in Queensland works out at a very small figure proportionately to the revenue per unit charged for carting bales of wool and so on.

All in all, the money comes from the Loan Fund and goes into the project fund from which the railway is built, and all rail revenue is paid into Consolidated Revenue. In that way, the charge on Consolidated Revenue is not so great because the revenue

of the Railway Department is increased. But money is scarce. We are told that we are getting a very poor deal from the Loan Council; that we cannot get enough money to build schools and large electricity power stations; that we cannot get enough money for conservation, forestry, irrigation works, and so on. We are told that the money has been spent. Of course it has—on railways for mining companies which normally would themselves meet the cost.

The Treasurer believes in meeting arguments head-on, in terrific collision. He replies to questions by saying, "Don't you want the State to own the railways? Do you want the companies to own them?" That is not necessarily the practice. The other day I referred to the approach by Mr. Ludwig, the mining magnate of Clutha Development, to the New South Wales Government, offering to spend \$9,000,000 on a couple of harbours and on a railway line linking them with his coal mines in New South Wales for export purposes. No doubt that would be on the same basis as the Treasurer states that the Goonyella-Hay Point railway line is being constructed. The company will advance the money to the State Government; it will be held in a suspense account and used to finance the construction of the railway line. The State Government will then repay the company over 11½ years on the first count, and 12½ years on the second count. No doubt this money will be repaid to Utah Construction Co. by way of railway freights.

I have no doubt that this was Mr. Ludwig's proposal in New South Wales, namely, that he would spend the \$90,000,000 necessary to build the two harbours and the railway line, and that the harbour dues and railway freights would then be repayable by the State to the company so that the ports and the line would be amortised over a period of years. I have no doubt that this was his proposal, and it is the type of proposal that the Treasurer could have brought into effect when the other railway lines were built.

Take, for instance, the tragedy of the Mt. Isa railway line reconstruction. I drew Mr. Hiley's attention to the impact that this would have on the budgeting of the State. He did not deny it. It did have a considerable impact although, admittedly, not as great as the construction of the Moura-Gladstone line and the other line. But it did have an impact on the money which was available in any one year for other developmental projects.

In that case the company refused to come to the party. How definite the company was in its refusal to make some contribution to the cost of reconstruction of the railway line at that time, I would not know. Perhaps the Government failed in its negotiations with the company for this purpose. Certainly the company should have lent the money to the Government or should have met some

of the cost of reconstruction, considering the tremendous dividends paid by it and the huge expansion of its production due entirely to the reconstruction of the railway line. In other words, it could not possibly have carried out its expansion programme had it not been for the reconstruction of the railway line at that time. Therefore, the company had some obligation.

It should not be forgotten that Labour Governments insisted that companies should come to the party in these matters. Companies came to the party and expended large sums of money in the provision of housing, dams and other projects, so that we can criticise the type of expenditure or the means that the present Government has pursued in spending the money which it has available for all purposes.

Let us consider what has occurred. Year after year, in many cases the people of Queensland are being deluded by political propaganda or by an anticipation of argument. I instance university expenditure. The capital expenditure on new buildings such as the Mt. Gravatt university is lower than that in South Australia. The capital grant from the Commonwealth Government is higher in South Australia, on the matching principle, than it is in Queensland. In other words, in any one year the Queensland Government is not spending the money on capital works to enable it to attract the complete matching grant available from the Commonwealth.

Take the university expenditure on research, which is a case in point. The money available from the Commonwealth for university research grants is some \$400,000 or \$500,000 less in Queensland than in South Australia. There is a reason for this. Mainly, it comes back to the State Government itself. The State is continually shelving onto the Federal Government the responsibility for increased tuition fees at the university. In many cases this is not completely correct, because, prior to the start of each university year, the State Treasurer or Premier advises the university senate that it will be able to make available only a limited amount of finance during the next 12 months, so, if there is a matching grant available, it is on the basis of State endowment plus student fees, and the university is forced into the position of not receiving the full Commonwealth endowment or increasing its tuition fees up to a level where it can attract the full Commonwealth endowment.

That has happened on three occasions during the last seven or eight years. On each occasion the State Government said that it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government to make more money available to the university. That could be quite correct, too, but in the main this responsibility and obligation rests with the State Government. If the State Government was prepared to make an adequate contribution to keep a balance between contributions

and student fees, constant increases in fees would not have been necessary. But fee increases have been necessary because the State Government has, orally or in some other way, simply advised the university that its endowment for the next year would be so much lower than the amount necessary to attract the full Commonwealth endowment. These are only one or two cases that come readily to mind, but they are examples of how the Government has mis-spent money available to it.

The load of taxation is far beyond bearing by the people of Australia, because it is over-governed through the trinity of government to which I have referred. Let us trace back, for instance, the operations of the Australian Loan Council. In 1946-47, almost all developmental works and housing were financed by State Governments themselves through borrowings from the Federal Government, or by permission of the Australian Loan Council. A very small proportion of the developmental work carried out was undertaken by semi-governmental bodies and local authorities. We were securing this money at the Commonwealth long-term bond rate, which was adequately controlled by a Labour Government at 4½ per cent. That control was imposed because it was realised that a uniform fiscal policy was necessary in Australia if inflation was to be contained.

In the succeeding years encouragement had to be given by State Governments to local authorities to expand semi-governmental activities and to call on available debenture loan raisings to enable a normal rate of development to proceed. By way of comparison, in about 1946 or 1947 the total allocation by the Loan Council under the gentleman's agreement for the semi-governmental and local authority borrowing programme was about \$7,000,000. That amount has grown phenomenally, to the extent of \$64,000,000 if my figures are correct, which I think they are. That represents a tremendous percentage increase. The percentage of borrowing by the State Government for works and housing has not increased to the same extent.

This necessity for the creation of semi-governmental authorities to undertake work normally carried out by State Governments, and the shelving of responsibility to local authorities, in many cases at a high rate of interest compared with the rate being paid by the State, means that the ratepayers of each local authority area, and the consumers in semi-governmental areas, have to pay higher taxation in rates, and higher prices for commodities as consumers, because it is necessary for the authority to pay higher interest rates. That has been the trend, and it is quite farcical.

In 1946-47, State taxation was, I think, about 1.8 per cent. of the gross national product for all States of Australia. In 1967-68, State taxation had grown to 2.2 per cent. of the gross national product. That

would not be so remarkable were it not for the fact that the level of Commonwealth taxation decreased over the same period. Whereas Commonwealth taxation was about 20 per cent. of the gross national product in 1946-47, by 1967-68 it had decreased to 15½ per cent. There is an indication of the way in which taxation has been transferred from the Commonwealth to the States, and the reason why States have been forced in many cases to increase their taxation by imposing taxes which are charges on production and which have an effect on consumer prices.

There is a continuous spiral of taxation. The Committee had another example of that today, when the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt suggested that there should be an education tax—another form of taxation. Why is that necessary when the people of Australia are contributing adequately in all forms of taxation, if there was efficiency in Government, to enable Governments to provide social services commensurate with the needs of the people? Because of the tremendous division of powers between the Commonwealth, the States, and local authorities, it is not an economic proposition. Because the Commonwealth will not reimburse the States adequately, the States have to impose their own forms of taxation; because the Government of Queensland, in particular, has a habit of reducing the percentage of subsidy available to local authorities, it is necessary for the local authorities to impose higher rating on the ratepayers in their areas, again increasing the incidence of taxation. When the question is asked, "How are we going to finance an adequate educational service for the people?", the only answer is the bankrupt idea of increasing taxation. In my opinion, that is a fallacious answer.

I have said before that some uniformity is required, and I believe that the Government of Queensland has shown a grave lack of responsibility in the field of education, which is a very important field of Government activity. In 1946 a Labour Government had a gigantic plan for re-organisation of the whole system of education in Queensland. It created a decentralised system, with regional directors of education in various parts of the State. It intended to decentralise education and to concentrate on forms of education that would meet the needs of industry in each part of the State; to have peripheral high schools to cope with the heavy demands in the 1960's resulting from the increased post-war birth-rate in 1946; and to have, in the interim, a school construction programme to enable all children to have an adequate form of education at this time. Instead of that, one finds in many of the high schools, in particular, in Queensland no assembly hall, many demountable classrooms in use, and temporary arrangements being made with either teaching staff or accommodation. I point out, also, that the only money expended by the State Government between the months of February and

June this year was that made available to it by the Commonwealth Government for the construction of science laboratories and other capital projects. Again, that was the result of a shortage of loan moneys for other capital work.

In many ways the educational system has slipped further and further behind the demands of industry in a modern age. If this country is to survive the scientific drive and the demand for an increasing output of technologists from its educational system, it must eliminate the lack of uniformity in that system. Why is it that the Government of Queensland is embarking on a programme that may be completely inadequate for other Australian States?

I sponsored the idea of a uniform system of education several years ago. At that time Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister of Australia and, strangely enough, he replied and said that uniformity in the education system would not succeed and would not be sufficient to enable us to carry on. Unfortunately, I think time has proved that the idea I put forward was the correct one. Queensland cannot have a system of education that is separate from that in other States of the Commonwealth.

While the Federal Government holds the major proportion of the money available from taxation and other means of raising revenue, it must make further contributions to the education system. We must have schools; we must have freedom of education; we must have an educational system adequate for industrial purposes. It is useless to continue with an education system that cannot train the young people of today for absorption into the system of industry and commerce that will be in operation in five or 10 years. This lack of adequate education has been apparent since 1946. Labour Governments are partly responsible for it, but at least they had some planned form of education. This Government is carrying on haphazardly. The present Minister for Education has told the people of Queensland that he is \$10,000,000 short in his requirements for education in this financial year. What a tragedy that is! What an indictment of a Government and a system that does nothing about frustrations and failures in our educational system. It is no wonder we are experiencing the present trend of student protests and demonstrations and the other unfortunate incidents occurring at the present time.

I think the appropriate Minister might realise that there is today need for incentive and need for a sense of achievement in anything that is done. Whether a man be a carpenter, a bricklayer, or any other type of tradesman he must get some sense of achievement from his work, and I do not think that any students attending our schools in Queensland today have any sense of achievement on finishing their education, whether it be at primary, secondary or tertiary level. If this sense of achievement

and being needed was present there would be no need for today's demonstrations. I do not think the Government is providing the necessary incentive to give this form of encouragement to young people.

I regret as much as anybody else does the form of protest and demonstration we are experiencing today. I regret that in the last few months a pamphlet called "Revolution" has circulated amongst high school students. The abusive language contained in this document and the insulting terms used—accusing R.S.L. members, including myself, I suppose, of being warmongers—are in many cases obscene and unacceptable for distribution, yet the Government, being a permissive Government, is allowing these things to occur without taking any action.

Mr. Chinchen interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: I have no doubt that the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt will continue to protest that we have moratoriums and anti-Vietnam programmes. Of course we do, because we believe that the war in Vietnam is unnecessary and a disgrace to the country. I think many hon. members on the Government benches also believe that and would say so if they were honest.

I repeat that I regret these protests as much as any other member does. I regret any act of violence. I regret many of the things that are occurring, but I blame our system and our permissive Government for many of them.

Not very long ago the heads of the Police Department refused to take action against violence extended to them by a group of students, or some people who may or may not have been university students, simply because they were in the grounds of the university. They took no action at all against these people but they took severe and "praiseworthy" action against a group of motor-cyclists entering the City of Toowoomba, possibly because the motor-cyclists were not of the privileged class. If ours is a permissive society, it is only so because of the permissive type of government we have, both in Queensland and in the Commonwealth itself.

Mr. Tooth: You are saying that neither the State nor the Federal Government is tough enough.

Mr. LLOYD: There is no necessity to be tough. This is the type of propaganda that emanates from the Government. Under a Labour Government these things did not occur. By negotiation and encouragement people in the community can be invited to put their ideas forward, to be free in their speaking, and to feel that they are needed in the community. Under our present system they are hounded and refused the right to protest. As a result, they resort to violence

and obscene methods. That is what happens under this form of permissive Government in Queensland.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. LLOYD: I did not know that the Minister had resorted to capital punishment in school-teaching. I am grateful to the hon. member for having enlightened me.

I believe that a greater awareness by members of the Cabinet of the needs of the people in education and development will achieve better results than those obtained since 1957.

I realise that the Treasurer is tired of hearing many of my arguments; however, I believe that a good argument is worthy of repetition. Time and time again he has heard them, and I have no doubt that eventually I shall convince the majority of the people that I am right and that he is wrong.

Whereas the Government is selling the natural resources of this State for 5c, or one piece of silver a ton, Judas received 20 pieces of silver. As the State Government is prepared to carry on in this way, it must create suspicion in the minds of the people about its attitudes and integrity. I have been told that without the very generous concessions given to Comalco the establishment of the Gladstone alumina refinery and the development of the Weipa bauxite deposits would not have occurred. It is strange that Alcoa, which was interested in those deposits in 1956-57, upon being rejected in the development of Weipa, went to Western Australia and established a massive industry in that State as well as one in Victoria. Comalco has not yet built a refinery in this State; it is still talking about it 13 years after the agreement was signed.

In 1969 Comalco had a 16 per cent. shareholding in Queensland Alumina Limited, which was given to it by the Consolidated Zinc and Kaiser companies. That is the first shareholding Comalco has had. Certainly Consolidated Zinc and Kaiser have encouraged a consortium of American companies and banks to enter into the agreement to build the alumina refinery at Gladstone, but Comalco did not participate actively in it. At the same time Alcoa was busy in Western Australia building a refinery at Kwinana, and that refinery now produces over 1,000,000 metric tons each year. As well, it has established an aluminium smelter at Geelong with a capacity of 90,000 tons a year. At Anglesea it has constructed a power station of 150 MW capacity. Alcoa did all of those things while Comalco was only interested. Consolidated Zinc, which is a dwarf in the aluminium world, created Comalco, and that company, by virtue of the generous concessions granted to it by this Government, has become a giant.

Mr. R. Jones: What did they do at Weipa?

Mr. LLOYD: They did not even provide the money to build the port or the town. The Co-ordinator-General provided it, and now the company is repaying the amount over a number of years by means of harbour dues.

Alcoa was originally interested in Weipa but could not carry on because Reynolds Metals would not let it in. It then went to Western Australia, where it carried out the terms of its agreement and paid the Western Australian Government 7.5c a ton. Under a new agreement it is building in Western Australia a new alumina refinery and will be paying 25c a ton on the alumina produced. In other words, all alumina produced from the refinery will mean 25c a ton for the State Government. That is Alcoa in Western Australia. What went wrong in Queensland? With Cabinet Ministers in Queensland accepting shareholdings in Comalco, it went across to the European Common Market to establish its refinery. A 600,000-ton-capacity refinery is being built in Sardinia, and a shipping company has been formed in conjunction with an Italian firm.

A couple of ships are being built to carry 1,500,000 tons of bauxite a year from Weipa to the Sardinian refinery. That will be good for Australia as it will build up our exports to the European Common Market, but that has eventuated only because of the very generous concessions granted to Comalco. It extended Bell Bay and spent \$30,000,000 in increasing production to 94,000,000 tons a year.

This company has entered the fabrication field and bought extrusion mills in Perth, Adelaide, New South Wales, Victoria and Brisbane. This is a highly profitable undertaking, but the company did not build a refinery in Queensland although we were told that it would be compelled to do so under the agreement. The company got somebody else to do that. I have no doubt that when the refinery is built at Weipa it will get somebody else to do that, and that Consolidated Zinc and Kaiser Steel will be shareholders. Eventually the refinery at Weipa, if it is built, will be transferred to Comalco Industries Pty. Ltd., or whatever the company is called.

But what has happened to the promised aluminium smelter? We were told that every few years feasibility reports would be submitted to the Minister for Mines. We were told in glowing terms by the then Minister for Mines that we would have an aluminium smelter, and as recently as 1961 the then Premier told us that an aluminium smelter would be built here. In the meantime, Comalco went into partnership with another company and built an aluminium smelter at Invercargill, in New Zealand, not in Queensland.

None of the terms of the agreement have been complied with by the company. Regardless of the value of the developmental work that this State has gained through

the construction of the alumina refinery at Gladstone—I admit it was a wonderful thing for Queensland—Comalco was a very small entity in the aluminium world at the time the agreement was entered into with the Queensland Government. We were told that Comalco would be forced to undertake certain works, that an alumina refinery would be built, and that the export of raw bauxite would be prohibited. That threat was held over the company to force it to build a refinery. We were also told that we would have an aluminium smelter. We were told all of these things, but none of them has come to pass.

Would the Government at that time have signed the agreement under the terms of the present emasculated agreement? Would it have been courageous enough to bring any such agreement before Parliament and ask that it be ratified, as it did in 1957, when it asked for ratification of the Comalco agreement? The terms of that agreement looked reasonable, although we certainly argued about the rate of royalty and wanted a select committee of Parliament appointed to study its details. We did not oppose the agreement as it was framed at that time. However, none of the conditions imposed on the company have been enforced by the Government, and it must be admitted that all Comalco's activities must have received the consent of the Government. It is certainly a permissive Government.

All in all, we have received from this wonderful field of bauxite royalties of only 5c a ton. I repeat that Judas received 20 pieces of silver.

Mr. Chinchin: Are you aware that, prior to 1956, not one penny was collected in Queensland as mineral royalties?

Mr. LLOYD: That interjection indicates that the hon. gentleman is a follower of dogma; he is not pragmatic; he has not kept up with the times.

When the mining laws of Queensland were framed, nobody wanted our bauxite, iron-ore, coal, or other minerals. Years ago we knew the value of our massive mineral deposits in Queensland. We had the Powell Duffryn report but we could not sell our coal; we could not even give it away. We had to encourage its sale, whereas today people are demanding it. Japanese and other industries are demanding these things, and, where there is a demand let us be tough. I am glad to see the Treasurer adopting a tough attitude with our nickel deposits. It is not before time. I should like to see the Government insist on some of the terms the Commonwealth Government insisted on in reaching agreement with mining companies. I should like to see an insistence on Australian participation, and I should also like to see Government participation. The hon. member for Baroona has mentioned this, and we mentioned it in 1957 relative to Comalco.

I went to South Australia on several occasions when Sir Thomas Playford was Premier of the Liberal Party Government in that State. What did he do about the uranium deposits? He built the uranium-oxide factory in Adelaide with Government money. The South Australian Parliament passed legislation refusing any mining company the right to take the deposits of uranium in South Australia. They were reserved for the Government. It was a State Government undertaking, backed by the Commonwealth Government. This is nothing new. The aluminium smelter at Bell Bay would not have been started had it not been for the Commonwealth Government and the Tasmanian Government taking some action in the first place. What is wrong with Queensland having a governmental undertaking to develop its mineral resources? What is wrong with doing what both Liberal and Labour Governments have done in South Australia?

(Time expired.)

Mr. HARRIS (Wynnum) (9.8 p.m.): Mr. Hooper—

Honourable Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Mourilyan is not in his usual place in the Chamber. If he cannot pay the usual courtesy to a member of his own party who rises, he needs to learn something of the Standing Orders.

Mr. F. P. Moore: I just—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in his usual place in the Chamber. He has been chided for that already.

Mr. HARRIS: I am astounded how some people play to the gallery. During the speech of the hon. member for Kedron, those Government members who were in the Chamber were almost asleep. Then, when some fair ladies condescended to honour us with their presence, it was amazing how many Government members there were who awakened and came out of their foxholes—not to listen to the very enlightening speech from the hon. member for Kedron, but to see who was in the gallery in case they were some of their constituents. The hon. member for Kedron enlightened the visitors in the gallery to a great extent on the subject of mines and minerals.

Last week the Australian Labour Party, in its wisdom, elected from its numbers the hon. member for Port Curtis (Mr. Martin Hanson) as its shadow Minister for Mines and Main Roads. I am very happy to relate that I am a member of his team, and, because I have received that honour, I am going to be parochial in my reference to the Main Roads Department.

I am going to speak about the poor, humble motorist. He is the person who buys a motor-car and is then subjected to all the inconvenience that the Main Roads Department can think up in an endeavour to prevent him from registering the vehicle

and then from obtaining a licence to drive in a reasonable time. Having obtained a licence and having registered the vehicle, in due course the registration becomes due for renewal and he is again subjected to unnecessary discomfort and inconvenience.

On many occasions I have approached the Minister in an attempt to have an office of the Main Roads Department established in the Wynnum electorate. There is in Wynnum a new court house that was built by the Government, but only after strong representations made by me, my predecessor, and the hon. member for Belmont. I should like it clearly understood that I do not usually boast about these matters, but I can honestly say that construction of the new court house was attributable to representations made by Labour members on behalf of the people of Wynnum.

The court house at Wynnum is a very fine building, and the workmanship that went into it is excellent. It contains three vacant rooms that are quite conveniently situated and large enough to house a branch of the Main Roads Department. I discovered from a survey I made that there are sufficient officers living in the area to staff such a branch. There are nine firms that sell new and second-hand vehicles in the electorate, and employees of those companies have to travel from Wynnum to the Main Roads Department, sometimes five or six times a day, simply to transfer, cancel or renew registrations.

It is a shocking state of affairs when the Government, in 1970, will not give consideration to motorists by making the facilities of the Main Roads Department available in the various suburbs.

Let us consider the case of someone who wishes to obtain a driving licence. After making the necessary representations to the department, the applicant has the privilege of going as far as Coorparoo if he lives anywhere between Cleveland and Coorparoo. If the applicant does not want to go to Coorparoo, it is necessary for him to go to the city. We of the Australian Labour Party claim that this procedure is not necessary. We claim that a branch of this department should be established in the electorate of Wynnum.

Once again, Mr. Wharton, let me draw attention to the problems associated with the Police Force in general. Hon. members have listened on many occasions to the words of the new Commissioner of Police. I think most of us are well aware that he was formerly a Commonwealth police officer, then went to New Guinea, and now has come to Queensland in an endeavour, as I understand the situation, to clean up the Police Force. Is it necessary to bring a great white master from the islands to teach us, when many dozens of men in the force in this State are capable of filling the position of commissioner, as others have done in the past? I refer to men such as Tom Harrold.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. HARRIS: I point out to hon. members opposite who are laughing that, under this Government, even the microphones are faulty.

Police officers with anything from 30 to 40 years' experience are overlooked and a man is imported into Queensland because the Government does not think that they are as capable of doing the job as were their predecessors. What a shocking state of affairs that is!

Is it any indication of what will happen in the future that this man, who has been in the State a very short time, suspends two police officers for a misdemeanour in the department without giving any consideration to either the Deputy Commissioner or his subordinates? If he is the Police Commissioner, by all means let him exercise his authority; but decisions of that type should be left to the heads of the various departments. It is bad enough having a police Minister who is endeavouring to be Commissioner of Police, without having someone else butting in. The hon. member for South Brisbane has made that clear on many occasions.

Mr. F. P. Moore: Couldn't he do his job in New Guinea?

Mr. HARRIS: I do not intend to say whether the gentleman concerned did his job in New Guinea. If he did his job in the Commonwealth Police Force and in New Guinea, why did he have to come to Queensland to get a job?

While I am speaking of police matters, let me mention some of the things that are happening at Wynnum. It is not the sons and daughters of people living at Wynnum who act like louts and sit and loll round the streets of Wynnum; it probably is the sons and daughters of people living in the upper-crust areas who are visiting Wynnum. Because the Government has neither the time nor the money to institute a real drive for additional police officers, the police station at Wynnum is staffed so inadequately that the police cannot take any action against them. The number of breaking and enterings in Wynnum alone is astronomically high. As hon. members know, in the State about 6,000 of these crimes are unsolved at present. My place was robbed of approximately \$1,800, but not one cent of it have I retrieved, and I have not had any indication from the police as to what has happened.

Mr. Davis: Did they investigate it?

Mr. HARRIS: Of course they investigated it. But how can they investigate it thoroughly when they have an inadequate staff? Judging by the past, the position will not be improved in the future.

The Government, after due representations by the Labour Party, is erecting a new police station. I want to say that it is not before time, particularly when we realise

that the present building is 74 years old. Let us assume that this station will be finished in the near future and that construction will not drag on as was the case with the new court-house. Will the Minister give due consideration to adequately staffing it?

I repeat what I have said on many occasions, namely, that the approximate population of Wynnum and surrounding districts is 55,000. Hon. members have heard that figure on many occasions. I have harped about it when pleading for a hospital for Wynnum. The police district runs from the Capalaba Hotel to Bulimba. How in the name of goodness can 14 police officers stationed at Wynnum control an area of that size, particularly when those 14 men must have days off, week-ends off and holidays, which have the effect of reducing man-power to about eight per week? What a shocking state of affairs! And it appears that it will not be rectified either now or in the future, even when we get a new police station.

I want now to mention the railways. One of my colleagues suggested that I speak about uniforms. I am not going to say anything about police uniforms, as the Minister in charge of Police was wise enough to approach some members of the Australian Labour Party who had the ability to give him certain advice about the type of material that should be used in this tropical State and also about the style of uniforms that should be worn if Queensland police uniforms are to compare with those worn in other States of Australia. But what happened in the railways? The Minister for Railways very obviously cannot be spoken to and most certainly is not going to take advice or suggestions from anybody, including his own colleagues. There is no way in the world he will accept them from the Labour Party.

Let us go back a couple of years to when this matter was first mooted. Hon. members will remember that I brought an old railway uniform into this Chamber and gave a practical demonstration of the way in which uniforms are made, and of the shoddy workmanship and material used in them. The Minister decided that he would form a committee in an endeavour to have the anomalies I pointed out rectified. It was suggested that he should have on the committee a representative of the railway unions. He rejected the suggestion. It was then suggested that I, as a tradesman, be put on the committee, and again he rejected the offer.

What did he then do? He allotted the work of turning out the new-style uniform to two people operating under the name of Stuart Adams, who were alleged to be his advisers. We asked who Stuart Adams were, who the company was, where it was established, where its registered office was and where the work-room manufacturing

these uniforms was situated, and we discovered it was in a house in the electorate of the hon. member for Kedron. They had no warehouse, no workshop and no registered office and today one can see the result of their work in the new railway uniforms; they are a shocking disgrace. I refer particularly to the uniforms worn by station-masters, who are supposed to be the best-dressed men in the railway service.

Mr. R. Jones: You must be joking.

Mr. HARRIS: The hon. member for Cairns was a railwayman. I understand that the shunters are the best-dressed men in the department.

Mr. R. Jones: The guards!

Mr. HARRIS: To get back to the station-master's uniform, I point out that it has epaulets on the shoulders. I understand that bandoleers went out in the Crimean War, nevertheless this uniform, designed by Stuart Adams, has epaulets on the shoulders. Why, I do not know. As well, the uniform has military-styled pockets with straight flaps. Why, I do not know. It was designed in that manner simply because the Minister for Transport was not prepared to accept advice from someone who could assist him in designing a suitable uniform.

As well as being stubborn about uniforms, he has rejected advice that he should consider railway passengers. All of us know that Queensland trains, particularly those in the metropolitan area, cannot cope with the number of passengers who travel in peak hours. Of course, we hear that it is not economical to run additional trains during peak hours, and other rubbish. We know all about that; but the fact remains that the workers should be considered. Mark my words, today's boss ensures that his employees do not have too many rests during the day, so when those employees cease work at the end of the day they should receive priority in seating accommodation in trains.

The hon. member for Yeronga smiles and chuckles to himself while I talk about the workers. I have been reliably informed that he is one of the worst employers in Brisbane. He rarely paid his men, and when he did he paid them the wrong amount. He was considered to be a nigger-driver and a slave-driver. It is all right for the Minister for Health to laugh. I will give him a blast on hospitals shortly. His turn will come.

If the Minister for Transport will give due consideration to the electrification of the metropolitan railway system, the City of Brisbane will go ahead. A Labour Government spent \$22,000,000 on the introduction of electrification. And what happened? The scheme has been abandoned by this Government. We know what happened to the buildings that were erected at Mayne, Northgate and Banyo. A number of my colleagues and

I often wonder why the scheme was scrubbed and what was the reason for the introduction of diesel locomotives. Like my colleagues, I wonder if someone is getting a "sling" out of the oil business. The Government knows that we have some of the greatest coal reserves in the world. If it was honest and genuine about providing transportation facilities for the people, would it not be logical to use the coal in power-houses built at the pithead to provide electricity for electrification schemes, instead of importing overseas oil? That is logical, but we cannot get the idea through to the Minister for Transport. We can only keep on trying.

I assure the Committee that, after the next election, when the A.L.P. takes over the Treasury benches, there will be a great number of changes.

The good Queenslanders and Australians who are prepared to suffer the trials and tribulations of a trip from Wynnum to South Brisbane by train could be given the privilege of parking their cars on adequate areas of land that are adjacent to many railway stations. When the Minister was approached about this matter he spoke about the near future, but it seems that not until the distant future will our request receive some consideration. That is not good enough. The parking lots could be made available now. The Wynnum railway station is a dangerous place because of the way that the roads are built, and the situation of the railway crossing at the top of the Wynnum North railway platform. The additional six shops erected in the immediate vicinity have created a greater traffic hazard, with increased density of people, but still there is nowhere to park motor-vehicles. It is easy to forecast what will happen in the near future if the Minister does not give urgent, serious consideration to providing parking facilities for railway passengers.

Before the Minister for Health goes to sleep I should like to refer again to the need for a hospital at Wynnum. I know that I have not a chance of wearing down the Minister tonight, but I speak on behalf of my people, who know that I represent them fully and faithfully. They also know, as well as I do, their great need of a hospital. Our need is based on the many accidents that occur in the area and the great demand for a maternity hospital.

I do not wish to refer to the Ampol oil refinery, relative to accidents, but I think I should mention industrial development. I give the Government full marks for putting on paper a statement that it intends to establish an industrial estate in the Wynnum-Lindum-Hemmant area. One of these days, I will be happy to relate that it has eventuated. Certain reclamation work has taken place in the area. The people who have taken up blocks, not necessarily in this development area but on its fringes, have established very profitable industries, which are creating a considerable amount

of employment for the people not only in the Wynnum electorate but throughout the Wynnum district.

The Government is failing to provide housing for these workers. It is all very well having industry and claiming to create employment in various industrial areas, but it is the Government's responsibility to provide adequate housing accommodation for the families of workers in these industries. I receive two or three applications each week for rental accommodation and I suppose most members would receive as many. I understand that the Housing Commission has a large area of land that is quite suitable for housing purposes, but we do not seem to be able to get the Commission to move.

When the Commission does move we sometimes get what happened in my area today. It was an action of the Commission that caused me to be out of the Chamber for most of the day. One of my constituents sold a block of land to the Housing Commission some months ago on the understanding that an easement would be provided through his property to the portion at the back sold to the Commission. That is quite a logical request and it is done in similar circumstances. A house has been built on the land sold to the Housing Commission and the land for the easement has been taken from both of the neighbours. It is the established fact that 9 ft. is the footage required for an easement in this area. However, the Housing Commission, or the people concerned, have taken 24 ft. The fellow growled about that; he was very annoyed about it. However, it did not matter a great deal until he came home from work this afternoon and found a team of workmen erecting a fence at the side of his house, having taken 24 ft. from his allotment and having thrown his double gates away. At this moment he has to leave his car on the road because he has no access to his property. I have been endeavouring to contact someone to stop the men from completing the job tomorrow because there is no way in the world that this can be allowed to continue.

I do not wish to harp on my next subject, which I have mentioned on many occasions. The State Government owns land in Wynnum for hospital purposes, and 50 acres adjacent to it has been cleared by its owners. This land has been offered to the department and I admit that the price asked by the owners is reasonable. However, on such occasions, negotiations should take place. It is understandable that the owners of property adjacent to that on which projects will be built want reasonable compensation for their land. On this occasion I admit that the prices asked were high, but the land being offered is the pick of this area and those who own

it are justly entitled to its full value. Obviously the Government is not prepared to pay that amount.

It will not be very long before this land is no longer available to the Government, and then not only will the Government suffer but the people of the district will be denied the opportunity to have a hospital in a central position. I say "central position" because the land is handy to the industrial area of the future. It is handy to the oil refinery which, whether we like it or not, is a potential fire and explosion hazard. Very few people are aware of the occasions on which there have been minor explosions at the refinery, because they are not mentioned in the Press. The land is also in close proximity to the middle of the town, and the main benefit of the hospital would be that it would eliminate the problem of having to travel through dense traffic to reach the principal city hospitals. In addition, there is adequate ground available for parking of motor vehicles.

No doubt the Minister will say, "How could a hospital at Wynnum be equipped with all the necessary sophisticated equipment needed in a hospital of the size that you want?" Admittedly we want, and need, a hospital with as much sophisticated equipment as it would be possible to obtain, but we fully realise the enormous expense that that would involve. There are, however, many hospitals throughout the length and breadth of Queensland that have not such facilities but would be quite adequate for what is required in Wynnum. We do not necessarily want neuro-surgery carried out there; we fully appreciate that that type of medical service is available at only the principal hospitals. There are, however, many complaints that could be treated in a hospital at Wynnum.

I appeal to the Minister to give due and serious consideration to not only the proposed hospital for Wynnum but also the dental clinic. I drew to the attention of the Minister for Health only a month or so ago that one of my constituents had to wait 13 months for dental treatment. The Minister corrected me, and I appreciate and accept his correction that the wait was not 13 months but 11 months. No doubt the two months were in the Christmas holidays. Even 11 months is still too long to wait for dental treatment.

It is not much use saying that if a person required immediate dental treatment, such as for toothache, it would be given at the clinic, or he could travel to Brisbane. It is appreciated that that could be done, but the point is that there are many people who cannot travel to the city because they have large families to look after. Whilst there is a clinic at Wynnum, it is only right and proper that people should be able to receive the treatment that the clinic is able to give.

There is one other matter that somewhat disturbs me, and that is the state of the various school buildings in my electorate. The Minister for Education has on occasions

acquired land which has been brought to his attention as desirable for school purposes, and on most occasions land of this type has been made available to schools. Having the land available is not of much benefit to the schools if the old buildings are not removed very promptly, and I know of several instances in which the old dwellings are still on the grounds.

Let me refer particularly to the Hemmant State School. The grounds are adequate at present, but I understand that plans are on the drawing board for additions to the school. Although that is not before time, unfortunately the new buildings are to be located on the only available playing area. If they could be relocated at the back of the school, I think they would be of much greater benefit to the children. I ask the Minister to give serious consideration to having that position rectified as soon as possible.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (9.46 p.m.): Government members appear to be ashamed of the Budget. Few of them have spoken of it, others have quickly ducked away from it, and those who have spoken of it have damned it with faint praise. I am the seventh member of the Opposition in succession who has spoken today, and so far 27 members of the A.L.P. Opposition have spoken in the Budget debate. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber have, of course, spoken for many hours without any Government member taking part in the debate. That is rather surprising, but I suppose it is because hon. members opposite cannot see anything in the Budget to praise and, therefore, prefer to say nothing rather than get to their feet and be critical of it.

Some weeks ago when the Treasurer brought the Budget down, I referred to it as the "3D Budget"—the three-dimensional Budget—drought, deficit, and doom. In going through the Treasurer's comments, I noticed that he mentioned the drought about 67 times. Of course, he mentioned that he was budgeting for a deficit, and the reason for that is very clear. There seemed to be a suggestion of doom all the way through the Budget. As one listened to the Treasurer's Financial Statement, one was not inspired by the way in which he presented it. That was for the simple and good reason that he did not think there was anything in the Budget that would appeal to Queenslanders and he merely did the best he could with very poor material. All hon. members on this side of the Chamber agree with me on that point.

Queensland has passed through a period of drought; it would be idle to say that it has not. However, a glance at the rainfall charts for Queensland for the past 80 years or so is very revealing. They show that in fact there have been worse periods of drought than the one the State has recently gone through and that there has been very low rainfall indeed in many parts of Queensland for many years. I noticed when looking

through them that that was true of the Townsville area, from which I come, and it is obvious that drought is always with us in some part of the State. Someone said that Australia is a land of drought with periodic good seasons, and I think that describes fairly adequately the position in Queensland.

In his Financial Statement, the Treasurer appears to be preoccupied with drought. In fact, if one looks back, as I did, at the Budgets that have been brought down by the Treasurer and former Treasurers of Country-Liberal Governments, one sees that in almost all of them drought is resurrected and put forward as one of the reasons why the Government was not able to do what it wanted to do. It appears to me that Country-Liberal Governments seek to hide their shortcomings under the cloak of drought. We must remember that the Government has now been in office for over 13 years.

Mr. Lickiss: And we will be here for another 13, too.

Mr. TUCKER: That is the hon. member's view, not mine. I have been watching the hon. member, and I do not think he is quite as certain that he will be here for the next 13 years as he tries to appear to be. He frequently rises in this Chamber and speaks as though he is quite worried.

I repeat that the Government has been in office for more than 13 years. My son, who is now 24, was 11 years of age when the Government came to office. All the children of that time are now young men and women of voting age. The great majority of young people in this State have never known anything but a Tory Government that, year after year, continues to blame drought for its failures.

I venture to ask what the Government has done about drought. It claims to have always faced it, and it cannot continue, year after year for 13 years or more, blaming drought for everything. Drought is obviously going to be with us all the time, and a good Government would have acknowledged this and, since we have to live with it whether we like it or not, would have at least started to do something about it.

This Government has done nothing but blame drought. It has no regional plan to beat drought and it cannot point to any large water-conservation programme it has undertaken in the last 13 or 14 years. I know that small dams have been constructed around the State—and they are small when one considers Tinaroo, Koombaloo and such places. No large water-conservation scheme has been attempted by this Government during its term of office, yet it continues at all times to blame the drought. Many places have had seven years of drought. At the present time Mt. Isa is experiencing a water shortage, which has continued over the last year or so. Lake Moondarra is at its lowest level for years.

Many places will not survive a severe drought, and the Government should have been planning water conservation on a grand scale. It cannot continue to blame drought if it is doing nothing to beat drought. If the Government will do nothing in this respect it should not be on the Treasury benches.

Adverting to regional planning, I think the Government should be looking at certain strategic areas in the State where water can be conserved, where people can, independent of seasons, grow crops and fodder which can be air-freighted to outback areas when needed. No plan of this kind has been instituted, and no areas have been selected for water conservation. If such areas were selected and developed, in times of drought the distress of those west of the ranges could be alleviated to some degree. But the Government rather relies on the fact that somewhere around the place somebody might be growing something which can be transported, with freight concessions and so on, to those people in western areas who need it.

A Labour Government built the Tinaroo Falls and Koombooloomba Dams, which are two of the largest water-conservation projects in North Queensland. What has the present Government done to conserve water in that portion of the State? I see no evidence whatsoever to show that it has done anything. While Labour was in office members of the Liberal and Country Parties claimed that the Government had no vision or planning for development. Yet Tinaroo and Koombooloomba are living examples of Labour's planning. Where are the examples of this Government's planning in water conservation, particularly in North Queensland? I cannot see any.

Mr. Newbery: How about the Eungella Dam?

Mr. TUCKER: Probably the hon. member and I could spit more than that dam holds. It will serve only one project, the Collinsville Power House and the Northern Electric Authority.

Mr. Newbery: The allocation to the N.E.A. is only one-twelfth.

Mr. Houston: Why don't you make your own speech?

Mr. TUCKER: I point out to the hon. member for Mirani that I am the seventh consecutive Opposition speaker. The hon. member did not rise to speak today, although he had the chance.

The Eungella Dam is a small project, and would not withstand a long drought.

Mr. Newbery: The Eungella Dam could supply 12 Goonyellas.

Mr. TUCKER: It will serve certain specific places, and that is all. It is not capable of supplying water for the generation

of hydroelectricity. Recently the chairman of the N.E.A. announced that hydroelectricity generated by the Tully Falls project was much cheaper than that generated anywhere else. Who planned that project? Was it the present coalition Government? Not on your life! It is another example of Labour's far-sighted policy. This Government has neglected North Queensland.

Mr. Houston: All Government members do is put their names on plaques.

Mr. TUCKER: That is so. The best I can say about them is that in North Queensland they continue projects that Labour began. The Government has done nothing since it assumed office; yet the Treasurer says, "This is the result of the drought," or, "Drought was the cause of this." Sir Thomas Hiley said, "We will defeat drought," but nothing has been done to plan for its defeat. We will be living with it always.

Mr. Lickiss: The director of the Weather Bureau said it is the worst drought in our history.

Mr. TUCKER: That may be true, but an examination of rainfall charts will reveal that in the past droughts that were nearly as severe have occurred. Drought is part of the history of this State.

For years Labour has been advocating the construction of the Burdekin Dam, and we know that if it is built tremendous benefits will follow. Time and time again it is scrapped and prior to elections it is resurrected. Either the Treasurer or the Premier visits Ayr or another area in which he wants to win votes and says, "We will now go into the matter again and make further representations to Mr. Gorton." But when we ask Labour Senators to inquire whether representations have been made they are told that none have been made. The Burdekin is one of the strategic areas that I have spoken about.

Mr. R. Jones: Prior to the 1965 by-election the Government flew Sir Wilfred Hudson, of the Snowy Mountains Authority, to North Queensland.

Mr. TUCKER: That is right.

At present there is a lack of water on the Burdekin Delta land, while tremendous wealth, in water, flows into the sea. Everyone in North Queensland knows that whenever there is a small drought the salt water begins to move into this area, where tremendous cane crops are grown. Although the area is in jeopardy, nothing has been done about it other than the construction of some small dams on the Bowen River, as a result of pressure exercised by the Minister for Justice. These dams are in no way comparable with dams of the necessary size to alleviate drought.

Giru provides a perfect example of a town running out of water. Although the Government is paying a 50 per cent. subsidy, the

local council has to grapple with the problem of bringing water to that part of the Burdekin area. No real attempt has been made to do anything about water conservation. The growing city of Townsville has to continue with makeshift water conservation to plug the gap, although long ago the city could have been drawing water from the projected Burdekin dam, and in fact would have been doing so if Ben Chifley had remained in office.

Mr. Heatley: I don't think you are quite right about that. Would that be the right area to draw Townsville's water from?

Mr. TUCKER: Yes, it would. We could have brought water from the dam to Townsville by gravity. We would have had enough water for ever, without having to worry about spending millions of dollars on the Fivehead Creek Dam and another dam, and bringing water 80 miles from the Paluma Range, which is further than it would have been from the dam site. Instead of the 20-inch pipeline that we got because we were afraid we would not be able to fill it, we would have got a much better supply from the Burdekin Falls dam, which was to have been 16 times the size of Sydney Harbour. It would have provided all the water needed for Townsville for the next 100 years. This Government will not push the Commonwealth Government to get it; it continues to say that our troubles can be attributed to the drought. The Government's inaction annoys everybody in Queensland, particularly those in North Queensland.

The argument has been advanced in this Chamber—I have heard it in the 11 years I have been here, during which time I have been advocating the Burdekin dam—that the barratta soils in the Burdekin could not be used because they were impervious to water. That story is no longer heard, as the Government research stations found that the barratta soil was perfect for rice-growing. Today we have a flourishing rice industry there. I have frequently seen rice going yellow simply because those who sowed it were unable to get the necessary water to keep it going. Even now that is the position on the Burdekin. It is a great pity that there has been so much inaction.

Mr. Heatley: It was this Government that discovered it, wasn't it?

Mr. TUCKER: I hardly think so. If the Minister for Mines and Main Roads went up there and sowed some rice and found that it grew, good luck to him. The point is that it is known.

If drought plays such a big part in each Budget, the Government has a miserable record in dealing with it. There has been no planning or leadership in this State, which is drought-stricken for a good deal of the time.

Mr. R. E. Moore: How can you store fodder to last seven years?

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. member for Windsor comes in. He has nothing on the top of his skull and nothing under it.

Every primary industry in Queensland has gone backwards under this Government, which is dominated by the Country Party. A couple of weeks ago it showed people how to get out of the dairy industry, and that has been its contribution to primary industry.

I admit that there is sometimes a need to budget for a deficit. I want to be fair and responsible in my remarks. I believe that it was necessary for the Treasurer to budget for a deficit on this occasion. If he had not done so, unemployment might have resulted, so the Labour Party has no argument on that score. However, we must realise that eventually the deficit must be paid for. No Treasurer can budget for a deficit for ever and a day.

Western Australia requires those exploiting its minerals to make a significant contribution to the economy of that State. However, Queensland does not. This Government claims that profits flow from the ancillary services, such as the Railway Department. Opposition members have asked repeatedly what freights are paid on minerals, but the Minister for Transport or the Treasurer ducks the question, claiming that the exact figure cannot be given but that certain profits to the State flow from ancillary services. I should like to be told exactly what these companies pay in the way of freights. We are always told that this information cannot be given because the Government does not want the companies' competitors to get it.

We receive 5c a ton royalty on our coal. This represents about 1 per cent. of its value.

Mr. Camm: It is five times what you were getting.

Mr. TUCKER: That is all right. I want to make my own speech.

Time and time again the Treasurer has demanded only 1 per cent. of the value of the commodity by way of royalty. He did this with Moura coal. Some years ago many Opposition members, including me, debated the question of royalties and pointed out that we were not receiving a fair and equitable share of the profits enjoyed by those exploiting our mineral resources. The same thing happened with Blackwater coal, and again Opposition members had their say on that. However, we could make no impression on the Treasurer. The same applied to Goonyella coal. It was debated in this Chamber and again we could make no impression on the Treasurer. He was adamant that this was the amount of royalty he would charge the people who were shipping our coal overseas. And so the story continues. The Treasurer is still on the same line; he is still adamant and arguing with us, but our argument runs off him

like water off a duck's back. Despite our arguments, the Government again and again negotiated low royalties.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Whether we receive it by way of freights or royalties does not matter. It is what we get out of it that counts.

Mr. TUCKER: I thank the hon. member very much for his valuable contribution. I did not understand a word of it.

I might say that a somewhat similar story applies to the Comalco project at Weipa. The same attack was made by the A.L.P., and it, too, was of no avail. The Treasurer simply adopted the same attitude.

The Treasurer and other Ministers then claimed that they went to the people at the last election on that policy and received their endorsement on this approach to royalties. Over the last few years, right up to some months ago, that has been claimed as the Government's attitude.

Then came the Greenvale nickel project. If this came to fruition it would be of tremendous assistance to North Queensland, and to Townsville in particular. I am therefore interested in it for the sake of North Queensland, and particularly for the sake of the city of Townsville. There could be 300 men employed on the site where the nickel will be mined, in the triangle formed by Townsville, Charters Towers and Ingham.

Mr. Campbell: That number would not cover many more than time-keepers.

Mr. TUCKER: I venture to say that if the Minister went there he would not even get a job as a labourer. There would be 700 families at a place known as Saunder's Beach, which is virtually a suburb of Townsville, where a refinery would be built. I understand that an ammonia-leaching process would be used because the nickel-ore in this area is different from the nickel-ore found in some other States.

The point I make is that, unlike coal, we would not be exporting the raw ore. An industry would be established just outside Townsville, and hundreds of men would be employed there in addition to those employed at the mine. The refining work would be done in this country. These are the lines along which we are thinking, and this type of development would be good for the State.

Mr. Camm: Exactly the same as Comalco at Weipa and Gladstone.

Mr. TUCKER: To a degree, but I should like to see aluminium, the final product, being produced at Gladstone. I do not think that we on this side of the Chamber have ever "knocked" a project that would do something for this country. Rather than have ore exported to another country, we would prefer to have it refined, by

our workmen, in this country. I quite agree that a nickel refinery would make a significant contribution to the economy of North Queensland.

Such a refinery would also be of assistance to the Townsville Harbour Board. It would, for instance, double the oil intake of the harbour. Some 330,000 gallons of fuel oil a year would have to come through the port for use by the refinery. Nickel exports would amount to only about 25,000 or 30,000 tons and they would not have a very great effect on the port's economy, but the products that would come in through the port would assist the harbour board in a very real way.

All who have an interest in this matter know that the project is a marginal one, as the nickel content of the ore is low. But we now very much need another industry in North Queensland. The Treasurer said that he wants a return of \$50,000,000 for the Government from this project. He wants it from a calculated profit of, as I see it, about \$250,000,000.

Mr. Chalk: After tax.

Mr. TUCKER: Yes, after tax. From this project the Treasurer wants approximately 20 per cent. of the profits of the company. Just a few moments ago I showed that time after time the Treasurer was satisfied with 1 per cent. in royalties from other Queensland projects.

Mr. Chalk: Be fair in your argument. One per cent. is royalty; \$50,000,000 is freight including royalty.

Mr. TUCKER: I will be fair. The Treasurer is making a straight-out demand for \$50,000,000 from the calculated profit of \$250,000,000.

Mr. Chalk: That is correct.

Mr. TUCKER: Nowhere in the Goonyella agreement do I see that the Treasurer has demanded that Utah pay part of the profit it makes on the coal.

Mr. Chalk: One per cent. royalty plus freight is what the company is paying under the Goonyella agreement.

Mr. TUCKER: The new project also has a railway line.

Mr. Chalk: Of course it has.

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. gentleman will be getting freight from that, perhaps on the same basis as he is getting it at Goonyella. But he has not demanded from Utah a share of the \$400,000,000 profit that it will make in the next 40 years. He has asked for much less from the Japanese and Americans in that coal project, but on this occasion he has asked for a large share of the profit from the company at Greenvale. The Treasurer is shaking his head. That is understandable, of course, because it is a paradox. I ask: why the change of heart?

Mr. Chalk: There has not been any change of heart.

Mr. TUCKER: Does the leopard change its spots? In one instance the hon. gentleman has demanded only a small payment from overseas companies—

Mr. Chalk: That is only your interpretation.

Mr. TUCKER: Now he is demanding a huge amount from another company. I am not castigating him for asking for more. I was one of those—I always will be—who said that the Government should ask for more. I am merely pointing out that, for some reason unknown to hon. members, the hon. gentleman has done an about-turn and has tried to use hon. members on this side of the Chamber by saying that it was the demand by the Opposition—

Mr. Chalk: I did not say that.

Mr. TUCKER: You implied it.

Mr. Chalk: I did not imply it.

Mr. TUCKER: You implied it many times.

Mr. Chalk: You have been reading from the brief that has been given to you by Metalsex. I have the brief that you have.

Mr. TUCKER: If I had read the brief I might have been more bitter, because I imagine the company would be bitter at present.

It makes the Opposition look for other reasons. There are some nasty rumours abroad in Townsville and in North Queensland at the moment, but I do not intend to repeat them because it is possible that they are not true or are not correctly based. All I say is that they are abroad and are worth keeping in mind. I suppose the Government has people reporting to it in the same way as people report to the Opposition. The Comalco share issue did not help the Government. Episodes such as that only add fuel to the fire when people are whispering about what may or may not be happening behind the scenes in the Government. If the Government does not like that, it has only itself and the Ministers who accepted Comalco shares to blame.

I am very much in favour of an equitable return. By the same token, only a fool kills the goose that lays the golden egg. The hon. gentleman has asked me for some constructive ideas relative to this question.

Mr. Chinchen: No, we did not.

Mr. TUCKER: The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt has not a constructive idea in his head. If I may use the vernacular, he comes in on the "grouter" after the Leader of the Opposition or some other hon. member has made a speech.

Mr. Chinchen: No, I do not. Tell us your constructive suggestion.

Mr. TUCKER: Delays in the Greenvale project will bring Metalsex into competition with other major new projects. If some hon. members had gone to Western Australia earlier this year—

Mr. Chinchen: I have been there.

Mr. TUCKER: Perhaps the hon. member has, but the difference between him and us is that we saw things and understood them. We know what is happening in regard to the nickel refineries over there and we are also well aware of the fact that in the next few years many major nickel producers will be coming onto the world market. If Greenvale is marginal at any time, it is possible that it may not get off the ground at all and that would be a disaster for North Queensland and the City of Townsville. Other industrial projects flow from such a big undertaking as Greenvale.

I believe it is the Government's duty to resolve the stalemate. I am not against it asking for a fair and equitable share but perhaps the Treasurer might allow the company to begin operations without putting an imposition on it during the early years and then, after it has started working and begun production, he could ask for his share—in the later years of production rather than in the first.

Mr. Chinchen: Babes in the wood.

Mr. TUCKER: We may be babes in the wood, but I will pass on the remark to those people in Townsville who do not happen to be our supporters. Many feel that if this attitude was taken and if the Government did, in fact, ask for its share at a later date rather than initially while the project is in its first few years, when it might find it very hard to pay—

Mr. Chalk: Why would they find it hard to pay when they make \$7,000,000 themselves in the first year?

Mr. TUCKER: If they are able to do this, so much the better, and if the Treasurer is able to show us that this can be done and that they would—

Mr. Chalk: They are their figures, not mine.

Mr. TUCKER: If they would sustain no hurt from it, then I go along with it, but if the reverse is the case and it is shown that the Treasurer, in fact, is not adopting a fair and equitable attitude towards them, then we are ready to attack him. However, I brought this matter up today because I think it is vital to North Queensland. It is also vital that we should know the whole story relating to this company and not only a part of it.

Now let me turn to the public works that the Treasurer mentioned. I believe that the public works programme outlined in the Financial Statement is very disappointing.

Public works affect the local economy. If we have a dearth of them we quickly find ourselves faced with an unemployment problem. As we know, most public works involve the building industry, which injects finance quickly into the economy of an area, but, when building in an area ceases, unemployment follows very quickly.

I believe that the public works programme for this year has been cut back and, being parochial for a moment, I am sorry that on this occasion I have been unable to discern in the capital works programme any mention of a new police station for Townsville. The present building is old and dilapidated and completely inadequate for the police staff working there. I have spoken of this on many occasions before. The state of the building must affect police efficiency.

Unfortunately, all representations made over the years seem to have failed. We have achieved nothing previously and it appears that we will again achieve nothing this year. The Treasurer has merely mentioned, as he has done for years, that "Planning is proceeding for the erection of new Courts of Law at Townsville." For a long time we have put up with intolerable conditions in the Townsville Supreme Court. Once more North Queensland has missed out in public works, but that is usual.

I turn now to freights. Although the Financial Statement contains a short reference to freights, I cannot find any substantial reference to an alteration of northern and country freight rates. It would appear from the Financial Statement that no provision has been made at all for them. If Beckingsdale Management Services recommends drastic alterations in the freight rate structure—and I cannot see why it would not—there appears to be no way of implementing those recommendations. I am convinced that when that organisation's report is made available it will contain recommendations about northern freight rates. When I see that no real provision is made for anything that is likely to emanate from this consultant's report, I doubt the sincerity of the Government.

On page 8 of his Financial Statement the Treasurer foreshadows further rises in freight rates in the forthcoming year; so North Queensland is in a very sorry state. Of course, this is in line with the Premier's famous pre-election statement that he made on the Atherton Tableland. He said, "I am the lone ranger in the Cabinet in regard to northern freight rates." He implied that he alone thought of northern freight rates and that his fellow Ministers agreed to the present anomalies, which favour the metropolitan area. When the Premier said that he was the lone ranger in the Cabinet, an election was looming, and the Country Party had to say something. The Premier was aware of the tremendous pressure that was brought to bear in electorates held by the Country Party. He said he thought of

freight reviews and concessions, but apparently the other Ministers, including his Country Party colleagues, did not. Of course, the Liberal Party said nothing because it was not represented in North Queensland electorates, except Bowen.

There is no doubt that in freight rates the North carries the South. With increasing quantities of coal and other minerals that will be carried by the railways, we in the North will have an added burden placed on our shoulders. Northern manufacturers find it almost impossible to compete with their metropolitan counterparts, for the simple reason that freight concessions seem to be given only to the metropolitan area. Owing to negotiated freight contracts, which give Brisbane manufacturers a decided advantage, we in the North are unable to compete. Eventually our industries will wither and die. When we ask the Treasurer what freight concessions are given, he says, "Those are secret and cannot be made public. They must be kept secret, otherwise competitors will find out about them." All sorts of freight concessions are given by the Railway Department to all sorts of manufacturers in the metropolitan area. I have been told that there can be 10 different freight rates for one commodity. They are confusing, and they also react against the North.

The Government says that it favours decentralisation, but it gives only lip service to it. The Minister for Transport makes secret arrangements with firms that are designed to centralise manufacturing operations in Brisbane, while the Minister for Industrial Development issues fine brochures which have been referred to today in this Chamber, but he does not have a chance of coming to grips with this great crippler of country industry. The Minister for Transport thumbs his nose at him. He has virtual life-or-death control over northern industries, as he can give southern industries secret concessions that we in this Chamber can get no information about.

The Budget contains no reference to planned relief for industries in North Queensland. It is the greatest paradox of all time that the Minister for Industrial Development should be able to say that he wishes to attract an industry to an area yet be unable to tell that industry what concessions it can expect. He has no control over that, as the Minister for Transport decides what will be done by way of freight concessions. If the Minister for Industrial Development, in trying to implement decentralisation, attempts to place an industry in an outside area but cannot tell it what it is up against, what is the good of his portfolio?

I ask hon. members to imagine Charles Court, the Western Australian Minister for Industrial Development, putting up with that sort of thing. Quite frequently what is done by the Minister for Industrial Development today is countermanded by the Minister

for Transport tomorrow. The Minister for Industrial Development should be a Minister with power to say what he can do for industry and to help in its decentralisation. Why must he always be subservient to the Minister for Transport? If he is to assist industry in any way he should have the major portfolio, not the minor one that unfortunately it is.

I am well aware that the Government's freight policy is turning the people of Mt. Isa away from Townsville and sending them into the arms of South Australia and the Northern Territory. Freight anomalies are causing Mt. Isa people to say, "We can get goods much cheaper from Adelaide or Darwin." I have been told that the people of Mt. Isa are flat out trying to do business elsewhere because of Queensland's anomalous freight rates. It seems that our manufacturers and business houses are slowly losing a lot of trade to the other States, but who can blame the Mt. Isa people if they can get a better deal elsewhere because of anomalous freight rates, which have a decisive effect on the cost of living in North Queensland. Living costs in the North and the West are very high, and freights play a significant part in arriving at them.

This Government is not really concerned about the unjust situation that exists in country areas, nor is it really concerned with decentralisation, to which it gives lip-service. Everything it does is designed to centralise industry in Brisbane and to take the life-blood out of industry in the country. The Budget clearly emphasises that point.

This is an apologetic Government. The Budget is a stay-put Budget. It does not indicate in any way that we are moving forward. It is the Budget of a tired Government that is devoid of thrust, vision and real leadership, and has been sickened by its inner strife and the in-fighting that is going on at present.

Mr. Hughes: The Opposition has not put up a constructive suggestion.

Mr. TUCKER: It is a coalition in name only; it is falling apart at the seams, and the "ginger" group is contributing to that in a real way. If this Budget, which contains no ideas, is the Budget for the start of the 1970's, the sooner Queenslanders turf this Government out of office the better.

Hon. G. W. W. CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (10.37 p.m.), in reply: Because of the lateness of the hour, I do not propose to reply this evening. I intend to deal fairly extensively on Thursday with the various matters raised during the debate.

(Leave to continue speech tomorrow granted.)

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.39 p.m.