

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 1970

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER, 1970

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Hooper, Greenslopes) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

PAPERS

The following paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Commissioner of Police for the year 1969-70.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Mining Acts, 1898 to 1967.

Orders in Council under—

The State Development and Public Works Organisation Acts, 1938 to 1964.

The Mining Acts, 1898 to 1967.

Balance Sheet of the Coal Mine Workers' Pensions Fund for the year 1969-70.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING JUDGES

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

(1) Is he aware of a circular notice dated August 24 sent by ten members of the Queensland Bar Association claiming, by way of notice of a special meeting of the Bar Association—(i) that the view of the Association is that when a judge of the Supreme Court or District Court is, because of appointment as Administrator, absence on leave, sittings in special tribunals, or for any other reason whatsoever, likely to be unable to participate in the ordinary sittings of the Court of which he is a member for a period of four weeks or more, an acting judge should be appointed to that Court for that period, (ii) that the view of the Association is that there is no obligation of any kind whatsoever on the Government to appoint as a judge of the Supreme or District Court any person who has been an acting judge of the Court in question, and (iii) that the Committee should take all necessary steps to bring the view of the Association expressed in (i) and (ii) above to the attention of the Attorney-General as soon as possible?

(2) In view of this feeling expressed by several members of the Bar Association, what does he propose to do in regard to the appointment of acting judges?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "A Sub-Committee consisting of the Honourable the Acting Chief Justice and representatives of the Bar Association and the Queensland Law Society has

for some weeks been examining the systems in operation in the Court concerning the entering, listing and hearing of cases. This examination is expected to indicate whether additional judges or acting judges are required."

VACANCIES, LICENSING COMMISSION

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

(1) When will he appoint a chairman to the vacancy in the Licensing Commission?

(2) When will he fill the vacancy in the Licensing Commission?

(3) Who are the prospective appointees?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "The matter is under consideration."

STATEMENTS BY VICE-CHANCELLOR, QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

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

(1) Is he aware that the University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Zelman Cowen, when addressing a meeting of Brisbane businessmen, informed them that they should have a sense of proportion in an age when there was a fashion for violence?

(2) Will he ascertain whether the Vice-Chancellor is now condoning, excusing or encouraging violence on the University campus?

(3) Is he aware that the Vice-Chancellor compared incidents by hoons and larrikins on the campus, when engaging in violence, to the tolerance shown to people on strike?

(4) Will he find out what connection there is between a lawful and legitimate strike and the disregard of law in demonstrations of violence on the campus for no real reason at all?

(5) Will he tell the Vice-Chancellor to keep out of industrial affairs as he appears to have more problems than he can handle on the University campus itself?

(6) How can the Vice-Chancellor say that not one single hour of study time has been lost at the University when these idle demonstrations and manoeuvring of tent towns go on for hours?

(7) As the Vice-Chancellor said at the same time that this University is the most poorly-financed University per student in Australia, what does he intend to do to correct this rather startling and unsatisfactory situation?

Answers:—

(1) "The Vice-Chancellor, in addressing the Australian Institute of Management, said that there appeared to be a fashion for violence in many parts of the world. He deplored it."

(2) "The Vice-Chancellor is totally opposed to violence on the University campus."

(3 to 5) "The Vice-Chancellor reports that he did not do as suggested. He pointed out that while vast numbers of hours were lost in industrial troubles in the community, not one class had been cancelled in the work of the University."

(6) "In respect of this Question the Vice-Chancellor has reiterated that not one class period had been cancelled and no student had been denied the opportunity of continuing his work."

(7) "In Queensland and in all other States, the financial situation in the Universities and in education generally is under constant review. As the Honourable Member well knows financial provision for education receives a high priority in public spending in Queensland."

BRISBANE CRICKET GROUND AND
TOWNSVILLE SPORTS RESERVE

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

Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of October 28 wherein he is reported as stating that abundant funds will be made available through the S.G.I.O. for the reconstruction and modernisation of the Brisbane Cricket Ground, Woolloongabba and, if so, will funds be made available on the same terms and conditions for the reconstruction and modernisation of the sports reserve and the Murray Sporting Complex, Townsville?

Answer:—

"The Honourable Member's Question is of a hypothetical nature. I am unable to provide an Answer to it without a comparable proposition being submitted to the State Government Insurance Office. If a proposition can be submitted with comparable feasibility of financial return to the State Government Insurance Office, it would receive consideration."

CLEARING OF TIDAL CREEKS, BRISBANE
AND TOWNSVILLE

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

Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of October 27 wherein he is reported as saying that the Government will spend a considerable sum of money in cleaning out tidal creeks

in the Brisbane area as a flood-prevention measure and, if so, will he take similar action with respect to tidal creeks in the Townsville area and advise the Townsville City Council of terms and conditions on a comparable basis with those for Brisbane?

Answer:—

"I am aware of the Press article to which the Honourable Member refers. Consideration is being given by the Department of Harbours and Marine in its capacity as the Brisbane Harbour Authority to ways and means of having rubbish and litter cleared from the bed and tidal banks of Breakfast Creek. This action is under consideration by the Department in the interests of harbour cleanliness and navigational safety in Brisbane Harbour and is not expected to have any more than a very minor effect upon flooding of the Breakfast Creek area. The Brisbane Harbour Authority has no jurisdiction or powers to take similar action within the limits of the Townsville Harbour."

PENALTIES FOR SERIOUS TRAFFIC
OFFENCES

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

Will the resolution that penalties for serious traffic offences be increased, which was overwhelmingly carried at the recent seminar on road safety at which he was present, be conveyed to the judiciary and, if so, by whom and in what manner?

Answer:—

"No."

SUSPENSION OF FIREMAN GERMAINE

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on September 17 regarding the suspension of fireman Germaine following a train collision at Narangba on June 8—

(1) Has the suspension been lifted?

(2) On what date did he commence duty?

(3) Will he be paid for the time he was off duty under suspension?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Monday, October 26."

(3) "This is a matter for determination by the General Manager, S.E.D., and Chief of Operations, Brisbane, in the exercise of the powers conferred on him by the Railways Acts."

RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUSTS

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

(1) How many River Trusts have been set up in Queensland under the River Improvement Trust Act on (a) coastal rivers and (b) inland rivers?

(2) What was the total finance made available to these Trusts during the last ten years by way of (a) subsidies and (b) loans?

(3) How much of this was required for emergency repairs to work already completed and damaged by catastrophies such as cyclone Ada and provided by (a) the Commonwealth, (b) the State and (c) the Trust itself by way of loans obtained?

(4) Has any other direct Commonwealth financial assistance been made to River Trusts in Queensland?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) six; (b) six."

(2) "(a) July 1, 1960 to June 30, 1970, \$457,516.96; (b) July 1, 1960 to June 30, 1970, Treasury Loans, \$86,988.02. Government Guaranteed Debenture Loans raised by Trusts, \$1,100,885."

(3) "During the period July 1, 1960 to June 30, 1971, expenditure on exceptional flood damage prior to Cyclone Ada has been: (a) Commonwealth—Condamine Trust, \$2,023 (1967), Herbert Trust, \$34,228 (1968); (b) State—Condamine Trust, \$2,276 (1967), Herbert Trust, \$34,227 (1968). (c) Trusts—Condamine Trust, \$2,783 (1967); Herbert Trust, \$34,227 (1968). In respect of damage by Cyclone Ada, the following amounts are to be provided: (a) Commonwealth—Pioneer Trust, \$15,667; Upper Pioneer Trust, \$16,667; Don River Trust, \$110,000. (b) State—Pioneer Trust, \$15,667; Upper Pioneer Trust, \$16,667; Don River Trust, \$110,000. (c) Trusts—Pioneer Trust, \$15,666; Upper Pioneer Trust, \$16,666; Don River Trust, \$110,000. The above amounts for Don River Trust will leave repairs costing \$56,000 not carried out."

(4) "No."

MAJOR POWER STATION DEVELOPMENT

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

In view of the State Electricity Commissioner's report that long-term planning is in hand for the development of the next major power station in Queensland after the Gladstone project, has a site been selected? If so, what is the selection and, if not, will the areas being investigated include sites in the Mackay district, with consideration being given to the possibility of the use of coal from the Bee Creek deposits?

Answer:—

"A site has not yet been selected and it will not be selected until detailed investigations have been completed. However I can assure the Honourable Member that these investigations will include all sites and sources of fuel offering favourable conditions for the production and transmission of electricity to the principal load centres of the State."

BLUE NURSING SERVICE

Dr. Crawford, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

Following his statement on October 27 that the extension of the Blue Nursing Service subsidy is not in accordance with Government policy—

(1) When and by whom was this decision made?

(2) When was this Government policy discussed by the joint-party caucus?

Answers:—

(1) "The Honourable Member is obviously challenging the wise policy of the Government to channel its financial resources into areas where financial assistance is most needed. That is the Government policy I referred to in my Answer to the Honourable Member's Question Without Notice on October 27. If the Honourable Member, perchance, intended to challenge the action taken over ten months ago following a very substantial increase in Commonwealth financial assistance to nursing-home type hospitals conducted by all, and I repeat all, Churches and Charitable Organisations, I advise the Honourable Member that approvals and amendments to approvals for the payment of both capital subsidy and maintenance subsidy for such institutions are given by Cabinet. Cabinet approvals extend over the period from June 7, 1949, to the most recent decision of November 24, 1969."

(2) "Discussions in the joint-party meetings are on a basis of strict confidentiality, and I reject the Honourable Member's attempt to inveigle me into a breach of that confidentiality. Statements on joint-party discussions are made by the Honourable the Premier or his Deputy."

DEPENDENCY ON BARBITURATES AND ANALGESICS

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

(1) How many persons (a) under 25 years and (b) 25 years and over have been treated in Queensland for drug addiction since January 1, 1970, and of these how many were found to be addicted to (i) barbiturate and (ii) analgesic preparations?

(2) Has his attention been drawn to the findings of a survey on drug dependence in Brisbane by members of the Department of Psychological Medicine, Queensland University, as reported in the Medical Journal of Australia of August 29? If so, what is being done by his Department to combat the barbiturate and analgesic dependency problem as revealed in this survey?

Answers:—

(1) "As people in Queensland addicted to drugs may receive treatment at any of the 132 State hospitals and the special hospitals and clinics or may be treated by private medical practitioners, collection of the information sought by the Honourable Member would be a mammoth task, and the time and expense involved would not be warranted in the present circumstances. The great majority of cases of drug addiction relate to the two groups mentioned by the Honourable Member. Where addiction reaches a degree of severity indicating the need for specialised treatment, the patient is usually referred to a psychiatric hospital. Patients treated at Wolston Park Hospital and Wacol Rehabilitation Clinic for the twelve months ending June 30, 1970, were—

	Barbiturate Addiction		Total Drug Addiction	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Under 25 years	1	..	6	1
25 years and over	7	35	16	40

(2) "My awareness of the work and findings of the survey by the Department of Psychological Medicine has already been the basis of earlier statements in this House. It has long been realised that the most important way of approaching the drug dependency problem is by education. The Queensland Health Education Council has developed a very active drug health education programme. Following upon the receipt of Commonwealth assistance, this programme is at present gaining added momentum by the appointment of additional staff and the training of part-time health educators."

PROPOSED TEACHERS' COLLEGE,
ROCKHAMPTON

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

With regard to the proposal to establish a teachers' college in Rockhampton—

(1) Have the final plans for construction been completed and approved?

(2) Will construction commence in November this year and, if not, what is the anticipated date?

(3) What is the estimated cost?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "Provision is made in the State Grants (Advanced Education) Act 1969 for a Commonwealth contribution of \$700,000 to be matched by a similar State contribution for expenditure during the triennium commenced January 1, 1970, for the establishment of teacher college facilities within the framework of the existing Capricornia Queensland Institute of Technology at Rockhampton. A tender has recently been accepted for extensions to the dining and kitchen block at the college as the first step in the establishment of the teaching facilities. Work on this contract is expected to commence at an early date. Plans have been prepared and tenders will be invited in the near future for further buildings at the college which will be used for joint purposes of students in teacher education courses and other tertiary courses."

VALUATION OF BALONNE SHIRE

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

As the Valuer-General has just completed the valuation of the Balonne Shire which resulted in an over-all increase of 13 per cent. in the unimproved land values, can he justify this rise in view of the calamitous state of the wool market, the prolonged drought and the lack of confidence generally in land values?

Answer:—

"The valuation of the Balonne Shire has been made on the basis of the property market as at the relevant time and is considered by officers of the Valuer-General's Department to be justified on this basis."

MINING ROYALTIES, MOUNT ISA
DISTRICT

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on October 7 relative to royalties received from mining companies in the Mount Isa district, what is the reason for the progressive decline since 1966-67 in the amount of royalty received?

Answer:—

"From the figures below it will be seen that the decrease in royalty for the periods under review was due solely to the royalty received from Mount Isa Mines Limited—

	1966-67	1967-68	1968-69
	\$	\$	\$
Mount Isa Mines Limited	1,068,990.00	431,218.00	306,380.00
Other producers ..	742.70	1,748.50	6,611.19
Total ..	1,069,732.70	432,966.50	312,991.19

The year 1969-70 disclosed a substantial increase. The decrease in royalty payments by Mount Isa Mines Limited was caused mainly by a reduction in its mine earnings for these years. These earnings are the figures on which royalties are assessed. From its annual report, earnings for the year on which the above royalty was paid decreased progressively from \$15,859,992 to \$10,444,574."

CHEST X-RAYS OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

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

Why are railway employees required to book off duty and claim sick pay when recalled under the compulsory chest X-ray scheme to report to the Cairns Base Hospital's thoracic annexe for further tests?

Answer:—

"I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to the Question asked by the Honourable Member for Ipswich West on October 7, 1969. The existing provision is considered to be a generous one."

NILE PERCH

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

(1) Has a progress report been received regarding the Nile perch which were introduced into ponds at Townsville?

(2) If reports are satisfactory, will he expedite the stocking of Tinaroo Falls Dam and other suitable streams with these fish?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "No Nile Perch have been imported into Australia. The importation of exotic fish is subject to agreement by all States and the Commonwealth via the Australian Fisheries Council, and such agreement has not yet been reached in relation to the Nile Perch."

REMOVAL OF TREES, KENNEDY HIGHWAY

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

Further to his Answer to my Question on September 15 concerning the removal of trees along the Kennedy Highway, what arrangements have been made for the replanting of trees and what type is to be planted?

Answer:—

"No trees have yet been replanted. Arrangements are being made for the Forestry Department to supply the trees. The Main Roads Department District Engineer at Cairns will advise you directly when arrangements have been finalised."

AUTHORITIES TO PROSPECT

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

(1) Before granting an authority to prospect, what consideration is given to (a) alternative land usage and (b) the landholder's interests where the land is tenanted or owned by a person other than the applicant for such an authority?

(2) What powers or authorities has the Beach Protection Authority in relation to coastal land where authorities to prospect have been issued?

(3) Where applications are received by the Department for authorities to prospect coastal and beach areas, are they referred to the Beach Protection Authority?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) An authority to prospect is granted for the purpose of ascertaining the existence or otherwise of economic mineral deposits. In most cases such deposits are proved not to exist and, consequently, the matter of alternative land usage is not a problem. However, if at the outset it is apparent that mining might adversely affect other interests, notably agricultural, an authority to prospect is not granted. (b) The law makes provision for prospecting on private land and if such prospecting proves an economic mineral deposit a mining lease must be approved before mining begins. Applications for mining leases must be advertised before being heard by the warden in open court at which any person may lodge an objection to such applications. In the case of private land mining will not be approved until a compensation agreement between the applicant and land-owner has been lodged and approved."

(2) "The Honourable Member's attention is directed to sections 49 and 50 of the *Beach Protection Act of 1968*."

(3) "It is not usual to refer applications for authorities to prospect to the Beach Protection Authority but all applications for mining leases within the "coast" as defined in the *Beach Protection Act of 1968* are referred to the authority."

MANUFACTURE OF CAUSTIC SODA

Mr. Hanson, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Industrial Development,—

(1) As caustic soda (sodium hydroxide, NaOH) amounting to between 80,000 and 100,000 tons is used in the refining of bauxite to produce alumina at the Q.A.L. plant at Gladstone, has any submission been made to his Department to have caustic soda manufactured within this State on a site well removed from residential and commercial areas?

(2) As the greater proportion of caustic soda used at the alumina plant is imported from overseas and as the manufacturers, I.C.I.A.N.Z., Union Carbide and Dow Chemicals sought a restoration of the 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. tariff plus a support value, will he endeavour in the State's interests to have a caustic soda plant established in Central Queensland?

(3) As large bulk quantities are sold to the Queensland Alumina Company, as apparently an industry is being lost to the State because of the price demands of present Australian caustic soda manufacturers and as the alumina makers realise that caustic soda is a vital element in alumina production which must compete on world markets at world prices, has he or have his departmental officers investigated the possibility of the establishment of a plant in Queensland?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "As the Honourable Member will be aware from statements made both inside and outside this House, my Department has for some time been actively negotiating for the establishment of a chlor/alkali plant in Central Queensland. These negotiations are still proceeding. A provisional site has been reserved for such a project on the Department's Clinton Industrial Estate. The nature of the Honourable Member's Question would seem to suggest that he is pursuing his customary practice of endeavouring to join the band waggon when this Government is in an advanced stage of negotiation for the establishment of industrial enterprises in this State. In the light of the success of the Government's industrialisation policy, more particularly in the area represented by the Honourable Member, such an attitude is perhaps understandable."

TIME-PAYMENT CONTRACTS, BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL

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

(1) Has he seen a report in *The Courier-Mail* of October 28 headed "3 time payment works approved", stating that the Brisbane City Council had approved road and drainage works to cost \$1,054,926 by deferred-payment schemes?

(2) Has the Government approved of this method of finance as applying to these works?

(3) Will the Government pay subsidy on these works? If so, how much?

(4) Is this method of finance within the terms of approval of the Loan Council?

(5) Have these borrowings on deferred-payment commitments been approved by the Loan Council?

(6) Are these works being financed by hire-purchase companies?

(7) What rate of interest is charged to the Council?

(8) Will the cost of these works plus interest be paid by ratepayers?

Answers:—

(1) "I have seen the report referred to."

(2) "The 1967 Amendment of the Local Government Acts authorised the making of time-payment contracts subject to the limitations laid down in the legislation."

(3) "Subsidy is paid on works carried out on a time-payment basis to the extent of the works expenditure component of progressive payments to the contractor. The estimated interest component in the cost does not attract subsidy. Subsidy on road and drainage works is presently payable at the rate of 15 per cent."

(4 and 5) "Approval of the Australian Loan Council to deferred payment arrangements is necessary only in respect of proposals involving payments in excess of \$250,000 over a period extending more than three years beyond the completion of the project or the receipt of equipment being purchased."

(6 and 7) "Any financing arrangements involving a third party would be between the contractors and such party."

(8) The source of the funds required to meet the payments under the proposals, with the exception of the Government subsidy, is a matter for decision by the Brisbane City Council."

POLLUTION OF BREAKFAST AND ENOGGERA CREEKS

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

With reference to the Answer to my Question by the Minister for Local Government on September 4, 1969, concerning the pollution of Breakfast and Enoggera Creeks by oil from the Mayne railway yards, when did the Railway Department allow oil to pollute these creeks?

Answer:—

"I would suggest that the Honourable Member re-read the Answer furnished by the Honourable the Minister for Local Government on September 4, 1969. As I informed the Honourable Member yesterday, the matter of drainage from railway property at Mayne is receiving attention."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

IMPOSITION OF LEVIES ON IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS BY UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. WHARTON: I direct a question to the Premier. Has he read the Press statement in "The Courier-Mail" this morning by the Honourable John McEwen that Australian products would be faced with real barriers by Britain's proposal to impose levies on imports of foodstuffs? Will he maintain close liaison with the Federal Ministry of Trade and Queensland's Agent-General so that Queensland's interests in the marketing of sugar, beef, butter and other primary products will be safeguarded?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I did read the article to which the hon. member makes reference. I, as I am sure all members of this House are, am deeply concerned at the possible effects that such new arrangements might have on the primary products of this country and of our State. As the hon. member suggests, I will keep in close touch with the Prime Minister and the Honourable John McEwen, who is handling this problem.

Mr. CASEY: I ask the Premier: In view of the announcement of the British Conservative Government that it will place levies on imported foodstuffs, and the consequential effect that this action will have upon Queensland's primary products, will the Queensland Government consider the removal of all preferential clauses for goods and materials supplied from the United Kingdom for all future tenders called by the various Government departments?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: As the hon. member will appreciate, this is a matter of policy, which we do not discuss or reveal in this Chamber.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION AT UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Mr. HUGHES: I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: Has his attention been drawn to an article in today's "Courier-Mail" relative to the University Disciplinary Committee's recommendation to the university senate to suspend two students? If so, will the Minister, on behalf of the public and the State, commend the authorities concerned for the calm, efficient and effective manner in which this breach of decency, discipline and university statutes has been handled?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have noted the report. Of course, I shall be in touch with the university in this regard. While, to me, the action taken might be very commendable, I consider it would be a little presumptuous of me to speak on whether those here approve or disapprove—as obviously some hon. members disapprove—of the attitude adopted by an autonomous body like the university senate. Personally, I was rather

pleased at what happened, and can only hope that this will not precipitate any action that will require further and more drastic action.

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES— THIRD AND FOURTH ALLOTTED DAYS

(Mr. Ramsden, Merthyr, in the chair)

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1970-71

PREMIER AND DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEVELOPMENT

CHIEF OFFICE

Debate resumed from 27 October (see p. 1421) on Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's motion—

"That \$639,140 be granted for 'Premier and Department of State Development—Chief Office'."

Mr. F. P. MOORE (Mourilyan) (11.39 a.m.): On Tuesday evening I spoke on two items under the other Votes controlled by the Premier. I pointed out that the Premier had deviated from the organisation of his departments and, in many instances, had attacked the Australian Labour Party and cast aspersions on the integrity of Opposition members. To illustrate my point, I should like to quote from the editorial in "The Caboolture News" of 30 September, 1970. Under the heading, "Life Tough For The Premier", the editorial reads—

"Indications are that the Premier of Queensland, Mr. Joe Bjelke-Petersen, is finding the going a little tough. Speculation is whether he will continue in office for perhaps as long as he looked forward to when he took office.

"Mr. Petersen told a Young Country Party gathering in his electorate of Barambah just recently that, 'I won't last ten years like Sir Francis Nicklin'. And he went on to explain just why. It was a story of a man realising that life can be a lot tougher than anticipated.

"There can be no doubt that Mr. Petersen has had anything but a placid life as Premier and that in recent times particularly he has found it most difficult to stop 'putting his foot in it' with almost everything he says and does.

"The current panto-like state of affairs existing in connection with the Government's much publicised questions-without-notice sessions is an excellent example. Everybody knew that these sessions would be used to some extent to enable Ministers to make statements under the guise of answers to questions by the simple expedient of making arrangements for a colleague to ask a certain question so that loaded answers could be given."

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! The Committee has discussed the Legislative Assembly. We are now dealing with the Premier's Estimates.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: This concerns the Premier. It is a statement referring to the running of his department.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Questions without notice come under Legislative Assembly, not the Minister for State Development.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: The editorial continues—

“On the other hand, parliamentarians like Murrumba’s Mr. Nicholson, on the verge of establishing a record as Speaker in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, are gaining added respect and admiration on all sides for the more practical and efficient roles they are playing in Parliament.

“Mr. Nicholson’s recent straight-forward criticism of what he termed ‘slanging matches’ in Parliament is an example of his obvious determination to carry out his job without fear or favour and to preserve the dignity and meaning of government.

“Now he has been asked by the Press to take a hand in keeping the ridiculous out of the should-be-sublime questions-without-notice business, and there’s no doubt that he’ll do just that.

“Mr. Nicholson, regarded with equal respect by both Government and Opposition members alike, and with the toughness, experience and ability to do the job, could perhaps be a worthy successor to Mr. Petersen, should the Premier decide to give it away.

“The Speaker scoffs at the suggestion, but there are others that don’t. He must certainly be regarded as a possible starter, and one with winning prospects at that.

“Take a look at the rest of the field and what do you see? Well, what?”

I am quoting from “The Caboolture News”, and the hon. member for Murrumba is chairman of directors of its publisher, North Coast News Company Pty. Ltd.

Mr. HUGHES: I rise to a point of order. I ask if the hon. member for Mourilyan is correct in speaking on matters not contained in the Vote now under discussion, on which matter a ruling has already been given. We must not, as a Government, be accused of wasting time and not dealing with Estimates properly, as the Opposition is presently doing.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): I have already asked the hon. member for Mourilyan to confine himself to a discussion of the Premier and Department of State Development. I have already ruled that the conduct of the Legislative Assembly has been debated, and that it is now out of order to discuss it. If the hon. member cannot continue his remarks in accordance with my ruling, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: I observe your rulings, Mr. Ramsden; I respect you as the Chair, and I am not, unlike the gentleman who spoke previously, trying to question your authority. What I am trying to do is point out that the Premier has virtually departed from organising his own department, and what I am quoting goes to prove beyond doubt that that is so. Mr. Speaker must have mentioned this matter to the newspaper from which I am quoting. He must have put his knife into the Premier’s back before 20 October, because this newspaper is dated 30 September.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I have drawn the hon. member’s attention to the fact that the Committee is not discussing Mr. Speaker. He does not come under the administrative acts of the Premier’s Department. Will the hon. member please confine his remarks to that department?

Mr. F. P. MOORE: I conclude by calling on the Premier to resign. If he does not, he will get his head lopped off, even if it is by the Treasurer, Mr. Chalk.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (11.45 a.m.): In taking part in the debate on the Vote now before the Committee, I wish to deal with a question of vital importance to many members representing large electorates. Of course, elected members of this Assembly must keep faith with their electors on matters raised with them, and hon. members who represent large electorates are being placed in a very embarrassing position by a situation that is not of their making.

I refer to appointments to the Commission of the Peace for Queensland. This problem has become so serious in my electorate that, following the 1969 election, it was necessary for me to take the matter up with the Premier and point out to him the growth in the enrolment in the Belmont electorate. In 1960 the enrolment was 12,280; for the 1969 election it was 19,919. A police check would show that the present enrolment is about 23,000.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will tie his remarks in with the Vote under discussion. Redistribution and enrolment matters come under the Department of Justice.

Mr. NEWTON: I appreciate your remarks, Mr. Ramsden. I am not dealing with the Department of Justice, nor is it my intention to do so. I am dealing with recommendations made for appointments to the Commission of the Peace for Queensland, which is a responsibility of the Premier.

Today, more people seem to be approaching their State members and requesting appointment as commissioners of the peace for Queensland. I have noticed for some time that quite a number of new documents are being issued which require the perusal

of a justice of the peace, and that the signature of the person making the declaration or filling in the form must be witnessed by a justice of the peace. At the same time, it is quite evident that many members of the younger generation are entering professional and academic fields of employment and, because of their calling or occupation, are being called upon to witness documents.

As I said earlier, hon. members representing large electorates in Queensland find themselves in a rather serious situation. In my own case, on not one but several occasions the Premier's Department has written to me indicating that I am well in advance of the quota of nominations allowed under the present system and that I might have to discontinue submitting names until those that have already been submitted are dealt with.

I make it quite clear to the Committee that I represent one of the fast-growing electorates in the metropolitan area, an electorate that includes quite a number of new suburbs. Because of this, I have a waiting list of 26 people who require their names to be submitted for consideration for appointment to the Commission of the Peace in Queensland. This is embarrassing to me, as it would be to any member of Parliament. If people write to a member or phone him, he must inform them that a quota system operates in the submission of names by each member for appointment to the Commission of the Peace. I do not know how long this system has been in operation, but at the present time I am allowed to nominate only four persons a quarter.

Mr. Low: It has been operating for many years.

Mr. NEWTON: I thank the hon. member for Cooroora. The point I am making is that if a quota system restricting nominations to four persons a quarter is to operate, some special consideration should be given to electorates that have grown as large as mine has.

So serious has the position become in my electorate that I was forced to write to the Premier on 27 May, 1969, the text of my letter being as follows:—

"Dear Mr. Bjelke-Petersen,

"I am making representations in relation to the present position applying to the nomination of persons for the Commission of the Peace for Queensland.

"In 1960 when the Belmont Electorate was made a new section, the enrolment was 12,280. Today it has grown to 19,919 and as a Member I am still allowed to nominate only four persons per quarter for consideration for a Commission of the Peace. My present quota is filled until the end of June 1969, but I have a waiting list of fourteen persons seeking an appointment.

"It has always been my policy to submit four each quarter instead of piling up a waiting list at your Department, but, if the present position is to remain as far as growing electorates are concerned, I will have no alternative but to submit the fourteen nominations in bulk.

"In view of the above, I would be pleased if you could look into this matter at your convenience and let me know if there is to be any change as far as growing electorates are concerned."

Mr. B. Wood: I will bet you got nothing out of him.

Mr. NEWTON: The reply I received will indicate the truth of what the hon. member says.

The Premier replied to me on 4 June, 1969, as follows:—

"Dear Mr. Newton,

"I have your letter of 27th May, 1969, in which you refer to the fact that the number of voters in your Electorate of Belmont is approaching the 20,000 mark and that on this basis your annual quota of sixteen nominations to the Commission of the Peace is inadequate.

"I appreciate your position but hasten to point out that this is not peculiar to the Belmont Electorate. All I can say at the present juncture is that this is a situation which could be remedied following any Electorate re-distribution.

"At the moment it would be extremely difficult to institute some form of pro rata system based on Electorate figures.

"At the same time it must be remembered that there is no great dearth of Justices of the Peace in the metropolitan area and that this number is constantly increasing by virtue of the fact there are twenty-eight metropolitan M.M.L.A., making about 450 nominations annually."

I reiterate the point I wish to make to the Committee. If we are to retain a system of quotas, some consideration should be given to growing electorates. It is 10 years or more since the last redistribution; the enrolment in my electorate has grown virtually to the size of two electorates, yet I am still allowed to nominate only four persons a quarter.

This is the situation of which I complain, and it is embarrassing for any member of Parliament who represents a fast-growing electorate to be confronted with it. Of course, I realise that the Government has looked at various methods of overcoming the problem to save members of Parliament embarrassment, but the situation remains unchanged.

Unless the Government implements a policy of redistribution, other hon. members and I could be placed in a much more embarrassing situation than at present. Sometimes I receive representations from people who live in the suburbs that border my electorate and who should approach either

the hon. member for Chatsworth or the hon. member for Mt. Gravatt. They have been referred to those two hon. members.

This is a serious matter. If we continue to operate under the present system, which has prevailed for many years, I suggest that the Premier look at the matter of the nomination of persons as commissioners of the peace. As the hon. member for Cooroora has pointed out, the present quota is four persons a quarter. I do not feel that any hon. member should be made to suffer embarrassment in the manner that I have described.

Dr. Crawford: How many people are put on the commission every year throughout the State?

Mr. NEWTON: I would not know. The Premier indicated to me that I would get 16 a year in my electorate, but some electorates would not have that demand.

Dr. Crawford: All the metropolitan ones do, and I am way behind, as you are.

Mr. NEWTON: My situation is entirely different from the hon. member's. Although his electorate is a growing one, it is not growing as fast as it did years ago. I can recall when, after World War II, extensive housing development was occurring in the Wavell electorate. My electorate is growing faster than most others in the metropolitan area, and it will continue to, because the areas that were included in it were excised from the Mt. Gravatt and Wynnum electorates. Homes cannot be built into the sea at Wynnum or on the mountains in the Mt. Gravatt electorate, so the people must come into my electorate.

Unless the Premier does what he indicated he would do in the reply that I have read out, hon. members will continue to suffer embarrassment. If my electorate is interfered with in any way, such as being cut in halves—and it is not for me to say; probably the Government will determine that—

Mr. Davies: It should be the commission that determines it.

Mr. NEWTON: It should be. The Opposition has stated its position clearly. We hope that a commission will be set up to consider all the factors and will reach an unbiased decision that will treat all political parties equally.

If there is a redistribution of electorates, any member who took over what might be left of my electorate would find 26 people waiting for their names to be submitted so that they could become commissioners of the peace. On the list already submitted to the Premier's Department, my quota is full, probably until December, 1971. That is a serious matter.

Members on this side of the Chamber have conferred to see if some of us have not as great a demand as others from persons

asking to be nominated, but we have found ourselves in the same position as the hon. member for Wavell indicated that he was in. Members representing metropolitan electorates and provincial city electorates, with fast-growing areas, are all in the same position.

That was the only matter I wish to deal with, and I put it forward on the basis that it affects most members of Parliament, and because I believe that no member of Parliament should be placed in such an embarrassing position.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (12.2 p.m.): The Estimates for the Premier's Department are very important, and we could devote quite some time to debating the many facets pertaining to it. Before I develop certain submissions that I wish to make, however, I desire to place on record appreciation of the courtesy extended to members of Parliament generally by two officers of the Premier's Department, namely, Mr. Spann and Mr. Maher. I am very conscious of the fact that at all times they are extremely courteous to members of Parliament, whose position they apparently respect. A member has only to make a submission to either of them to get a ready and courteous response. That is certainly appreciated by all of us. I mention those two officers specifically because I believe I should refer to their unfailing courtesy and the way in which they almost bend over backwards to assist us.

The Agent-General for Queensland in London carries a very grave responsibility, and in the last few years Queensland has been very fortunate to have Dr. Summerville in that position. No doubt he has been faced with considerable trouble because of the impending entry of the United Kingdom into the European Common Market, and certain complexities relative to trade agreements have undoubtedly worried him. He has had to ensure that the produce exported from Queensland is adequately placed so that we might receive a good price for it. He has performed a wonderful public service, which I wish to emphasise during this debate.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of liaison in the Agent-General's office in that we are not getting the number of immigrants that we should, particularly from the United Kingdom. We are faring badly compared with other States. The Government has been remiss in not encouraging the Agent-General to increase the number of migrants to Queensland to fill vacancies in trades, professions and many other avenues of work—both skilled and unskilled—in the expanding economy of the State.

One has only to walk along the streets of capital cities and towns in the southern States to see the number of migrants there. Queensland has lagged in this respect. Many projects are about to be launched here and there will be difficulty, as there has been in the past, in getting the tradesmen and

specialised workmen necessary to complete them. This is to be regretted because, with the advent of a Labour administration in this State, large-scale development will be launched, requiring the resources and planning of a wise administration to satisfy the demands of industry and to ensure that the skilled workmen are available and placed.

Many years ago a request was made to the Agent-General's office in London to see if it could encourage United Kingdom dentists to come here. This was wise and judicious planning by the Government because there was a shortage of dentists in this State. The Agent-General's office was very co-operative and extended itself. The result was that this service was adequately provided in our public hospitals. This is the sort of work that the Agent-General's office could engage in. There is not sufficient liaison in that office to see that migrants who are vitally necessary in Queensland are assisted to become residents of this State.

Yesterday, in company with many other hon. members, Ministers, and officials of Parliament, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the new State Government Insurance Office. Either the Treasurer or the general manager said that we were lucky as the company had gone international. That made me recall questions that I had asked a former Premier relative to the terms and conditions of occupancy of Queensland House on The Strand, which the Government rents from Central and District Properties Limited, Berkeley Square House, Berkeley Square, Westminster. I believe that if the State owns an insurance company and rents premises, that company should carry the insurance on those premises. That is normal, simple, common-sense business practice.

I also asked the Premier whether the S.G.I.O. insured the furniture, effects, stock and other items in that building. I was told that no insurance relative to this building was carried by the S.G.I.O. and that the lessor had the right to decide which insurance company would handle this business. I was told also that it was not the Government's policy to insure items of this nature. This is contrary to normal, common-sense business practice.

I suggest to the Premier that he use every endeavour to see that the owners of the property occupied by the Agent-General consider the State Government Insurance Office in any extension or rebuilding carried out. After all, insurance companies from the United Kingdom and various other places come to Queensland and do considerable business here. Of course, their bona fides must be established, and they must be approved by the Insurance Commissioner. Why should the reverse not take place? If the State Government Insurance Office wishes to go international and become involved in insurance business in other parts

of the world, I hope its administrators can see the common sense of the submissions I am now making. It is also very desirable that my suggestion should apply to all State properties under the administration of the Premier in places other than Queensland.

Another matter with which I wish to deal comes under the heading of Trust and Special Funds, through the Premier and Department of State Development. I refer to the Moura Railway Project Fund, which appears under Trust and Special Funds in the Estimates of Premier and Department of State Development, at page 9 of the Estimates. I should like to bring to the attention of the Committee that the report of the Auditor-General shows, in the portion dealing with this fund that there were no further advances from Loan Fund during the year 1969-70, and the total to 30 June of this year was \$27,500,000. Net expenditure to 30 June, 1970, was \$27,290,001, of which over \$400,000 was incurred during 1969-70. That left an unexpended balance of \$209,999.

I should also like to bring to the notice of the Committee a question that I asked pertaining to this fund, appearing at page 80 of Volume 249, 1968, of "Hansard". Among other things, I asked—

"Was the final cost in excess of or below the original estimate?"

I was informed—

"The final cost is not yet available. It is expected that the amount spent will equal the original estimated cost of \$27,500,000, but not exceed that amount."

That was fair enough.

Another part of my question was—

"On what firm date did the Railway Department actually take over the railways and did the department on doing so release all contractors from further obligations?"

Another part of my question was—

"Have any legal claims been made or can they be made under the agreement against any contractor or contracting firm for faulty and inferior workmanship?"

I also asked—

"Since the Railway Department has assumed full responsibility for the railway line, what amounts have been expended by the Department on such matters as line buckling, landslides, washouts, strengthening of bridge piers and foundations and all other appropriate matters?"

To my great surprise, I was told in answer to that question that no legal claims were made against the contractor. The answer then stated—

"The contract documents entered into by contractors provide that the making and acceptance of the final payment shall constitute a waiver of all claims by the Commissioner other than those arising from faulty work, from requirements of the

specification, or from manufacturer's guarantees. Under the contract for track construction the faulty work must appear within three months of final payment."

Since the money from the railway project fund has been spent, a really unfortunate state of affairs has developed on this line. Not long after the line was taken over by the Railway Department, there were huge landslides everywhere, particularly on the hilly sections, whenever it rained. The department has had to issue to employees innumerable advices and orders relative to speed restrictions. That has been necessary because of the discovery of clay-holes and other disabilities that point to inadequate investigations by the consultants, Ford, Bacon and Davis.

Speed restrictions are only a part of the enormous number of instructions issued by the department, and I remind the Committee that a great deal of buckling of the line occurred many months after its construction. Hon. members were informed in this Chamber that the consultants were recognised throughout the world as authorities on the construction of railway lines. In spite of that, many of the sleepers used, apparently on their recommendation, were inadequate. Miles and miles of sleepers have been removed and discarded, and they have been replaced by sleepers of greater strength that meet higher specifications.

The considerable amount of strengthening of bridges that has taken place makes one wonder whether the consultants carried out a complete and detailed investigation in the first place. I know that a firm of Italian contractors was given the task of strengthening a railway bridge that was built on the property of a former member of this Assembly, and it had to enter into indentures to the tune of almost \$1,000,000 to guarantee that the work would be done satisfactorily. But I point out that that would not have been necessary if the work had been done correctly in the first instance.

I do not place the entire blame on the contractors, who worked under extremely difficult conditions. The consultants were given the task of placing there a line that would be completely adequate for the expected traffic, but unfortunately they did not do it very efficiently. Only a few months ago barrel trucks loaded with concrete were taken to different parts of the line so that concrete could be dumped into holes. I do not think the consultants would know where those trucks went, but it was necessary to take that action in an endeavour to strengthen the line.

I shall raise the matter again in this Chamber, but I thought it was so serious that I should at least mention it in this debate and ventilate inadequacies relative to the expenditure of moneys from the Moura Railway Project Fund. It is a matter that demands the attention of all hon. members, particularly the Premier. As a member of Parliament, I think I am acting correctly

in being very critical of the consultants on this occasion. I hope that the railway project to be undertaken to connect the Goonyella coalfield with the coast will be completed more successfully than the construction of the Gladstone-Mourra line.

I suggest that the Premier, his department, his Ministers and the administration generally were very remiss in not ensuring very intense investigation before planning and construction began and strict supervision during construction and the period immediately after it.

I do not know of one building project in respect of which contract documents are entered into and signed without some sort of a time lapse in which the parties can satisfy themselves that the building is sufficiently substantial not to collapse around their ears. Unfortunately, on this occasion the Railway Department rushed in quickly to take over the complete responsibility, and I should be very interested to know whether any statement, private or otherwise, will be made to the consultants informing them of the terrible inadequacies of this developmental project. I assume that there have been bad results and no castigation.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton South) (12.21 p.m.): In this debate I wish to deal mainly with one aspect of the Premier's Department, namely State development. At the very outset, I ask: what exactly does the Premier do relative to State development? One would think that possibly he should play a co-ordinating role, that is, to co-ordinate development in the State.

Mr. Low: Through the Co-ordinator-General.

Mr. WRIGHT: I am speaking of the Premier personally. Looking around the State, one might ask if the Premier does actually perform this role, because I believe that there is very little co-ordination in the development of the State. Instead, when something good happens, such as the increase in coal production, this Government is very quick to take the credit, and when something bad happens the Government and the Premier are very ready to say, "Well, the drought caused it"; or "It has nothing to do with us."

I believe that one of the great needs in State development is co-ordination, and therefore we must look to the way in which we administer development in the State. One of the first things that I feel is necessary is a set plan. We have heard of five-year plans in other countries, five-year advancement plans and a five-year leap forward. If Queensland is to grow and become more than a Cinderella State in Australia, I think it is necessary to have a long-range plan of State development. It is now simply a minor aspect of the portfolio of Premier and Minister for State Development, and means very little to most members of this Committee. We need to embark on a five-year plan of development in

this State. However, to do this, I think it would be necessary to change the present parliamentary term from three years to five.

I have given consideration to this matter and it is my personal opinion that it may be a very good thing. At the moment, we hold elections around May and it is August before Parliament starts to work. I am not throwing any abuse at parliamentary members, because I know they start working in their own electorates immediately after the elections. I am speaking purely of legislative work, which does not start before the August session. We then have the Christmas break. This is the pattern every year, and so we work as a Parliament for few months of the year. I believe that much could be gained by extending or increasing the Parliamentary term from three years to five.

Mr. Murray: The public is always suspicious of that suggestion although this complaint is fairly general.

Mr. WRIGHT: The public may be suspicious but, after all, we have been elected to do a job, and I do not think we can do it properly and to the best of our ability if we have only three years in which to work and, of those three years, we only use possibly half the term in actually considering and passing legislation. I think much could be gained by my suggestion. I am not being party political; regardless of what party was in power, I believe my suggestion would allow the Government to work at greater length and thus more effectively. The Government would be able to plan and have time to implement its plans.

Mr. Murray: I think it is sufficient to say that the United Kingdom members of Parliament and Ministers have considerable sympathy for us under our system.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I hope that the hon. member will tie this up with the Estimates under debate.

Mr. WRIGHT: I am speaking about State development, and I believe that an important aspect of it is planning. That is the point I am trying to make. As I have said, a period of three years is far too short. If the Premier's term of office was extended to five years he could really get down to his work as Minister for State Development.

Of the utmost importance is the co-ordination of our activities. Other hon. members have spoken about speeches being too lengthy, but this is not the only aspect in which valuable time is lost.

Mr. P. Wood: The hon. member who made that comment makes longer speeches than anybody else.

Mr. WRIGHT: I believe he does. It was the hon. member for Chatsworth, was it not?

Parliament must be given the opportunity to plan ahead. It is very easy to become parochial. In the 18 months that I have been in Parliament I have spoken many times about Central Queensland. Today I should like to discuss its development.

Recently a booklet was published by the Department of Industrial Development on the potential of Central Queensland as related to the development of the State as a whole. A complete survey was conducted, but little notice has been taken of the findings of that survey. Instead Central Queensland has become the Cinderella region of the State. No doubt many hon. members have visited Central Queensland, and, in the light of the tremendous coal production that is being achieved in Central Queensland, I am sure they realise that that portion of the State possesses tremendous potential in that sphere. But the Government has failed to consider the potential for development of Central Queensland relative to the many other industries in the area.

Development should be tied to the potential of a particular area in all its aspects. It is well known that Central Queensland is a major cattle-raising area, and I have emphasised that fact when speaking about the need to develop Port Alma as a meat port. I have stressed the fact that approximately 60 per cent. of the State's total of cattle is within 250 to 300 miles of Port Alma. I am sure hon. members realise that Port Alma is playing a major role in the development of Central Queensland; yet the meat industry is not being co-ordinated to its greatest advantage.

A great deal remains to be done in Central Queensland, so the Premier should look at its growing industries and determine what additional steps the Government can take to provide a boost to the region. I am sure that, in addition to the cattle industry, a fertiliser industry could be established in Central Queensland. However, the Government tends to say, "We already have a cattle industry, so we will let that grow as it may; we have coal in the area, so let us emphasise that; and let us clear a small area of brigalow land." Very little is done about planning, and the Premier is not doing his job. All the activities should be co-ordinated.

The Government has claimed that large areas of brigalow land have been cleared and developed. They have been, and the Government may feel proud of its achievement, but it is not doing enough. Figures have shown that those developed areas have a carrying capacity of one beast per 6 to 10 acres, compared with undeveloped areas that have a carrying capacity of one beast per 20 to 60 acres. The development of the grazing areas is the solution to boosting the cattle industry. We have seen proof in the brigalow areas of what can be achieved by this, so it is an indictment on the Government that more areas are not being improved. Other figures have revealed that of the 130,000,000

acres in Central Queensland only 1,000,000 acres, or less than 1 per cent., are being cultivated. By far the greater proportion of land is being used for grazing. As I have pointed out, very little land has been developed for grazing. So much can be done. In the Far West of Central Queensland cattle figures have decreased by approximately 16 per cent. A co-ordination of activities in the cattle industry would achieve a great deal.

I believe that in discussing these matters we should present a balanced view. In the last 10 years, the number of dairy cattle in Central Queensland has fallen by about 51 per cent. Sheep numbers have fluctuated greatly in the same period. On many occasions it has been said that this is not the best area for crop production. That statement is fair enough, but let us look at what Central Queensland has. It has a large coal industry, with wonderful potential. There is every reason why Central Queensland should become the coal centre of the State, with Rockhampton the coal capital of Queensland.

We must remember its other attributes, one of which is fruit production. About a quarter of the pineapples produced in Queensland are grown in this area. In 1966-67 almost 30,000 tons were harvested. We have discussed in this Chamber the possibility of establishing a cannery in the area. Although many arguments have been advanced for and against, it seems that the Government is not prepared to assist the fruit-growing industry by establishing a cannery in the region.

Mr. Lickiss: There was a cannery up there, and it closed down.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is so, but it was not given every opportunity.

About 40 per cent. of Queensland's papaws are produced in Central Queensland. On the fruit produced in the area, it is obvious that Yeppoon, Rockhampton, or any other place in the area would be an ideal site for a cannery. I do not care where it goes, but let it be put in the area. It would benefit Central Queensland and the State as a whole.

I will not discuss at length the minerals mined in this area, but I point out that many millions of tons of coal are being produced. However, I do not altogether agree with the Treasurer's statement that tremendous benefits are flowing to the State from the exploitation of our coal. I attended the opening of the S.G.I.O. building yesterday, when the Treasurer made a political speech and told everybody what the Government was doing for the State. I do not think he told the true story. He will not disclose figures relative to coal freights and much of his speech was hog-wash.

The area has a great mining future, but we should look at other aspects that are just as important in the over-all development

of Central Queensland. We must have water for development, and water conservation must be co-ordinated. Much has been said about the Fairbairn Dam being built near Emerald. Its storage capacity of 1,170,000 acre-feet will serve an irrigated area of about 60,000 acres. But the Government's responsibility or task does not end with that dam. It should investigate the major dam proposed at the Nathan Gorge on the Dawson River. It is estimated that it would store sufficient water to irrigate 170,000 acres, almost three times the area to be irrigated by the Fairbairn Dam. A dam has been proposed also at the Gap, on the Fitzroy River near Rockhampton. The Government should investigate it because it could hold 10,000,000 acre-feet if it were about 200 feet high. To emphasise its size, I point out that Lake Eucumbene in the Snowy Mountains holds 3,800,000 acre-feet and that the Hume and Eildon Weirs together have a total capacity of 2,500,000 acre-feet. I believe that the Gap scheme is not being implemented because the Government disregards co-ordination in its developmental policies.

Central Queensland has tremendous potential for irrigation. Barely 1,000,000 acres of 130,000,000 have been cultivated. Far more should be done in the area. It is all very well to talk about our coal resources, but that is not good enough for Central Queensland. About 8 per cent. of the people of Queensland live in the area, and I emphasise that of that number 70 or 80 per cent. reside in Rockhampton. Because of the Government's policies, population is being centralised around Rockhampton. I know that previous members representing the area, particularly Mr. Pilbeam, consistently spoke only of Rockhampton. I believe that Rockhampton will grow if development takes place in the whole of Central Queensland. In one sense, it is all very well to be parochial, but we must be broader in our outlook.

Mr. Lickiss: He was one of the greatest advocates of the development of the whole region.

Mr. WRIGHT: The District Promotion Bureau did not think so back in 1968: in fact, he was possibly its greatest enemy.

Mr. Lickiss: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. WRIGHT: I can assure the hon. member I do. He should go and ask the people about Mr. Pilbeam.

This brings me to one aspect that the Department of State Development should be looking at, namely, decentralisation. Recently, in this Chamber, I asked about the possibility of the Rockhampton area being declared a boating patrol region. I was told that this was not warranted. There has been a major increase in the number of boat licences in this area, and in the number of fishing vessels, both professional and amateur. Central Queensland, given the chance, could

develop a major fishing industry. As it is, fishermen meet local demand and supply the Brisbane market.

Mr. Thackeray: It would have to be an off-shore industry.

Mr. WRIGHT: I agree.

There is plenty of room for an expanded fishing fleet in this area, but before this can be done, the Government must accept that fishing is a primary industry. This is not accepted.

Mr. Thackeray: And it should do something about these foreign boats on Swain Reefs.

Mr. WRIGHT: Yes, something must be done there. According to the policy of this Government, if a person has an American accent, or is Japanese, everything is all right, but if he is Australian, he joins the queue behind the others.

Mr. Low: Now you are spoiling a good speech.

Mr. WRIGHT: This is the truth. If the hon. member thinks about it, he will admit it. A foreigner with a few dollars in his pocket is No. 1 around here, but an Australian is given the "brush off". This is a pity. However, I shall not get off my point.

We have the potential to develop a fishing industry in this area, but we must have Government support. A fishing industry can be established only if the Government co-ordinates the activities of this and other industries in the area.

One of the most important aspects of development is decentralisation. I have spoken of the need for this. I have stressed that if we are to encourage people to go to an area, we must provide the facilities for them. Surveys in New South Wales and in other countries show that we should develop cities of up to 200,000 people. With centres of this size, the cost of communication and other necessary facilities is lowered. Nothing is done in that regard in Queensland. I think that the development of this State is haphazard. If something happens, the Government takes credit; if it does not happen, the Government says that as Labour did not do it it will not do it.

I am glad to see the Minister for Tourism entering the Chamber, as I wish to comment on our local Tourist Industry. Rockhampton is the gateway to the Capricornia coast. We have marvellous beaches at Yeppoon, Emu Park and Keppel Sands. We have Great Keppel Island. However, when tourism is discussed, Rockhampton receives very little attention. I am thankful that the recent convention was held in Rockhampton, although I understand there was some sparring between the Minister for Tourism and the Mayor of Rockhampton on the way people were welcomed.

Mr. Herbert: Quite untrue.

Mr. WRIGHT: Not according to the article on the front page of "The Morning Bulletin".

We must do more for State development in this area, and it can be done only if we co-ordinate our activities and plans. I do not think this is being done. Central Queensland has the potential, particularly in the cattle, fruit and fishing industries, and I believe it could become an important tourist area. But this will not happen if the Premier continues to see State Development as a minor part of his portfolio. It is time it became a very important part of the State's administration, and it is time that it became tied to decentralisation.

This matter has been discussed many times not only by members on this side of the Chamber but by some on the other side, and for that I give them credit. But what is being done about it? Not very much. I repeat that I question the role of Premier and Department of State Development. I believe it is time some planning was done—I suggest a five-year plan—and, to do this properly, the term of each Parliament should be increased, perhaps to five years. I think the State would benefit greatly from what I have suggested.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane) (12.41 p.m.): I am not going to spend time attacking the Premier, as some other hon. members have done.

Mr. Murray: Say something nice.

Mr. DAVIS: I am not a crawler, like the hon. member for Clayfield.

I am not going to attack the Premier for sending me out of the Chamber last week. I think I should make the comment, however, that I have found, from going through "Hansard" back even to the time of Forgan Smith, that even though there were at times physical punch-ups, all persons named were given the opportunity by the Leader of the House to apologise and withdraw. The Premier, by not giving me such an opportunity, has created history.

I draw the attention of the Committee to a very important item appearing on page 14 of the Estimates, namely, Grant to Ninth British Commonwealth Games, Edinburgh, 1970. Hon. members who have studied the Estimates will have seen that a lousy \$2,500 was given towards the expenses of the team that went to Edinburgh.

I think all hon. members would agree that sportsmen play a tremendous part in advertising the State and the Commonwealth. I am sure that all Queenslanders—and, indeed, all Australians—are proud of the honours brought to this country by our sportsmen and sportswomen. Those who organise appeals to finance visits overseas by sporting teams do a tremendous job. They meet great problems, because every week-end people in the metropolitan area are approached for

donations to various charities because the Government does not do enough to assist them.

It is my opinion that the Government should do much more to assist appeals for teams going to Commonwealth and Olympic Games, and I think the time has arrived for the State to create a pool of finance for the general assistance of sporting organisations. Many sports not only in the metropolitan area but in provincial cities as well face tremendous financial problems. I might instance sports such as hockey and cycling, and particularly women's sports.

Mr. Thackeray: Rowing.

Mr. DAVIS: Rowing, lacrosse, and many other sports which are mainly participation sports.

Mr. Thackeray: Rowing is the only true sport.

Mr. DAVIS: I do not propose to debate which is the best sport.

If one goes to Downey Park on any week-end, one sees thousands of women, all amateurs, participating in various sports. There are no paying spectators watching them, and the expenses of these sportswomen have to be met by either themselves or their parents.

Mr. B. Wood interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: The hon. member for Cook referred to something that I regard as a pastime, not a sport.

Players and their supporters have to meet not only the huge cost of creating ovals and playing fields but also the cost of equipment needed by teams of amateur sportsmen and sportswomen travelling interstate to compete in carnivals. If a team travels interstate and is fortunate enough to win an Australian championship, every-one in Queensland is proud of it. People are always proud to be associated with outstanding sportsmen, particularly if they achieve world-wide acclaim. Hon. members will recall the occasions when Herb Elliott, Hector Hogan, Dawn Fraser and others brought fame to Australia, and I am sure all Australians were pleased to have them as fellow countrymen.

In the past 18 months I have visited almost every part of the State, and during my travels I became aware of the many associations trying to assist sportsmen. They face acute financial problems, which of course are increasing with the present inflationary trends, and I believe that the time is ripe for the Government to create a pool of finance to assist sportsmen.

Probably the first question hon. members would ask is, "How would the pool be financed?"

Mr. Bromley: We could have a ministry of sport.

Mr. DAVIS: Yes, a ministry of sport. I know that the hon. member for Norman is a very keen supporter of sport and culture. In discussing how such a pool could be financed, I shall not mention poker machines. If I did, I am sure the Premier would fall in a heap. But there is an easy and sensible way to create a pool of finance to assist sportsmen.

If hon. members have not read the reports of the T.A.B. for 1968-69 and 1969-70, they should do so. I am not for one moment advocating the use of T.A.B. funds, because the T.A.B. was established to assist the various racing and trotting clubs, and perhaps also coursing interests. However, I believe that unclaimed dividends and fractions could be used to assist sportsmen. The reports are very interesting, because they indicate that between 1963 and 1970 fractions amounted to \$2,213,000, which is a large amount of money. I do not believe that any racing or trotting interests could claim that unclaimed dividends belong to them by right. The money is there merely by chance because some poor unfortunates have not claimed on their tickets, and it seems that there are many such poor unfortunates. Unclaimed dividends amounted to \$1,281,000 between 1963 and 1970, and the total of fractions and unclaimed dividends in that period was \$3,494,000.

In my opinion, a pool such as I am suggesting could easily be created from the fractions and unclaimed dividends in 1969-70, when the fractions amounted to \$592,000 and unclaimed dividends to \$314,000—a total of \$906,000. The Government could well use that large sum of money to assist sportsmen and sportswomen of the type to which I referred earlier.

I do not advocate—I am sure no-one would—that the State should control sport, but the Government could well assist sportsmen and sportswomen on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Amateur sporting bodies such as athletics and life-saving associations would very much appreciate such assistance. I know that it costs a great deal of money to outfit a team of life-savers, for example, and send them to a national carnival, particularly if it is held in a distant State. The money for purposes such as that could come from a financial pool, and I believe that the suggestion I have put forward is worth considering.

I began by saying that I thought \$2,500 was a poor Government contribution towards the expenses of the team that went to the Commonwealth Games at Edinburgh. When one considers how much publicity the various news media give the Commonwealth and Olympic Games, we do ourselves an injustice by not sending as many competitors as possible. Immediately a competitor from Queensland or Australia achieves success, this State or the country is mentioned by news media throughout the world, so at least we are saving on our advertising bill.

We spend thousands of dollars in Queensland and throughout Australia on advertising our State, and I believe that nothing advertises a country better than a successful sportsman, sportswoman or sports team.

I believe the State has a responsibility to its youngsters—its developing sportsmen—and that responsibility could be successfully financed in the way I have suggested. I cannot see anything wrong with it, and I hope the Government gives it consideration.

Mr. BALDWIN (Logan) (12.51 p.m.): There are a couple of points in the Estimates of the Premier and Department of State Development on which I should like to comment, and perhaps expand on. For a start, I support the hon. member for Belmont in his appeal concerning the allocation of applications for the office of justice of the peace. My electorate adjoins his and we have a flow-back, one from the other, in this matter, which is rather disconcerting. It is also of concern to me to find on a recheck that half of those I have recommended and most of those I know to be justices of the peace are justices simply because their work position demands it. Most of them work in Brisbane and they are justices of the peace only because their work demands it.

The lack of service in this regard was brought out very clearly in the 2,400-odd damage claims that came from the Logan electorate after the severe hailstorm on 21 January last. So I, too, appeal that a whole new system of allocating justices be formulated.

Another point that applies particularly to the Logan electorate is that in the Redland Shire alone 25 per cent. of the voting population are 60 years of age or over. The death-rate amongst justices in this electorate is very high, and the number of requests I have received because of retirement or replacement suggests that this matter should be given consideration.

Mr. Murray: It is an onerous duty.

Mr. BALDWIN: It is an onerous duty. I commend the people in the community who are prepared to accept such a thankless task. I would not accept it, even if I were paid.

In a well-run, co-ordinated Government with good services, I sometimes think that such an office could be dispensed with. It is a relic—and to a large extent an unnecessary one—of the old squire days of what we now call the United Kingdom. I hope the Premier will give consideration to the formulation of a new scheme or basis of appointment.

An item that attracted my attention in these Estimates is on page 11 under the heading, "Amount to be credited to Beach Protection Authority Fund". The estimated requirement is \$271,000. When I refer to the second annual report of the Beach Protection Authority I see a couple of items

that really make me curious. In the light of what is happening on North Stradbroke Island, with its 40 miles of coastline confronting strong currents and winds and the mining activity that is going on there, I should say that \$271,000 does not seem to be sufficient, even to meet the problems that I see on North Stradbroke. Perhaps this authority operates on a much more economic and efficient level than I give it credit for, but as I have not previously had a chance to look at its report, I am sure the Committee will forgive my comment in that direction.

The Redland Shire contains six large islands and a shore-line on Moreton Bay, the total shore-line stretching for over 100 miles. In view of its area of 175,000 square miles and its population of an estimated 19,000, I suggest that that is a very high ratio of shore-line to area and population. I have not had time to look at other areas of the State, but those figures suggest that it is certainly one of the highest ratios.

On page 7 of the report of the Beach Protection Authority, the total sum spent last year by the Gold Coast City Council on beach works is stated to be approximately \$149,000. No expenditure at all is listed for the Redland Shire. The names of the members who constitute the Beach Protection Advisory Board are set out on page 3 of the report. The board does not contain any representative of the Redland Shire. However, one member of the Board, Mr. A. B. Small, whoever he might be, represents the group comprising the City of Gold Coast and the councils of the Shires of Albert and Redland. If that is the same Mr. Small of whom I have read as having such large interests on the Gold Coast, I have no small wonder whether he would be interested in his membership of the board. I am greatly surprised that the Redland Shire, which has such a lengthy coastline, has no representative on the board, whereas Mr. A. F. Griffin, who represents the Rutile and Zircon Development Association, is a member of it. I do not claim that Mr. Griffin should not be a member of the board, because I suffered the misfortune of being lost in the desert on the east coast of North Stradbroke Island when I was hunting for the road on a moonlight night. Believe me, I wish that I had had an amphibious vehicle. And I was not returning from anything other than a meeting.

I should like to know what portion of the \$270,000 is spent on investigating the problem of beach erosion in the Redland Shire, particularly on the east coast of North Stradbroke Island and the north-eastern sector of Amity Point. Perhaps I will never find out unless I am told confidentially or receive a copy of a report. I hope to be able to find out so that, instead of weighing one priority against the other, I can convince those responsible that additional funds should be made available for the areas that I have referred to.

Mr. Herbert: Tell us more about that moonlight night in the desert.

Mr. BALDWIN: I do not need to tell a man of the Minister's great experience in those things, which is so widely known, I am sure.

On page 5 of the report the conditions that prevail on North Stradbroke Island are lumped together with those that prevail on South Stradbroke Island. Under the heading "Stradbroke Islands", the report says—

"Major causes of instability have been identified as the grazing of stock on the frontal dunes and non-restoration of mined leases."

From that, one would infer that grazing is carried out on the east coast of North Stradbroke Island, and that, whatever it is, it is partly responsible for erosion. The only stock that are grazed on the island are the sacred cows at Dunwich. I am sure that Mr. Griffin, with his intimate knowledge of the east coast, would not have come across grazing animals, for the simple reason that flora suitable for grazing is completely lacking on the east-coast dunes of North Stradbroke Island.

It seems strange that land development has been, and is being, carried out in the areas of the Gold Coast where a good deal of erosion has occurred. I can remember the cyclone season of 1936-37, which stripped away the southern tip of South Stradbroke Island. At that time it was claimed that the cause was over stocking during the drought, which had been raging prior to the cyclone. The cyclone blew up from the south-east and swept away the southern tip of the island.

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

Mr. BALDWIN: Before lunch I was referring to one of the prime accelerators of erosion on the Gold Coast, namely, the cyclone season of the 1930's, which was responsible for hundreds of yards of beaches being chopped away. However, during the last decade more beachfront lots were sold than previously existed on the South Coast. The ghastly loss of this part of the funded capital of civilisation—that is, the homes, roads, etc.—in my view had two main causes. The first was the overstocking of South Stradbroke Island, and the second was the absence of any conservation authority with power to recommend open zones along shore-lines as well as along creeks, rivers and lakes, although I realise that creeks and rivers are the responsibility of another authority.

The continuing land sales on and near these sites smack of some lack of care for the public good, of taking advantage of the public's gullibility and its faith in a Government instrumentality that should be protecting it. When I read about Hong Kong people buying land at Amity Point, I almost laugh. The only good thing about it is that they are not good Australians.

There should be open strips of suitable width depending on topography, soil type, vegetation type, subsoil structure and so on, Authorities in other countries examine all these things and declare the width and length of the strips to be set aside. Here, for status purposes, people build right on the shores and banks, and I understand that a proposal to develop and to build right in Raby Bay is still under consideration. That is a well-known part of the Logan electorate, and the whole concept is horribly stupid.

It is strange to me that the Redland Shire should not have a representative on the board, which is responsible for such a wide sphere of activities in the Logan electorate. On the east coast of North Stradbroke Island, roads are being swept away or covered up. Swamps, the necessary breeding places for marine and other organisms that help to maintain the ecology of the island and the immediate marine environment, and that help to stabilise plant life, are being destroyed. The mineral companies should be much more careful in mining the shore-line dunes, as well as the coastal flats and beaches. They should take much greater care of the beaches which they leave lightened, loosened, uncovered and unfixed by the roots of plants that lie in their destructive wake.

The Beach Protection Authority should pay much more attention to preserving that part of all our coastline that has high tourist and recreational potential for our children and posterity. I hope that a representative of the Redland Shire will be appointed when my plea is considered.

The erosion at Amity Point is no less serious. The erosion line, so far as old residents can calculate is now advancing 12 feet per annum on the north-western point. It receives the brunt of the westerly winds, wave action and tidal current force in and out of Redland Bay, between the island and the mainland. The erosion rate appears to be increasing, and many houses are endangered. Allotments that once held houses and shops are now 200 yards out on the bay floor. If the erosion is not arrested, dozens more allotments will be 200 yards out on the ocean floor in 30 or 40 years' time.

I hope the authority heeds my appeal to pay closer attention to North Stradbroke Island, the other bay islands, and the shore-line of the Redland Shire generally. I hope it will assist the Redland Shire to collect ocean-current and erosion data in less than three years. Many homes are at stake and could be destroyed in this time. Hayles has stopped its service to two island ports because of the dangerous erosion factors and the destruction of its jetties. More hulks should have been placed in position to prevent the inroads, behind the old hulks, that have taken place in the past three or four years.

On page 7 of the report there appears—
 “Technical advice on vegetative dune stabilisation . . . has been prepared and distributed to Local Authorities”, etc.

I take it that it is the Beach Protection Authority that is doing this and that its recommendations, as a Government board, will go, through the sand-mining company's representative, Mr. Griffin, back to all the companies. I note that some mineral companies are doing their own experimental work in rehabilitation, and this is good, provided the results are good.

I have no doubt that the mineral sands companies will have great interest in the results of the hydraulic surveys that are being carried out east of Stradbroke, and that in view of the very high prices being paid on world markets for the ores of economic and military value, the Government, through this board and other authorities, will insist upon a very high standard of rehabilitation, which it is in the ability of the companies to pay for.

I hope also that in the light of recent erosion disasters stemming from insufficient knowledge, planning and authority, the Government will see fit to give this board strong biting teeth to implement such worthy recommendations as we hope it will come up with. Being an instrument of the Premier's Department, it should be able to make the Department of Local Government and local authorities follow its recommendations on what must be done to preserve shore-lines and do a better job than has been done in preserving creek banks and floodways.

Another item in the Estimates, under the heading of Co-ordinator General of Public Works, that takes my eye is the special works investigations. No doubt this takes in such matters as preliminary surveys. One of them I am very interested in is included, *inter alia*, in one short paragraph on page 9 of last year's report, as follows:—

“Investigations into the potential yield of other sources of supply in the Moreton region have been continued by this and other departments.”

This relates to water supply in the Moreton region, and somewhere in this statement is included the Wolffdene-Mundoolan scheme on the Albert River. Its mention has grown from an “*inter alia*” level to a whole sentence reading—

“Investigation into the scheme is well advanced.”

If you, Mr. Hooper, knew as much as I know, and as much as the hon. member for Albert knows, because part of his electorate is to be covered by the proposed dam, you would know that this presents a great problem to the people in the area. If you knew the hundreds of thousands of dollars that this short sentence is costing, how many hundreds of farmers are waiting anxiously for the results of the survey and

the fate of their farms, how many hungry land agents and developers are drooling for the expected feast, and how many sleepless nights and scores of letters this work has meant for the farmers in this district, you would say it deserves a chapter.

Seeing the story from the inside, the heartache, the loss and the expense caused to the farmers affected by the survey, I can well understand why the costs are as low as the estimated \$182,000. This item and this part of the report of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works will make astounding reading to the farmers who face the loss of their farms.

Mr. MURRAY (Clayfield) (2.24 p.m.): I wish to comment on one or two points raised by the hon. member for Logan.

Mr. Davies interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Maryborough is not in his usual place in the Chamber.

Mr. MURRAY: He looks pretty distinguished wherever he interjects from.

The hon. member for Logan mentioned the need for a new formula for appointment of justices of the peace. I am prompted to suggest that this whole matter should be looked into. I understand that in Victoria there are about 4,000 justices of the peace, and I have heard that in Queensland there are over 30,000. I am not certain if that is correct; perhaps the Premier could ascertain the number for me. I think we should know just what the position is.

Mr. B. Wood: Do you think justices of the peace are still needed?

Mr. MURRAY: I ask the hon. member to allow me to develop this argument a little further. When one is first elected to this Assembly, one finds that one of his privileges, if it may be called that, is the recommending of people in his constituency for appointment as justices of the peace. During the first year or two as members, I think we all, in our starry-eyed naivety, are seized with a sense of responsibility in making such recommendations. We like to interview applicants, talk to them on the telephone, and then say to ourselves, “Can I, in all fairness, and in the light of my position, make a responsible recommendation to the Premier's Department that this person be made a justice of the peace?”

I also understand that each member has to work within a quota; I think each member is allowed about four recommendations a quarter. Ministers may have unlimited quotas. Perhaps senior Ministers have unlimited quotas, and junior Ministers definite quotas. However it works, if a member has filled his quota and another person asks him for a recommendation, he may be able to find a Minister to whom

he can say, "Please, Mr. Minister, will you recommend this person for appointment as a justice of the peace?"

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: There are over 40,000 J.P.'s in Queensland.

Mr. MURRAY: That shocks me, and it strengthens my desire to reinforce the plea made by the hon. member for Logan.

Let us look at the situation and see where we are going. I repeat, for the benefit of the Premier who was absent obtaining that information, that when we first become members of Parliament we feel a sense of responsibility in recommending people for appointment as justices of the peace. But this wears a little thin as the years pass and as we start to realise that we are bound to make such recommendations, anyway. After all, who in this Assembly would refuse to recommend a person for such an appointment? Unless a member knew full well that the applicant had a criminal record, or at the time was being sought by the police, who would refuse such a recommendation? I ask that question seriously, particularly as the onus for making such appointments is not on the member but on the Premier's Department.

It becomes extremely difficult for members to reject applications for recommendation. They can delay the matter, but, if they do, somehow or other the applicant finds a way of circumventing this process and getting somebody else, perhaps a Minister, to recommend him. I have had experience of that sort of thing.

Mr. Lloyd: Don't you think it farcical that people in our position, and perhaps some others, have to be made justices of the peace to enable us to sign documents? We should be able to do it as members of Parliament.

Mr. MURRAY: Perhaps that is right.

I ask the Premier to give some consideration to this whole matter. Apparently we have 40,000 justices of the peace in Queensland, but where can one be found when someone wants a document signed?

Mr. B. Wood: What additional importance does the signing of a document give?

Mr. MURRAY: Some people consider it tremendously important, and I am sure some people merely want the status symbol "J.P." after their name and have no thought of giving service to the community.

Mr. B. Wood: But is it necessary for the document? I know that many documents must be witnessed by a justice of the peace, but is it really necessary that they should be?

Mr. MURRAY: Many documents must be signed by a justice of the peace, and there are well over 40,000—I thank the Premier for that information—of them in Queensland. If we are to have justices of the peace

—it is not for me to say that there is not a proper place for them in the community—let us identify them, and let us alter the nomination process. Let us get away from the machinery of people in an electorate applying to their member to nominate them as justices of the peace. Members of Parliament are now merely a vehicle—a piece of machinery—in the whole process. Something better is needed. If we are to have justices, what about asking them to identify themselves? Perhaps they could have a little red light on their front gate with "J.P." on it. I do not know what it should be, but some identification is necessary. People walk up and down the streets looking for a justice of the peace when they have a document to be signed. With 40,000 of them in the State, there must be one in almost every street.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: If they put up a red light they might get some strange callers.

Mr. MURRAY: Well, make it a blue light; perhaps then they would be even stranger.

In my opinion, we should face up to this. I have heard criticism of the present process from many quarters, and as the hon. member for Logan raised the matter, I thought this may be an opportunity for me not only to reinforce his plea but also to make a few comments of my own on the situation. I hope the Premier will be able to at least begin—I know these things move slowly—implementing some action in this regard.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (2.32 p.m.): The comments of the hon. members for Logan and Clayfield relative to the duties and appointment of justices of the peace in Queensland have been very interesting, and I think I should also make some brief comments on the subject.

It has been a source of wonder to me over many years that some amendment has not been made to State and Commonwealth laws to enable people holding certain responsible positions to be witnessing officers to many of the documents now requiring signature and witnessing by a justice of the peace. As ordinary members of Parliament, we are allowed a certain quota of recommendations to the Premier each three months, and it becomes embarrassing on some occasions when one has a list a mile long and someone in the community asks one to recommend him for appointment as a justice of the peace because he has found in his profession that it is necessary for someone to sign certain documents in that capacity.

One has to establish a system of priorities in making recommendations for appointments as justices of the peace. Many people want to become J.P.'s merely for the honour and glory. I know several people who have been appointed and have put a sign on their front gate advertising the fact—"Mr. W. Smith, Justice of the Peace", and so on.

In the metropolitan area it means very little other than that they are available to witness certain documents that the law provides must be witnessed by a justice of the peace.

As I pointed out to the hon. member for Clayfield by interjection, it is ridiculous that members of Parliament must make recommendations for appointment when they themselves are not authorised to witness documents and have to be appointed justices of the peace to become eligible to do so. It is a farcical situation. In a basic analysis of this matter, I think some amendment of the law should be made, as has been done in the case of Commonwealth documents, to enable certain people in the community to become witnessing officers without actually being appointed justices of the peace. For instance, the witnessing of an enrolment for the Commonwealth Electoral Office can be done by another elector entitled to vote at a Federal election. The same thing applies to other Commonwealth documents, such as statements lodged with the Social Services Department. The witnessing can be done by somebody outside the category of justice of the peace. As I say, I think the Queensland law needs amendment in order to stop this continual appointment of justices of the peace, who are really only document witnessing officers.

I think one of the most important features of the Premier's Estimates is and always will be, that relating to the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works and the work he does as a Government instrumentality. The origin of this position lies in the fact that, years ago, Labour Governments found it difficult at Premier's Conferences and Council meetings to co-ordinate all the activities of the Government relative to construction work, capital works and the construction of major projects. It was thought beneficial at the time to co-ordinate all these works under the control of one man. Previously, the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply, for example, would undertake the construction of a project in one district while the Department of Works would be the constructing instrumentality on some other work.

The approaches by the State to the Australian Loan Council became rather difficult and it was decided to establish a system of priorities under a central authority within the Government. For that reason, control was placed with the Premier's Department through the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, who was required to co-ordinate the whole of the annual programme of capital works which the Government had planned or was then undertaking. Therefore, the position became a most important one and, generally speaking, I think that by examining it we can ascertain the system of priorities decided on by the Government for future building programmes.

The general works that the Co-ordinator-General has in hand at present make interesting reading. One of the most important, of course, is the university capital works programme. This has become, and is becoming, more and more important for the State. During recent years a very low priority has been given by the Government to construction work at universities. I say this deliberately, because an examination of the moneys available to the Co-ordinator-General for this purpose shows that, in a period of nine years to 30 June, 1968, the Queensland Government received from the Commonwealth Government somewhere in the vicinity of \$11,500,000. This was the amount Queensland received out of a total Commonwealth allocation for matching capital grants to all States of Australia of \$113,700,000. In other words, the Queensland Government, through the Co-ordinator-General, received for capital works on universities in Queensland, during a period of nine years, 10.3 per cent. of the total Australian allocation for this work.

Several years ago the Queensland Government came to this Parliament and said that, because of the failure of the Commonwealth Government to realise the importance of university education, it was necessary to defer construction of the Mt. Gravatt university. This university, like the other universities in Queensland at present, is recognised by the Australian Universities Commission as a "specified project". In other words, any moneys that the Queensland Government spends on construction work on the new university at Mt. Gravatt would be subject to a matching grant from the Commonwealth on a dollar-for-dollar basis. Therefore, the fact that the Queensland Government, since about 1960, has only spent in the vicinity of \$822,000 on construction work at the Mt. Gravatt university is an indication of the very low priority the Government has given to this highly important project.

The hon. member for Logan has put before the Committee figures showing the inability of university accommodation in Brisbane to provide the necessary facilities for tertiary education. Let me follow up those figures and examine the reasons why the Co-ordinator-General has been unable to supply sufficient capital finance from his own resources to enable the Mt. Gravatt university to be constructed. I do not think anyone would doubt the urgency of the project.

The works that the Co-ordinator-General has had in hand over recent years must be balanced to enable us to understand the problem. It is quite obvious that during the past five or six years the Government, in making money available to the Co-ordinator-General for all purposes, has given priority to projects such as the construction of the Moura-Gladstone railway line. Loan funds totalling \$27,000,000 were allocated to that project from the Queensland Loan

Account. They were diverted to the Co-ordinator-General, and he spent them. As well, the Co-ordinator-General expended \$4,500,000 on the provision of housing, lighting, water supply and sewerage at Weipa. However, no priority was given to the construction of the university at Mt. Gravatt, and I point out that expenditure by the Queensland Government on that project would have been matched dollar for dollar by the Commonwealth Government.

No doubt the Government will put forward the usual excuse that the work done at Weipa and on the Moura-Gladstone railway line would bring revenue to the Government, and, of course, that is so. I have no doubt that the income derived from the carriage of coal on the railway line builds up the Consolidated Revenue Fund and that the Government would receive interest and redemption payments in return for its installation of facilities at Weipa. However, there remains the amortisation of the loan moneys spent on those projects, and those moneys are an unknown quantity. They have not been quoted by either the Treasurer or the Premier to rebut any arguments that have been raised. The construction of the Moura-Gladstone line alone has resulted in a charge of almost \$5,000,000 a year on interest and redemption of the loan moneys required and allocated from the Loan Fund to that project.

Loan moneys allocated by the State and the Commonwealth to universities are non-revenue-producing and are in-debt charges on Consolidated Revenue. Where is the greatest priority in works? Do we need university construction? Do we need the urgent works that are required to enable education facilities in Queensland to be increased to meet the demand? Is the Government's excuse that it is obtaining revenue from other projects undertaken by the Co-ordinator-General a sound one, especially in the light of the fact that the children of this State lack sufficient education facilities? It is essential for the Government to provide basic services for the people, and these basic services can be provided only by capital expenditure, with the highest priority being given to educational works.

University works are the most important at present. In the same nine years South Australia received from the Commonwealth Government in matching grants \$500,000 more than Queensland received for university construction work. In other words, South Australia has been spending at a higher rate on university construction than Queensland has, although, on population, Queensland supposedly rates third in priority for Commonwealth finance.

Mr. Baldwin: We have the biggest cow-boy Government.

Mr. LLOYD: The hon. member must be right. If the Queensland Government is prepared to accept agreements with overseas

companies that are unacceptable to other State Governments, it must be completely lacking in responsibility. In other States companies are forced to construct railway lines themselves, rather than have the Co-ordinator-General carry out the work.

I see no reference in the report of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works to the Goonyella-Hay Point railway line other than that the company is to advance the money necessary to carry out the construction work. In the last financial year, for the Goonyella railway line Utah Constructions contributed \$7,000,000 to a trust account. That would have been fairly reasonable as long as the terms under which the Government had to repay the money were the same as those it would have to meet if it had borrowed the money from the Commonwealth Government.

It will be noted that the Co-ordinator-General is charged with the responsibility of undertaking the construction work on the Goonyella-Hay Point line, and the project fund has to repay the money to the company, on the first account, at a rate of interest over 11 years, and on the second account over a period of 10½ years. In other words, the debt has to be amortised at a higher level than if the money came from another source.

In other States, the companies make the necessary contribution. Clutha Constructions built two ports and a railway line and handed them all over to the New South Wales Government. In Queensland, the Co-ordinator-General must take major funds from precious loan funds to construct railway lines for private companies. The work in question involves the construction of a railway line and a port.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! There is too much audible conversation. It must be very difficult for "Hansard" to hear the hon. member.

Mr. LLOYD: We have been told that the railway line will be built with money contributed by the company. That is certainly so, but the Government has to find \$2,000,000 from its loan account for the construction of the port at Hay Point. Any money in excess of that sum will be met by a special deposit from the company.

We are not getting out of this project cheaply. Money is being denied for university construction work, flood mitigation and beach-erosion control, all of which are undertaken by the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. These projects lack priority when this other developmental work has to be undertaken.

I will outline some of the underspending on work to be carried out by the Co-ordinator General of Public Works. I ask hon. members to take particular notice of works presently being undertaken by the Co-ordinator-General.

Beach erosion control: This is very necessary but very minor work compared with the majority of other works undertaken for the progress and development of Queensland.

Universities: This year, \$2,725,000 from the Loan Fund will be used on capital works.

Elimination of level crossings: A very small amount of money is allocated from the Loan Fund for this purpose. It is not one of the major projects that we would expect the Co-ordinator-General to undertake.

New Victoria Bridge: This is certainly a fairly large project.

Weipa: This work is being done on behalf of a private company, Comalco, which originally undertook to meet the cost. The work was taken over in 1965 by the Co-ordinator-General as his own undertaking. Valuable loan moneys have been allocated for this purpose. They are repayable by the company over a number of years. That money could be used for more important work which the Co-ordinator-General would normally carry out.

Brisbane future water supply investigation: I have no doubt that this is very necessary work.

Eungella Dam: This is a comparatively small project.

I am at a loss to discover any massive projects carried out by the Queensland Government. Where is the priority of importance of very great works which are required in the development of Queensland and Queensland industries? The bulk of the money has been spent carrying out works on behalf of private companies, and has therefore been taken away from other essential works.

Burdekin River Authority: Approximately \$1,535 is estimated to be spent by the Government on this very important work in Queensland's development.

(Time expired.)

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (2.53 p.m.): I take this opportunity to speak on the Premier's Estimates. Like all Government members, and a number of Opposition members, I am proud to be associated with the development of Queensland under the Premier's direction. I am strengthened in my belief by the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, who said yesterday what wonderful progress we have experienced in Queensland, and particularly in Brisbane. While my priorities might be different from his, I acknowledge his compliment to the State Government on the development that has taken place in Queensland. Although I should prefer to see more widespread development than he mentioned, nevertheless I acknowledge and respect his appreciation of the job done throughout the State.

I believe that the development that has taken place has been well covered by Government members and acknowledged by members of the Opposition. I do not wish to repeat

what has been said during the past few days, and I shall deal with two matters only because time is running out and I have given an undertaking to the Opposition Whip that I shall not take much time. He has been gracious in allowing me to speak ahead of him, when the right is his.

I have listened to varying thoughts expressed on redistribution, and I shall deal with two aspects of this matter. The first is the suggested improved facilities for members of Parliament, which could be of considerable help. I believe that many of the things mentioned as being necessary in this building are certainly required. I have spoken on this subject before, and on a previous occasion I supported what was said on this matter by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

It has been suggested that better facilities would enable country members to cover greater areas. I believe that the assistance afforded in this way would be very limited. Increased facilities would be of much greater help to metropolitan and provincial-city members than to country members. With clerical assistance, for instance, it would be possible to handle a greater amount of correspondence from a larger number of people. But facilities for travel would have to be very greatly improved to allow members with large areas to cover them and give adequate representation to the people in them. When problems arise in a large electorate and the people there look to their member for assistance, he has more difficulty in seeing them than has a member representing a small, compact electorate containing more people. It is not that the country member is necessarily better than the member representing a small constituency; it is just that facilities, both Commonwealth and State, are not available in the far-flung areas for ready access by the people.

I believe that 78 members are quite sufficient for this Parliament, and I have always had that belief. It is also my opinion that, instead of increasing the number of members, the present members should be given facilities to allow more adequate representation of their existing constituents. The problem facing the country member is not the number of people in his electorate but the area over which they are spread. It is not just a matter of representing individual members of the public; it is a matter of dealing with all the responsibilities that come the member's way for the simple reason that he is the only one available who represents either the Commonwealth or the State.

Take, for instance, the matter of hospitals. In Brisbane there are only a few hospitals, admittedly large ones. In my electorate—I use it as an example only because I know it well—there are four hospitals, each of which at some time or other requires some assistance and guidance from me. Therefore, instead of having the problems of only

one hospital to deal with, as provincial and metropolitan members have, I have the problems of four.

The position is similar with schools. Metropolitan electorates would contain perhaps three, four or five schools. In my electorate there are more than 40 schools. They are scattered throughout the electorate, and they all have their problems. Most have parents and citizens' associations, which frequently have problems that they wish to bring to their member's attention. There is a constant flow of problems concerning school grounds and school associations, and also the pleasant problems such as speech nights, which every member endeavours to attend. Some of the high schools in my area are 100 miles or more apart, and it is almost impossible to deal with all these matters adequately. It is not so much a matter of giving assistance to the rural member of this Assembly; his difficulty is presented by the vast area that he has to cover, and it becomes physically impossible for him to service the area as it should be serviced.

There is also the matter of local authorities. The local authority in the City of Brisbane covers 20-odd electorates, so that the Brisbane City Council has 20-odd members in this Assembly to look after its interests. In my area, which is similar to many others in this respect, there are three complete local authorities and part of another. I have the whole of the Stanthorpe, Inglewood and Goondiwindi local authority areas, and part of Waggamba. I am sure that all members appreciate that all those local authorities quite often need some assistance from their member. Consequently, it is not desirable for any hon. member to have too large an area to look after, and it is essential that people should have adequate representation.

Mr. Casey: How would the local authority spending in your area compare with the spending in 1-28th of Brisbane? I think you have to consider that.

Mr. McKECHNIE: No. It is not a question of the money involved. Similar problems exist whether the amount of money spent is large or small. Brisbane is an entity, and 20-odd members of the council can be of assistance when money is to be spent. In my electorate and other rural electorates, on the other hand, there are three, four, five, and in some cases six, shires. They have differing problems that require special attention and, naturally, they request the assistance of the local member.

Problems associated with social services are probably even greater. In the Brisbane metropolitan area, provincial cities and the large country towns there are offices to which a person can go if he has a problem related to social services. In rural areas there are no such offices, particularly Commonwealth offices, and that certainly is true of my own electorate. Therefore, anyone

with a social service problem turns to his local member of Parliament, whether the problem is a State or a Federal one.

Mr. Casey: Don't you think a fully manned office in your area would be of great assistance to you?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Many things could be of great assistance to me. As I pointed out, in the Brisbane metropolitan area, a provincial city or a large country town there is no need to go to the member. The necessary facilities are available. In the far-distant areas of the State, however, the only course open to people is to approach the local member, seek his advice, and ask him to make representations on their behalf.

Mr. Casey interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: In some cases the police have about 40 jobs to do. Consequently, one cannot expect them to be au fait with all aspects of the various Acts that they administer on behalf of different departments.

Mr. Casey: I am agreeing with you. I said that public servants are allowed to authorise expenditure only up to \$25.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The point I am making is that people cannot go to the head office and fill in a form, so they go to the local member and seek his assistance. As a result, he has a great deal to do in that line.

The question of the appointment of justices of the peace has been raised, and the Premier informed the hon. member for Clayfield that there are about 40,000 justices of the peace in Queensland. However, in the sparsely settled areas people have to travel 20, 30, 50, or in some cases 100, miles in order to have a document witnessed by a justice of the peace.

The question has been raised as to whether that is necessary. Perhaps it is not necessary in some cases, but in others it is vitally important to have a justice of the peace sign documents. In my electorate, there is a constant demand for me to nominate the full 16 that each member of this Assembly is allowed to nominate every year. Admittedly, some people seek to become justices of the peace merely for prestige. It is a good reference, because a man with "J.P." after his name has been investigated by the Premier's Department and found to be of good repute.

Mr. Thackeray: Have you ever had any "knocked back"?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am pleased that the hon. member for Rockhampton North asked that question. No, I have not had anyone "knocked back", but I have advised one or two people not to apply, sometimes after seeking departmental advice. This presents another difficulty in rural areas. I presume that most hon. members—I certainly do—like to interview applicants before submitting

their names to the department. In some instances it is necessary to deviate many miles to interview a person who has asked to be nominated as a justice of the peace. Instead of just being down the street, he might be in a neighbouring town 100 miles away.

Mr. Tucker interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The hon. member for Townsville North has raised the matter of a list. I am pleased he did, because I applied to the Premier's Department for a list covering my own area. The department gave me one, but pointed out that it was not absolutely up-to-date. I was also told that some of the people would have moved out of the area or be deceased. I have sought the co-operation of the clerks of the court in my area to have the list brought up to date. It is my intention within the next few months to publish in all my local newspapers a list of the names of people whom I know to be justices of the peace. At the same time, I will have to concede that it might not be absolutely exact because one or two whom I did not know about may have left the district or others may have entered it. But I will make an earnest endeavour to get a list of justices of the peace in my area and their addresses that is as accurate as possible.

Mr. Bromley: Couldn't you get the addresses out of the phone book?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I would still have to determine who they were and where they are. The phone book is a matter for the Commonwealth, whereas this is purely a State matter.

Mr. Bromley: About five years ago I duplicated a list and sent one to the post office, police stations, and similar places.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The hon. member can appreciate the problems of the Premier's Department with 40,000 people, many of whom are frequently on the move. Post-masters, railway station-masters, and others who need this qualification are constantly moving about the State. It is very difficult to keep up with them after they have been nominated as justices of the peace.

Another matter that causes a lot of work for the rural member of Parliament concerns the problems associated with the Railway Department. Many problems arise in regard to the employees themselves. Some electorates embrace hundreds of miles of railway and dozens of railway stations. With two main lines running through my electorate, this gives me a lot of work. Some of it is very pleasant work, but, as I have a border of 300 miles with the State of New South Wales, I get many border problems and numerous queries from people in another State.

Mr. Bromley: Yours is an affluent area.

Mr. McKECHNIE: This is particularly applicable in my area, because, as I say, it adjoins New South Wales for 300 miles. The hon. member for Norman may be being a little facetious, although I do not mind him saying that I have an affluent area. At a function this morning that both he and I attended, I drew the attention of the Queensland Social Services League to the fact that it did not have any affiliations in my electorate. One lady mistakenly said that it must be an affluent area. I can assure the hon. member that we have our problems, and that rural areas are far from affluent. Again, these become the problem of the local member because worth-while organisations sponsored by the Queensland Social Services League are not always available and it falls back on the local member. I appreciate that this organisation is spread over the whole of Queensland and does a wonderful job. It just so happens that my electorate does not come within its ambit. I hope it eventually will.

The country member also encounters problems associated with electricity reticulation, which is taken for granted in the provincial and urban areas. This causes much work for rural members, as also do problems associated with irrigation, lands and forestry. Certain problems arise in connection with all these departments, and a rural member's constituents seek assistance and guidance on them. Consequently, he must be able to cover the whole of his area, and any extension of it would make the situation even more difficult for him. Without dwelling on the matter, the problem of drought, too, has thrown on rural members in the western areas perhaps more weight than any other problem in the last few years.

I am endeavouring to show that a member of Parliament who represents a far-flung rural electorate is required to do a lot more than his counterpart in either the metropolitan area or the provincial cities, and therefore should not be expected to have his electorate enlarged to embrace a greater number of people so that its population will be similar to that of provincial and metropolitan electorates. The need is for all people to be represented adequately. The rural member must be able to see all his constituents, no matter how large an area they are spread over, so I hope that Parliament will ensure them adequate representation.

Mr. DAVIES (Maryborough) (3.11 p.m.): During this debate a good deal has been said about the Government's failure to encourage the development of industries in various parts of the State. This morning the hon. member for Rockhampton South delivered a telling speech on the need for the Government to be more active than it has been in the Rockhampton area.

One portion of the State that seems to be taken for granted is the rich hinterland of the Wide Bay district, so I intend to devote a few moments to the development that has taken place in that area and its tremendous potential. With the development of the Wide Bay area Maryborough became the administrative centre. What became known as the Maryborough statistical area includes the towns of Gympie, Bundaberg, Biggenden, Gayndah and Mundubbera as well as those on the Kingaroy line. Maryborough was the first town founded in that portion of the State, and for a long time it was one of the area's best ports. Approximately 150,000 people live within a radius of 100 miles of Maryborough. The Government tends to overlook the density of population in the Maryborough hinterland, which is the biggest regional area in Queensland. Although it is difficult to obtain figures, I have been able to locate statistics relative to the consumption of petrol and oil by motor-vehicles and farm machinery. They reveal that at least 10 per cent. of the total consumption in the State occurs in the Maryborough statistical area.

Mr. Casey: On your figures, Maryborough services a population one-quarter the size of Brisbane's.

Mr. DAVIES: Maryborough has been overlooked in many ways. Certainly, it was overlooked in the establishment of institutes of technology, for which a much greater potential exists in Maryborough than in either Rockhampton or Toowoomba. I do not begrudge those cities the establishment of their institutes of technology, but, as I have pointed out previously, figures show that Maryborough has the greatest potential of the three centres. I do not blame this Government for having overlooked Maryborough, because the Federal Government said, "Here is the money. That's where you must establish institutes of technology."

Maryborough is the administrative centre of the Wide Bay-Burnett district, and it is the headquarters of branches of the Railway Department, the Forestry Department, the Education Department, the Vocational Guidance Council, the Works Department, the P.M.G. Department, the Adult Education Department, the Police Department, the Justice Department, the Machinery and Scaffolding Department, the Valuer-General's Office, the Primary Industries Department, the Department of Harbours and Marine, the Customs Department and the Commonwealth Electoral Office. As well, a vocational guidance officer and a remedial speech instructor are now stationed in Maryborough, and the Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Electricity Board, which services an area of 17,000 square miles, has its headquarters in Maryborough.

At one time the Lands Department had a branch office in Maryborough, but some years ago it was removed. I am not blaming the present Government for that; it

happened before this Government took office. The Lands Office was removed to Bundaberg for good and sound reasons, the main one probably being the large number of sales of sugar lands and the small size of farms. Because of the smaller size of farming areas, it was probably considered that there would be more business there, and consequently the Lands Office was transferred.

The member for Isis and I have recently drawn the Lands Department's attention to the fact that the department in Bundaberg is well behind in its work, mainly because of the Government's policy by which change-over is permitted from various forms of leasehold tenure to freehold. We pleaded for the establishment of a full branch in Maryborough and hope the Minister will take notice of our representations because many applicants are awaiting attention. The work is so far behind that applicants are being put to very great inconvenience.

Despite the tremendous natural resources of the Wide Bay area it is handicapped by being so close to the capital city. If we were as close as Ipswich to Brisbane, we would be included in the Brisbane line by the Government, but we do not get any assistance from the Government and depend entirely on private enterprise for the establishment of new industrial undertakings.

It was most interesting to hear a Minister, at an important function recently, trying to explain that, although royalties were low, revenue was flowing in indirect ways to the State and that, therefore, it was not necessary to worry about the low royalty payments. However, as the State is short of money for many important developments, it is apparent that his argument was quite illogical.

Maryborough's close proximity to the capital city should be to its advantage. It should be able to count on markets in the capital city as an outlet for many of the products of its secondary industries. It is only 175 miles by road from Brisbane—a mere three to four hours' drive. A good air service is available to and from Brisbane, and the time for the journey is only 40 minutes. In those circumstances, one would think Maryborough would receive far greater assistance from the Government in helping to establish various secondary industries, but one or two new industries slipped from our grasp simply because the Government failed to give a little extra assistance. Even without Government assistance, the city itself has prospered, thanks to the initiative of its pioneers and the enterprise of the citizens.

It is not widely appreciated that Maryborough has a wide variety of industries. When people think of industrial development in Maryborough, they think of Walkers. I will not speak at great length about Walkers because the success of the firm is well known. It has played a wonderful part in the industrial expansion of the State. I assure hon.

members that, but for the excellent management, drive and enterprise of the staff, and the skill of its workers, the firm would not have succeeded as it has. We view with pride the diesel hydraulics that the firm is now manufacturing. It took the firm a long time to convince the Government of the value of this type of locomotive. When the Government wanted 54 shunting engines, it was persuaded to so word the advertisement that the tenders could be for diesel electrics or diesel hydraulics. The master stroke was the obtaining of permission from the Government for one of the engines to be used on the railway lines, and it stood up to all the searching tests of the Railway engineers. It surprised everybody except Walkers, who knew of its great potential and value. This company is now receiving orders for the engines from various States. Prior to that, in the days of steam, Walkers Ltd. was Queensland's outstanding supplier of coal-burning engines. They were wonderful engines.

Walkers recently launched the second of two twin-screw suction hopper dredges. They are the only ones of their kind in Australia. The second one is being constructed for the Queensland Government. This was appreciated because it meant work for the shipyards and resulted in additional employment at Walkers Ltd. This is an important industry compared with some of the engineering works in Brisbane and district. None can compare in size, volume of work, and the number of people employed.

Walkers Ltd. employs over 1,000 people and the fact that it is in a country town should be given more consideration by the Government. Every endeavour should be made to further expand and develop this decentralised industry. I doubt if any other centre in Queensland has a comparable industry. The first of the two dredges went to Melbourne. Walkers Ltd. has acquired the rights from a Dutch firm, to use certain engines and methods of construction for these boats. It has displayed its skill in this regard. As there is a shortage of dredges in the State, I hope that the Government will let further contracts for them and that Walkers will be given an opportunity to develop further in this field.

Walkers Ltd. started in about 1867 as a result of the gold discoveries in Gympie. It still produces mining equipment. It can produce ships of up to 6,000 tons, which is the largest ship that can be taken out of the Mary River. It has Army contracts that are keeping it busy at the moment.

In this area, we have not only Walkers Ltd. but also timber mills, which are second to none on the east coast of Australia, meatworks, pipeworks, brickworks and a flour mill. We are still disturbed that the Government has not introduced legislation to protect this flour mill and to control the transfer of bread produced in the capital city. The flour mill is a very important industry in that area.

In addition, we have a sugar mill. In the early days, there were 40 juice mills along the Mary River. There was a large population, a considerable proportion of which came from the South Sea islands. The small juice mills sent their juice to the Yengarie sugar-refining mill. Eventually, it closed down and its equipment was transferred to Bundaberg. The Millaquin refinery in Bundaberg is well known throughout Australia today, and is a great success.

Unknown to many people, we have a butter and milk factory and a timber fabrication workshop. Pre-fabricated houses are produced, and sent away ready for construction. It will be remembered that some years ago Hyne & Son won the contract for the supply of pre-cut homes for Mary Kathleen. Furniture and joinery is sent from Maryborough all over Queensland. There is a first-class electroplating workshop in Maryborough. There are firms dealing with car accessories, aircraft sales, the dairying industry, plastic illuminated signs, and canvas manufacturing. There are also nurseries, and the fish depot.

I must later remind the Government of its failure to co-operate with the Burrum Shire Council in the provision of a good road to our nearest seaside resort. The hon. member for Isis is co-operating in this matter. Miles of that road are still corrugated and very rough. The school bus has to travel over it, and fish from one of the largest fish-producing areas at Boonooroo and Tuan deteriorate in quality when being transported over that rough road. Although that area is only 16 miles from Maryborough, 4 miles closer than Hervey Bay, the road to it still contains a dreadful corrugated section, and neither the Government nor the Burrum Shire Council seems to be able to co-operate with the other in the provision of a good road. It is possibly the only place in Queensland where a popular resort, and a place of economic value through its fishing industry, is so sadly neglected.

I have not as yet referred to forestry in the Maryborough area. There are 740,000 acres of State forest in the district. A Labour Government first started forestry development in the Tuan area in 1948, and today it represents tremendous wealth. Trees in the area are ready to be cut. Woodland Sawmills Pty. Ltd., a consortium of Australian and overseas timber millers, has been awarded pulpwood cutting rights for a huge State forest area. The firm of Hyne & Son is a member of that consortium. Two of the areas in which this firm will be interested are the Toolara and Tuan forestry areas. The Toolara plantings are along the Gympie-Tin Can Bay road. Increased plantings as a result of more money being made available by the Commonwealth for this activity are very wise.

This was the result of the inquiry by a timber commission into future timber requirements, and the realisation that, unless

something was done, the day would come when Australia would not be able to obtain timbers from Eastern countries. That, of course, is a story in itself of the development of a higher standard of living in Eastern countries, which means that those people will need their timber themselves for homes and newsprint and for other purposes. The Commonwealth Government therefore felt compelled to make more money available, and the planting rate has now been considerably increased.

The wallum country is being proved capable of development for cattle production. I might mention that I am opposed to opening this country to large, wealthy concerns, as was contemplated by the Government some time ago. I am glad the Government listened to the protests from the Opposition, and that nothing has been done about it. If any area is to be opened for cattle, we on this side want smaller areas for individual families. I hope the Forestry Department will reserve to itself all the areas of wallum that can be planted successfully with timber. This timber is a crop, and in the final analysis it will provide greater employment than would be created by handing over large areas to big firms.

There are still areas that can be used for cattle, and much work has been done in that direction in the Maryborough area. There is a report to be produced on this matter, and I hope it will be a balanced report from the Lands Department, pointing out to the Government that, whilst cattle production can be important in an area such as the wallum country of Bundaberg and Maryborough, the growth of timber will, in the end, be of greater advantage to the area.

The areas inland from Maryborough and Bundaberg, out to Biggenden, Gayndah, Mundubbera and Monto, and along the Kingaroy line, bring to mind the need for water storage. A Newcastle firm that has been working in the Hunter River district is coming to explore the economic resources of the Mary Valley, but I will have to leave that story till another occasion.

(Time expired.)

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (3.31 p.m.): I thank all hon. members for their contributions to the debate on this important Vote. It was interesting to hear the comments of the hon. member for Kurilpa and others relative to this being the first occasion on which I have had the opportunity of bringing these important facets of government administration before the Committee and giving all hon. members a chance to discuss them in full. It is the first time that I can remember it being done, but I assure hon. members that I hope it will be my privilege to continue bringing these Estimates before the Committee from time to time and giving hon. members further opportunities to discuss them.

Generally the contributions were excellent, but one hon. member attempted, as usual, to engage in character assassination. I am sure hon. members were gratified to learn that the Government is using the State's resources to the full.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to migration, and in that field the Government has the confidence of and is receiving support from various business organisations in encouraging the right type of people to come to Australia. The State migration facilities were enlarged recently by the appointment of a migration promotion officer to assist the already competent staff at the Agent-General's office in London. The Government expects very notable results from that action.

The hon. gentleman stressed the need for the State's representatives in the United Kingdom to be fully cognisant of working and social conditions generally in Queensland, and I think his comments were fair. In recent years the Government has given several officers from Queensland House the opportunity to come here and see conditions for themselves and learn what is required. I think that is partly why we are already attracting more people to the State.

The hon. member for Kurilpa expressed the opinion that the Agent-General had not sufficient funds or staff to implement the migration policy satisfactorily. I inform the Committee that for the current financial year the Government has increased both the staff and the amount of finance available for that purpose, so it confidently looks forward to achieving significant results.

I appreciate the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition relative to Mr. Barton, the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works. They confirm the tribute that I paid to Mr. Barton earlier. However, it is not true that this department has been left without engineers as a result of the transfer to the Main Roads Department of a group of structural engineers who have been engaged for over two years on the design and supervision of construction of the Captain Cook Bridge and the Riverside Expressway. Because these projects were using funds provided from the Main Roads Department Trust Fund and the engineers will continue to be engaged for some years on works financed by the Main Roads Department, it is only appropriate that they should be transferred to the control of that department.

The technical staff of the Co-ordinator-General is being built up to enable it to carry out efficiently the necessary investigations and studies that its roll requires. Here I should stress the fact that, in any case, the Co-ordinator-General is able to co-opt the services of all branches of the Public Service, wherever they may be.

The hon. member for Baroona referred to the Public Service Superannuation Fund, and the regulation that provides that persons who were in employment on 1 January, 1913, and who are not contributing may

become eligible for a gratuity on retirement. By its very nature and, by the passage of time, this regulation is no longer effective or appropriate.

A similar situation arose when the Railway Department was included in the Public Service superannuation scheme from 1 April, 1965, and it was provided that gratuities would not be payable to those officers who contributed to the superannuation fund. The superannuation scheme took the place of gratuities formerly payable. This will be appreciated when it is considered that for every \$100 of annuity benefit, \$65 is met by Crown subsidy.

All officers have had the opportunity of contributing to the superannuation scheme, and the increase in the number of officers who contribute voluntarily is indicative of the value they place upon its benefits. Therefore, it would be most unrealistic and unreasonable if a system of gratuities were introduced without any contribution by an officer. It would be completely opposed to the interests of those officers who have contributed, or will contribute, to the Public Service Superannuation Fund on a compulsory basis. In fact, the suggestion made by the hon. member would be a retrograde step and certainly not in the best interests of the great number of contributors to the present superannuation scheme.

The hon. member for Baroona endorsed my comments on the work of the Parliamentary Draftsman. He is obviously very much au fait with the perplexities of modern drafting requirements and the sheer mental and physical pressures placed on the Parliamentary Draftsman and his staff during parliamentary sessions. I again pay tribute to these very valuable officers of the Government.

The hon. member also canvassed the possibility of the State Public Relations Bureau preparing what, in effect, would be a directory of senior public servants, in order that members may more easily identify the appropriate departmental officer to whom inquiries might be directed. This matter is at present under consideration. However, its immediate implementation is not intended as early amendments will be necessary following contemplated accommodation changes when the new Executive Building is available for occupation in the first half of next year.

Various members attempted to assert that the work of the State Public Relations Bureau is designed to expose the shortcomings of the Opposition and at the same time to present the activities of the Government in an over-glamourised style. Nothing could be further from the truth. This has been amply clarified by my predecessors on several previous occasions. The officers of the bureau are capable and conscientious public servants, and their particular duties

and responsibilities are a recognised and respected facet of Public Service activity in this and every other State of Australia.

The hon. member for Toowoong commented on the commercial interpretation and application of the term "public relations" and, on the understanding that this is a world entirely divorced from the work performed by the State office bearing that name, I agree very much with many of the trenchant criticisms and comments he made in this regard.

Mr. Houston: The Federal office was not shown up in a very good light recently, you must confess.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That, of course, is another subject.

The hon. member for Baroona displayed his usual keen perception by observing that the Vote for the bureau shows a relative increase this year by virtue of the fact that several of its publishing projects intended for 1969-70 have been deferred to the current financial year. This was done for various reasons, principally the Royal visit, and the amount provided this year is to meet the obligations involved in producing some very good literature that publicises the State.

For the benefit of hon. members, I have with me a preliminary copy of one of these publications, which will shortly be available to all interested parties for the purpose of telling the world what a wonderful place Queensland is to live and work in.

Further to the comments about the State Public Relations Bureau, it was refreshing to listen to the plaudits of the hon. member for Norman. They were all the more meritorious because it is not very often that the hon. member shows much interest in, or appreciation of, the Government's work and activities.

Mr. Bromley: I think you are being unkind.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: No, I am being kind to the hon. member. He was very generous in his remarks, and I am sure they were appreciated by the officers concerned. However, unfortunately, the hon. member failed to continue in this strain. Instead, he made some ill-informed statements about decentralisation and development. Decentralisation is a subject on which it is easy to talk freely without applying much thought to it. It is a very involved matter. Surely if we look at Blackwater and other places in Queensland we see that they are only a few instances of decentralisation based on the mining industry. We see decentralisation being implemented on a scale never before visualised.

I think all hon. members will admit that tremendous decentralisation has taken place. New towns with populations measured in the thousands are being developed. Surely the hon. member for Norman realises that

all this development places an extremely heavy load on the Government's resources in that it provides the necessary amenities of houses, schools and water supplies, as well as the services of the police and other officers. I do not know where the hon. member got the idea that large amounts of Government moneys are not being provided for decentralisation. I am sure that if he had second thoughts he would appreciate that the Government is spending a large sum of money on decentralisation.

The hon. member for Chatsworth, in his usual able manner, made interesting comments on the Public Service and its present and future requirements. I am sure he would agree that the over-all increase of 1,980 in Crown employees could not be considered excessive, in view of the fact that 1,667 appointments resulted from an expansion of educational facilities, including the employment of additional teachers.

A comparison of those two figures is very interesting. The State's unprecedented development includes the expansion in population growth with the resultant demand for additional social services that require qualified staff. If the electors of the State demand and expect expanded services, as they are entitled to, we must try to meet their demand.

I must disagree with the hon. member on one point, namely, the interchange of officers between the Public Service and private enterprise. This is not something that any Government could undertake or consider lightly. It is a very big issue. It is very involved, and I am afraid that in some respects, it would not be practical to implement. In any event, it was a new and constructive thought, and was refreshing to hear.

The hon. member for Barcoo referred to the standards of Public Service housing and office accommodation. After all, it must be admitted that tremendous progress has been made in this field since the days of a Labour Government, and it has all been compressed into the short period of 13 years. I was Minister for Works and Housing for a number of years, and I know the great progress that was made in the provision of accommodation and office facilities. It is interesting to note that the progress will continue, particularly in country areas.

The new housing provided for transferred officers of the Public Service is of a very high standard, although naturally it must be related to available finance. We are very conscious of the need to make still further improvements in the field of housing public servants.

Several members, including the hon. member for Burnett, added further complimentary remarks to those that I and other hon. members made about the services of Sir Alan Summerville, who did a wonderful job in London as our Agent-General. Of course,

he has now taken up a very important post in Queensland. We are indeed glad to have Sir Alan back in the community to serve in this capacity.

The hon. member for Salisbury embarked on another discourse on his favourite—I almost said his one and only—topic of conservation of natural resources. As he knows, it is the Government's intention to introduce legislation in this regard during the current session. I have given notice to that effect, and the item now appears on the Business Paper. It will be discussed in due course.

I do not propose to do much more at this stage than indicate that the proposed environmental council will be designed to determine for the Government desirable aims and objectives in the field of environmental control and to co-ordinate departmental efforts accordingly. Needless to say, the council will also take steps to discuss problems with non-Government bodies, and to keep itself informed of public opinion, and to let the public know of its interests and activities.

The hon. member for Cairns said he was concerned about the conditions of officers in the Public Service who are transferred from time to time. In this matter, too, tremendous progress has been made since we became the Government. He will find that the rights and needs of transferred officers are now properly recognised. We have at all times aimed to continually improve these conditions. We will continue to do what we can as the need arises, and as it is warranted.

On the matter of an economic rental of official residences, the present relationship of actual rents to salaries is far more favourable than it was a decade ago.

The hon. member for Mourilyan referred to forthcoming legislation relative to the Beach Protection Authority. He tried to make the point that the authority spent too much money in South Queensland compared with expenditure in North Queensland. When we consider the greater erosion problems, where the beaches are not protected by coral reefs, and the larger population, we must surely appreciate the importance of this work and the need for it.

Much of the early work of the Beach Protection Authority was concentrated on situations that had become, or were becoming, critical. If the hon. member cares to peruse the report a little more intently, he will see that extra survey parties have been engaged to carry out investigation work on northern beaches, and that Flying Fish Point is mentioned as one of the places where investigation work is in progress.

The hon. member for Clayfield pointed out clearly how well provided we are with justices of the peace, with over 40,000 of them as against 4,000 in a more heavily populated State. This item of Government

interest creates a considerable amount of work, because each person has to be checked and investigated. His whole history has to be followed through. I know, from my position, that this investigation can go interstate; for instance, to Victoria, where the person came from.

Mr. Thackeray: They go over to England, too.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Yes.

A great deal of expense is involved, because a lot of care and consideration must be exercised in granting a person this recognition. The rate of increase in the number of justices of the peace in Queensland compares more than favourably with that in other States.

Mr. Houston: Don't you think there is no need to have some documents witnessed by a J.P.?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That could be one angle.

A neighbour of mine at home has, on his mail box on the road, "H. Larsen, J.P.", so that people in the area know that they can slip in there to have documents witnessed. The position would be improved, and it would be of great benefit, if many justices of the peace did this.

Mr. Houston: Numerous documents could be signed by citizens—

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: This could be so, too. I would not argue with the hon. member. I am inclined to think that this might be the important point in the whole business.

Mr. Bromley: Does "J.P." stand for "Joh Petersen"?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That could be so.

The hon. member for Port Curtis asked about the insurance on Queensland House in London. Under the terms of the lease, the lessor has the right to nominate the company with which the insurance on the building shall be effected.

I have noted the hon. member's remarks on extending S.G.I.O. activities into the international field. Of course, this is a matter for the Treasurer.

The hon. member for Brisbane referred to assistance for sporting bodies. He can rest assured that we are interested in this, and that each case will be judged on its merits. That is as fair as we can be in this regard.

I thank hon. members for their contributions and the assistance they have given in their remarks.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! By agreement, under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 15 October, I shall now put

the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Premier and Department of State Development.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to:—

Premier and Department of State Development—

	\$
Chief Office	639,140
Balance of Department, Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds	42,244,407

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND MAIN ROADS

CHIEF OFFICE

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.55 p.m.): I move—

"That \$907,828 be granted for 'Department of Mines and Main Roads—Chief Office'."

DEPARTMENT OF MAIN ROADS

To introduce the Estimates for the Department of Main Roads for 1970-71, I should like initially to give hon. members a very brief summary of the department's operations.

The department is responsible for the construction and maintenance of 24,813 miles of roads declared under the Main Roads Act, comprising 6,319 miles of State highways, 30 miles of urban arterial roads, 4,779 miles of developmental roads, 5,036 miles of main roads, 47 miles of urban sub-arterial roads and 8,602 miles of secondary roads.

Revenue for the department is derived principally from funds made available by the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, the State Grants (Beef Cattle Roads) Act, and from funds collected by the State itself by way of motor vehicle registration fees, charges imposed on vehicles of over four tons capacity as a contribution towards the cost of maintaining roads, and, to a lesser extent, repayments by local authorities of part of the cost of works done on declared roads. These normal sources of revenue are supplemented by Loan Funds to a limited extent, if these can be made available.

Co-operation between local authorities and the department is most important, as a good proportion of the department's programmed activities is carried out by local authorities acting as construction agencies on behalf of the department. Local authorities are required to repay only a relatively small portion of the expenditure on declared roads. This money then becomes available to finance further roadworks.

Charges now made to local authorities are—

Permanent Works	
State Highways	Nil
Urban Arterial Roads	Nil
Developmental Roads	5%
Urban Sub-arterial Roads	10%
Main Roads	10%
Secondary Roads	25%
Maintenance	
State Highways	Nil
Urban Arterial Roads	Nil
Developmental Roads	10%
Urban Sub-arterial Roads	20%
Main Roads	20%
Secondary Roads	30%

Hon. members will note that local authorities have been completely relieved of responsibility for repayment of part of the cost of maintaining State highways from 1 July, 1969. Prior to this they met 10 per cent. of the expenditure. The abolition of this charge has afforded them an extra \$500,000 relief annually.

At this juncture, I will take the opportunity to remind hon. members of the magnitude of the task with which the department is faced in its endeavours to provide an adequate road system to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

The department is charged with the provision of such a road system in the second largest State of the Commonwealth, having an area of some 667,000 square miles and extending about 1,300 miles from north to south and some 900 miles from east to west. The population is, to a large extent, decentralised, and practically the whole area of the State is in economic production. This means that there are very long lengths of road to be built through relatively sparsely populated areas to reach the decentralised community settlements.

A programme of decentralisation of the administration of the department's activities has been developed. Assistant Commissioners, Divisional Engineers and District Engineers are now stationed in the areas of their responsibility. This enables closer contact to be maintained with local authorities, and gives the department the added advantage of a better understanding of local problems, priority needs and the like. Hon. members would be aware that the needs of our road system are far greater than the availability of funds. Thus the department is forced to plan development of the road system after a very critical analysis of relative priorities.

I believe that, having regard to the road funds available to the State and the demands placed on these funds to develop such lengths of road to serve the needs of our vast State, we have just cause to be proud of our achievement in the field of road construction.

During the last financial year, the principal achievements of the department comprised construction and bitumen surfacing of 772 miles of declared road, completion of 65

new bridges and major repairs to 39 bridges, provision of traffic signals for 14 major intersections, elimination of five railway level crossings and, in co-operation with the Railway Department, provision of improved safety devices for 18 railway level crossings.

In addition to its recognised constructional activities, the department collected \$17,988,622 for other authorities. Details of these collections are—

Treasury Department—

	\$
Motor Vehicle Stamp Duty	3,075,301
Motor Vehicle Insurance	255,833
Nominal Defendant Fund	1,087,557
Driving Fees	272,266
Traffic Engineering Trust Fund—	
Driving Fees	401,838
Traffic Offences	401,838
	<u>\$5,092,795</u>

Insurance Companies—

	\$
Compulsory Third Party Insurance Premiums	12,895,827
	<u>\$17,988,622</u>

Amounts required in 1970-71 for the various funds administered by the Main Roads Department total \$94,463,882, compared with an expenditure of \$86,935,579 from these funds during the previous financial year.

The amounts are—

	Required 1970-71	Expended 1969-70
	\$	\$
Main Roads Fund	75,268,882	72,147,672
Beef Cattle Roads Construction Fund	8,000,000	5,064,421
Commonwealth Aid, Local Authority Roads, Fund	4,300,000	3,654,362
Roads Maintenance Account	5,200,000	4,801,075
Main Roads Department Special Standing Fund	1,695,000	1,268,049
	<u>\$94,463,882</u>	<u>\$86,935,579</u>

I shall deal firstly with the Main Roads Fund requirement of some \$75,000,000. Included in this figure is an amount of approximately \$44,600,000 required for permanent works. Hon. members will appreciate that it would not be practicable for me to go into all the details of this proposed expenditure as it embraces over 700 separate projects throughout the State. However, of this amount, about \$15,800,000 is required for development of roads defined by the Commonwealth as urban arterial roads, including some \$11,000,000 for expenditure on Brisbane's planned expressway and free-way system. At this stage, I would like to stress that, under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, there is a mandatory minimum

expenditure requirement for urban arterial road development. Further mention of this will be made later.

Also included in the figure required for permanent works is an amount of some \$28,000,000 for expenditure on roads controlled by the Main Roads Department in rural areas of the State.

Allocation of available funds to individual projects is largely governed by the requirements of the Commonwealth Aid Roads legislation (which nominates minimum expenditures on various categories of roads) and an objective assessment of priorities of works required on roads within these categories.

The present Commonwealth Aid Roads Act which has a currency of five years from 1 July, 1969, introduced a completely new concept in the allocation of Commonwealth funds to the States. This Act specifies the minimum amounts each State must spend per year on each of three broad categories of roads as defined by the Commonwealth.

These are—

- Urban arterial roads
- Rural arterial roads
- Other rural roads

For the 1970-71 financial year the Commonwealth will be making available \$39,560,000 to be spent as follows:—

Urban arterial roads	..	\$16,070,000
Rural arterial roads	..	\$9,190,000
Other rural roads	..	\$13,710,000

In addition a further \$590,000 has been allocated for road planning and research.

The increasing amounts forthcoming from the Commonwealth are helping considerably in bridging the gap between available funds and road needs, although the total funds available from all sources still fall far short of the desirable level to cater for our traffic and developmental requirements. The number of motor vehicles using our roads continues to grow at an ever-increasing rate.

At 30 June, 1940, there were 129,000 motor vehicles registered in Queensland, giving an average of one vehicle to every 7.8 persons. By 30 June, 1950, this had risen to 211,000 motor vehicles, an average of one vehicle to every 5.6 persons, and at 30 June, 1960, the figure had reached 405,000, averaging one motor vehicle for every 3.7 persons. In August, 1970, the 700,000 mark was reached, giving an average of one motor vehicle for every 2.6 persons in the State.

Not only has the number of vehicles grown so rapidly, but also the speed and loading capabilities of vehicles have increased. This has all had an adverse effect on road pavements. Although this large increase in the number of vehicles using the roads has resulted in an increase in revenue for the department, it has also increased the demand for road improvements and maintenance.

This then brings me to the question of road maintenance. Maintenance of roads accounts for a requirement of \$9,600,000 for 1970-71 compared with an expenditure of \$10,100,000 in 1969-70. There is the ever-present problem of confining maintenance expenditure within economic limits, as the greater the amount spent on maintenance the less funds there are available for expenditure on permanent works. However, assets already in existence must be maintained to predetermined minimum tolerable standards, and the amount of \$9,600,000 sought is considered to be the minimum requirement for this purpose.

It has been found that a factor which plays a large part in the premature deterioration of road pavements and bridge works is the overloading of vehicles. This finding is supported by actual experience and results of research on a world-wide basis. Consequently, it is incumbent on the department to prevent, to the best of its ability, this destruction of the State's assets. In order to do this, the regulations covering weight of loads must be rigorously enforced.

For the Beef Cattle Roads Construction Fund, the requirement for 1970-71 is shown in the Estimates as \$8,000,000. I think hon. members are quite conversant with the objectives of the beef cattle road scheme and of the advantages that have accrued from the work done to date. Arrangements have been made between the State and Commonwealth Governments for some \$70,000,000 to be spent on beef roads between 1 July, 1960, and 30 June, 1974. To date 952 miles of beef roads have been sealed under this scheme and a further 376 miles are under construction. In addition, 101 miles of road have been constructed to first stage gravel, leaving 1,118 miles yet to be constructed. Up to 30 June, 1970, an amount of approximately \$38,000,000 had been spent on the beef roads, including an amount of \$5,064,421 spent in 1969-70.

The department's Estimates for this year also include an amount of \$4,300,000 as anticipated expenditure from Commonwealth Aid, Local Authority Roads, Fund. This is to meet estimated payments to local authorities for works on roads under their control to be financed from their Commonwealth aid allocations. It excludes \$1,260,340, which councils themselves chose to have set aside and held in the Main Roads Fund for expenditure on declared secondary roads with a \$1 for \$1 matching contribution by the Main Roads Department. The figure includes some unspent money reprovided from the previous year and excluded an amount estimated to be unspent at the end of the current financial year.

The allocations actually made to councils for 1970-71 totalled \$5,360,182, comprising \$1,125,000 for expenditure by urban local authorities on roads defined by the Commonwealth as urban arterial roads and \$4,235,182 for expenditure by the other

local authorities on rural roads other than rural arterial roads. There are no rural arterial roads under local authority control.

Expenditure of Commonwealth Aid Funds in the urban areas defined in the current Commonwealth Aid Roads Act is confined to roads declared by the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport to be urban arterial roads. The funds cannot be applied to any other class of road. Most of these roads are declared under the Main Roads Acts or are being built by the Main Roads Department.

As mentioned previously, the amount allocated to the State this financial year for expenditure on rural roads other than rural arterial roads is \$13,710,000. The allocations for this category of road increase by 5 per cent. compounded each year during the term of the Act, and a similar annual increase is passed on to the rural local authorities. The amount allocated to local authorities for this category of road under their control is over 30 per cent. of the Commonwealth allocation, and this is considered to be on the generous side when compared with the needs of the more important roads of the same category that have been brought under the department's control.

The department is under strong and constant pressure to increase the funds made available to local authorities for development of the roads under their control. However, all the funds available to the State for expenditure on roads are fully allocated for this purpose each year. An increase in allocations to the local authorities for undeclared roads simply means a corresponding slowing down in the rate of development of the more important declared roads, for which the councils also press strongly for greater allocations.

The amount of \$5,200,000 shown in the Estimates as being required for expenditure from the Roads Maintenance Account represents the anticipated collections under the Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) Acts, which imposes on the operators of vehicles of over four tons capacity charges based on the mileage travelled on public roads. These charges are paid to the Transport Department as the collecting authority and are then passed to the credit of the Road Maintenance Account at the Treasury. These moneys, without any deduction for collection expenses, are then distributed between the Main Roads Department and the local authorities on the principle that they should be paid to those authorities financially responsible for the maintenance of the roads used by this heavy traffic.

During 1969-70, local authorities received \$1,625,275 from this source, while the balance of \$3,175,800 was paid to the credit of the Main Roads Fund and spent on maintenance of declared roads. It is partly due to the use of these funds by the Main Roads Department that local authority contributions to maintenance of declared roads

have been drastically reduced. Before these funds were collected, the average local authority contribution to declared road maintenance was 26 per cent. of expenditure. Concessions since applied have reduced this to only 10 per cent. on the average.

For 1970-71 distribution of these funds to local authorities will increase by approximately \$100,000 to \$1,730,000, which is one-third of the anticipated collections. I think it will be agreed that this is generous in view of the fact that something less than 20 per cent. would probably have been collected on account of heavy vehicle operations on local authority roads. A large proportion of these funds is collected on account of running on State highways, the cost of maintaining which is now borne entirely by the State.

An amount of \$1,695,000 is shown in the Estimates as required for expenditure from the Main Roads Department Special Standing Fund. This fund is in the nature of a suspense account in which charges are accumulated against work carried out for other bodies, including jobs in which local authorities have a joint financial responsibility. Other accounts, in the nature of reserves, are also contained within this fund. The items concerned are either wholly or partially recoverable or are reserves established for payment at certain times, such as annual leave, supervision fees, toll revenue, and the like.

In presenting these Estimates to the Committee, I have endeavoured to convey to hon. members some idea of the extent of the department's activities and their associated problems, and to stress that every endeavour is made to achieve a balanced development of the over-all road system of the State. I believe the department's proposals for 1970-71 are in keeping with this objective.

DEPARTMENT OF MINES

I am fully cognisant of the honour that has fallen upon my shoulders as Minister charged with the responsibility for the mining industry in this State. The mining industry in Queensland today stands at the very height of its affluence. At no stage in the long history of this State has mining been in a position to make a greater contribution to the State's economy, and if one is prepared to look closely at the circumstances prevailing in Queensland today one will see that this position could not have arisen at a more opportune time.

If I had risen to my feet here some 15 or 20 years ago and told hon. members that the time would come when the State's economy would be able to withstand the full economic impact of a disastrous series of droughts, no doubt I would have been laughed out of this Chamber.

Today, notwithstanding the drought, the level of employment throughout the State is high; the railways are making profits; the

amount of capital investment is being maintained at a remarkable level and the economy of districts which might otherwise be expected to be depressed at this point in time is buoyant.

All of these factors, remarkable as they are, can be attributed either directly or indirectly to events within the mining industry, and there is no doubt that from any point of view the industry has not yet reached its ultimate pinnacle of development and progress. Events in recent times have shown that the mining industry has many critics, both inside and outside Parliament, but none can decry the concrete evidence of the industry's achievements or their impact on the social and economic well-being of the people of Queensland.

It has always amazed me that so many people are prepared to single out comparatively minor aspects of the industry for criticism. These same people are rarely prepared to give credit where credit is due.

One has only to travel around this State today to see the tangible benefits that mining has given to Queenslanders in scores of widely separated and decentralised districts. The new towns, ports, railways and many other concrete pointers to progress which mining has made into reality would not have been possible as a result of increased activity in any other sector of the State's economy.

As a primary producer myself, I am fully cognisant of the major contribution that our great agricultural and primary industries have made to Queensland's growth over the years, but I believe there can be no question about the fact that, were we relying solely on these industries today, because of seasonal conditions and falling prices Queensland would present a far different picture from what it actually does.

A main point for criticism, particularly in this Chamber, centres on the amount of royalty that companies pay for the minerals they produce. For some reason, which I must confess I am unable to understand, there is a large number of people who cannot equate contributions to Consolidated Revenue and contributions in the way of additional employment, community services and increased prosperity in the same breath.

If one adds all of these factors to the royalty payments, it is easy to see that the companies currently operating within the Queensland mining sphere are making a considerably larger contribution to the people of this State than is disclosed merely in the amount collected by way of royalty. Overlooked, too, is the fact that it is not possible in the mining field to amass a considerable profit without first injecting a large capital investment.

In recent weeks the Utah Development Company has been singled out, both inside and outside this Chamber, as a target for economic speculation, and I note that the many experts who do not have access to

the company's books have come up with levels of profit ranging from \$20,000,000 to \$30,000,000 a year. If this were the case, and taking into account the amount of capital that the company has and that it plans to invest in Queensland, it is going to take something of the order of 20 years or more before the company recovers its invested funds and thereby makes any actual profit at all.

It is not my intention today to take up the time at my disposal on a lengthy dissertation on the facts of the mining industry which should be crystal clear to everyone except those who, for one reason or another, choose not to see. My purpose today is to outline the Estimates for the Department of Mines for the 1970-71 financial year. But I feel I would have been remiss in my duty as Minister if I had not used at least part of my time today to raise my voice in defence of an industry which is doing more than any other to promote progress and development within this great State.

However, before proceeding to analyse my department's Estimates and to look closely at the facts and figures which add up to the industry's actual dollars-and-cents contribution to the State's economy, I feel bound to say that in all the development that has taken place in mining in this State during the past few years, my department and the industry have been partners. This partnership has worked well, and the results of what has been achieved are clear for everyone to see.

I am proud of the part that the Department of Mines has played in the scheme of things, and I believe that it is deserving of the highest possible praise for the way it has gone about its job. No Minister or, for that matter, no State could have expected more than has been achieved by the department and the officers concerned with its administration.

The total amount required by the Department of Mines for 1970-71 financial year is \$2,567,235. This exceeds, by \$506,629, the amount actually expended in 1969-70. The great bulk of this increase can be attributed to an increased provision to meet a higher level of salaries and wages of departmental staff, and a provision of \$144,300 for Stage 2 of the Sunset suburb development at Mt. Isa.

The actual expenditure from the Chief Office Vote for the 1969-70 financial year was \$629,653.28, of which \$360,005.85 was for salaries. The salaries provision for 1970-71 is \$441,928. As I have said, the increased salaries provision is due to annual salary increments and award variations, as well as provision for the appointment of seven new members to the staff. These additional staff positions have been provided as approved by the Public Service Board.

The Chief Office contingency provision for 1970-71 is \$405,120 as compared with

\$214,803 for 1969-70. The actual expenditure for the 1969-70 financial year was \$209,739.

Increased or additional provisions have been made for the following commitments—

Development of the Sunset suburb at Mt. Isa, Stage 2—\$114,300.

Protection of old mine shafts, which is a re-provision—\$2,000.

Re-provision for equipment at the mines rescue stations at Ipswich and Collinsville—\$10,000.

A new mines rescue station at Blackwater—\$10,000.

A multilith duplicator, microfilming equipment and electronic calculator—\$7,000.

Under the heading of "Mining Fields", the amount sought by the department this year is \$1,551,797. Provision is made in this Vote for the salaries and expenses of wardens' offices, inspection of mines, petroleum engineering, the geological survey, the assay office at Cloncurry, and grants and loans to prospectors and plant and stock purchases.

Portion of the drilling programme expenditure is also provided, with the balance of necessary funds coming from the Loan Fund, together with contributions from the Queensland Coal Board and others.

The contribution of \$15,850 to the Water Resources Investigation Trust Fund, covering geological survey salaries and other costs, is divided in order that the total expenditure on underground water investigations is sufficient to attract the full Commonwealth subsidy as provided in the State Grant Water Resources Act. The actual expenditure to 1969-70 under this heading was \$1,352,023.49, of which \$887,802.94 was for salaries.

Salaries provision for 1970-71 is \$994,799, the increase again being due to salary increments, award variations, and provision for replacements and additional staff, mainly in the inspection of mines and geological survey where the staff recruitment position is still unsatisfactory.

The actual contingencies expenditure for 1969-70 was \$464,220.55. The provision for 1970-71 amounts to \$556,998, with the main increases being on behalf of inspection of mines, the geological survey and petroleum engineering.

The drilling programme revenue provision has been decreased to \$120,000 for 1970-71 under a special Treasury provision, with the Loan Fund provision being determined at \$978,000 and contributions from the Queensland Coal Board and others at \$70,000, making a total drilling programme provision of \$1,168,000.

Contribution to the Water Resources Investigation Fund has been decreased from \$30,050 to \$15,850 for 1970-71. This year an amount of \$26,069 is being sought for

the Coal Miners' Pensions Tribunal. This Vote provides for the salaries and expenses of the staff. The contribution made by the Government of \$150,000 is now made from payments authorised by special Acts. The payment of pensions is made from a separate fund administered by the pensions tribunal. The actual expenditure on salaries and expenses is a charge against the pension fund, from which a refund is made to the Treasury for expenditure incurred. The Government contribution is the only charge against State funds.

The amount sought for expenditure under the Gas Acts in the 1970-71 financial year is \$81,541. The expenditure in 1969-70 was \$57,766.79, of which \$45,525.11 was for salaries. The salaries provision for 1970-71 is \$54,303. Contingencies provisions for 1970-71 under the Gas Acts are \$27,238, the increase in this provision being mainly due to the re-provision by the Treasury for special equipment for testing natural gas at a cost of \$13,000. Other minor variations have been made in the over-all Vote provision.

I would also like to look at the activities of these various sections of the Department of Mines in closer detail. The value of the State's mineral production in 1969 totalled \$299,000,000, as against \$221,000,000 in 1968. Significant increases, both in production and value, in 1969 were recorded in respect of bauxite, coal, copper, lead, salt, zinc, rutile and zircon, and the production and value of tin concentrate increased slightly. However, although there was a significant increase in the production of silver, its total value barely changed because of world market prices. The production and value of gold recorded a slight decrease.

Mount Isa Mines Limited continued to be by far the State's largest single producer, with combined copper, silver, lead and zinc production worth \$182,000,000. The company's plans for the opening of a new mine to be known as the Hilton mine on its northern leases some 13 miles from Mt. Isa and the establishment there of a new township are well advanced. At the existing mine, about 5,380,000 tons of ore were milled and 143,000 feet of underground development were completed.

Mount Morgan Limited continued as the largest producer of gold with an output of 57,600 ozs., a decrease of 5,375 ozs. on the 1968 production. In addition to gold, the company produced about 8,076 tons of copper and 7,275 tons of pyrites. Almost 1,500,000 tons of ore were milled and 3,000,000 tons of overburden were removed.

Golden Plateau N.L. at Cracow milled 37,217 tons of ore, which yielded 14,404 ozs. of gold and 35,468 ozs. of silver.

At Weipa, the Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Ltd. increased the production of bauxite by almost 2,000,000 tons to 5,213,533 tons, valued at almost \$28,500,000. The construction of a calcined bauxite plant

to cost over \$3,000,000 was well advanced at the end of the year. In addition, the building of 53 new homes was begun, the primary school was extended, and the first two classrooms of the secondary school were constructed.

In the Herberton district, 1,398 tons of tin concentrate were produced, and of this total 909 tons of tin concentrate were produced by two bucket dredges operating near Mt. Garnet. At Wolfram Camp, Metals Exploration N.L. treated stockpiled ore for the recovery of wolfram, molybdenite and bismuth to a value totalling more than \$1,000,000.

In the heavy mineral sands section of the industry, 105,033 tons of rutile and 70,487 tons of zircon were produced. Most of the production was obtained by Consolidated Rutile Ltd. and Titanium and Zirconium Industries Proprietary Ltd. from North Stradbroke Island. Other significant production was by Associated Minerals Consolidated Ltd. at South Stradbroke Island and Queensland Titanium Mines Ltd. at Inskip Point.

In the Gunpowder Creek area north of Mount Isa, Surveys and Mining Ltd. continued exploratory drilling on the Mammoth copper ore body and progress was made in the development of mining operations and associated services. A concentrator of 1,500 tons a day capacity and a power station were nearing completion at the end of the year. A concrete dam with a capacity of 3,000 million gallons was built on Greenstone Creek, where the township of Gunpowder is being established for an eventual population of 5,000.

From Cape Flattery, 94,000 tons of silica sands were exported by Cape Flattery Silica Mines Pty. Ltd. The company proposes to establish a deep-water port with bulk-loading facilities at Cape Flattery.

The value of copper obtained from ore supplied by small producers in the Cloncurry and Mt. Isa district totalled \$2,500,000.

In another metalliferous mining project that could be established in the next five years, Metals Exploration N.L. and Freeport of Australia Incorporated have announced their desire to go ahead with the exploitation of lateritic nickel deposits at Greenvale. In addition to the mine and township at Greenvale, a railway from Greenvale to a point a few miles north of Townsville and a treatment plant at this point are proposed. The cost of capital works involved is estimated at \$180,000,000. The company is currently negotiating a franchise with the Government.

In respect to the phosphate deposits at Duchess and Lady Annie, Broken Hill South Ltd. is continuing beneficiation tests and feasibility studies, the latter including the pumping of the ore as a slurry to the Gulf and a suitable site for a harbour. Capital costs are expected to be well in excess of \$100,000,000.

Investigations into oil shales in the Julia Creek area and feasibility studies are being continued by the three partners, Australian Aquitaine Petroleum Pty. Ltd., the Oil Shale Corporation (Australia) Pty. Ltd., and Pacminex Pty. Ltd. The proposals include the mining of the shale, retorting the shale to produce gasoline, lubricating oils and fuel oils, and the burning of the spent shale to produce electric power and the treatment of the burnt spent shale to produce vanadium pentoxide and ferro-vanadium. If the project proves viable, the capital expenditure will be in the region of \$100,000,000.

In connection with the underground brines near Port Alma, negotiations with Dow Chemical (Australia) Ltd. regarding the establishment of a chemical complex at Gladstone are continuing. The boom in mineral exploration continues unabated and almost the entire area of the known mineralised parts of the State is held under either mining leases or authorities to prospect. At the end of 1969, 75,142 square miles were held under authority to prospect for minerals other than coal and petroleum. During 1969, about \$11,000,000 was spent in exploring these authorities. This represents four times the amount similarly spent in 1966 and twice the amount spent in 1967. In the north-west of the State the search for uranium has been intensified and at Cape York and in the Gulf of Carpentaria authorities to prospect for bauxite have been granted to major companies.

During 1969 the production of crude oil from the Moonie, Alton and Bennett fields continued, but at a reduced rate. The amount sold in 1969 was 1,849,329 barrels, valued at just over \$5,800,000. The producers contributed \$330,945 to the State by way of royalty.

The construction of the Roma-Brisbane gas pipeline was completed by Associated Pipelines Ltd., and it was officially inaugurated by the Premier on 17 March, 1969. Sales of natural gas increased more rapidly than anticipated and daily throughputs on occasions exceeded 25,000,000 cubic feet. The average daily throughput was about 13,000,000 cubic feet for the operating period. The Roma electricity power-house and the Roma hospital were supplied with gas throughout the year. Sales stations were constructed at Ipswich and Toowoomba. During the year just over 3.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas and 9,672 barrels of condensate were sold.

Petroleum exploration activity continued at a steady level, but apart from the discovery of the Grafton Range gas field in the Roma area no great success was achieved. Nearly all drilling took place on shore. Off shore, in the wake of the oil spill at Santa Barbara in the United States, consideration of applications for permits to explore was deferred until it could be shown more conclusively that drilling technology was capable of protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

Drafting of uniform Commonwealth-State regulations to control operations under the new joint legislation for off-shore drilling activities continued during the year.

During 1969-70, the Department of Mines continued its policy of actively assisting the mining industry. The funds provided for 1969-70 for prospecting, mine development and road grants totalled \$25,000. For purchases of machinery an amount of \$10,000 had been allocated and \$14,000 was allocated to the provision of compressor units, winches and pumping plants.

During 1969 the State treatment works at Irvinebank continued to treat small parcels of ore for the production of tin concentrates, antimony and wolfram.

Tin has attracted a number of prospecting companies into the area and options have been taken over several small mines and this has tended to curtail production. The companies are carrying out programmes of exploration to establish ore reserves and a number of small mines which were previous producers supplied very little ore to the mill during this stage. If these options are exercised or even relinquished, the mill supplies will improve.

The research officers of the University of Queensland have assisted with advice on recovery from antimony ore and are at present actively engaged on methods to improve the recovery of tin from the Irvinebank residues. The department has greatly assisted this research with financial aid, technical supervision and the supply of essential equipment. Two flotation units were added to the plant and two jigs were purchased. To help in this research a portable isotope mineral analyser was purchased and left for use at the university.

The Venus State Battery has continued to provide a valuable service by treating ore mined in the Charters Towers division, but ore supplies have dwindled in recent years and the operating methods are being re-examined.

The Government Assay Office at Cloncurry has attained a new record with the throughput of a total of 8,824 samples involving 10,724 assays. The revenue earned was also a record of \$23,276. This good performance was achieved by one assayer and two good technical assistants.

The growing activity of large prospecting companies is responsible for the increase in supply of samples. The Spekter absorption-meter which was purchased the previous year has helped considerably with the throughput of copper samples.

The hire of departmental equipment has been in demand, and two new compressors were recently purchased and 14 compressor plants were continually on hire. About 18 Quick winches and a number of pumping plants were made available for hire.

Extensive road grants were made either directly to small miners or to local government bodies to carry out the necessary repairs.

The Mines Department drilling branch was also extremely active during 1969-70. During this period the department drilled 185,819 feet, the second-highest figure ever recorded.

Once again coal drilling predominated in order to ensure sufficient reserves of steaming coal for the expected industrial growth of the State, and to test the resources of coking coal so that ample reserves are available for the State's requirements, having regard to the exports at present taking place.

Drilling operations for steaming coal were completed at West Moreton during the year and discontinued at Theodore at the end of the year. Drilling for steaming coal continued at Blackwater, and short programmes were completed at Tarong and Collinsville. The proving of coking coal deposits continued at Moura, Blackwater and the Northern Bowen Basin. Drilling for coal for special purposes commenced at Taroom.

The department was also active in the search for metalliferous deposits, and programmes were undertaken at Charters Towers, Biggenden, Wateranga, Maleny, Calgoa, The Caves and Almaden.

In view of the anticipated water shortage throughout the State, an accelerated programme of drilling has been in progress during the past year in underground water investigations to prove future reserves for the increasing population and industry of the State. Drilling also increased on dam-site foundations to enable preparation of sites for conservation of water supplies.

At 30 June, 1970, 15 departmental drills were operating. Operations generally have been moved to more remote areas, making it necessary to purchase 15 more caravans for drill-site accommodation during the past year.

The Redbank and Moura workshops continue to maintain and repair all departmental drilling and ancillary equipment. During the year the department conducted three drilling schools at Redbank, and these schools attracted staff from several private companies. During the 1969 calendar year almost 8,500,000 tons of coal was produced in Queensland, which is a new record. The total value of all coal produced was \$47,135,601. Internal consumption by electricity, metalliferous mines and cement works, together with foundries, distilleries, hospitals and other undertakings, continued to increase.

The largest individual increase in production for domestic consumption was at the Callide open cut, where an increase of 56,000 tons over the previous year was recorded. There were also dramatic increases in coal produced for export, which accounted for just on 5,000,000 tons of the State's

production. In addition to the activities of established producers, parcels of bulk samples of coal were exported overseas for testing from South Blackwater, Baralaba, Yarrabee and Blair Athol.

During 1969, 50 coal mines operated in the State comprising 30 underground mines and 20 open-cut mines.

The introduction of new and improved production and marketing methods continued at a high level. As a result of developmental and new equipment programmes incorporated during the last few years, it can now be said that, from a production point of view, the Queensland coal industry is as modern as that anywhere in the world. The industry is continuing to meet the requirements of Queensland, and I see no reason why the industry should not continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

As spectacular as developments on the home front have been, they will always tend to be overshadowed by the increasingly high level of activity in the export sector. In 1969-70 the Moura and Blackwater mines continued as the State's principal producers of coal for the export market. Work is already under way on two new mines, one at Goonyella and the other at Peak Downs, which will both come into the export trade within the next two years. Both mines are being developed by the Utah Development Company and, if the company's current plans proceed on schedule, they will establish two additional mines within the next five years.

Plans for other export coal complexes are also well advanced. A new mine at South Blackwater, which is being developed by Thiess Bros., is now in the production stage, and a number of other companies including Clutha Development Company, the B.H.P. Company and Mines Administration Pty. Ltd. are actively engaged in the preliminary stages of plans to develop export coal mines in the Bowen basin area.

As spectacular as events in the past have been, the future would seem to be even brighter for the Queensland coal industry. The only foreseeable limiting factor would seem to be the amount of time, effort and capital we are prepared to spend on the development of our coal resources.

In this regard I am pleased to report to the Committee that exploration for coal has been maintained at an extremely high level. Currently some 13,000 square miles of the State are held under authorities to prospect and the area is covered by a total of 52 individual authorities. The increasing tempo of activity within the coal industry has placed an additional burden on the Mines Department inspectors of coal mines. During 1969-70 departmental inspectors made a total of 1,251 inspections of coal operations and travelled a total distance of over 136,000 miles. We can attribute to the work of these

inspectors the fact that during the period under review accidents within the coal industry were kept within reasonable limits.

The Geological Survey of Queensland has continued, and will continue, to play a vital role in the development of the State's mining industry. The services provided by the survey encompass a wide variety of mining activities. Sustained interest and intensive activity in mineral exploration by companies and individuals has further increased the volume of administrative and technical responsibility of the survey. The demand for field and laboratory services as a basis for the development of the sources of minerals and their utilisation, engineering construction and industrial planning has in no way diminished.

The difficulties in recruiting additional professional staff have been aggravated by a continual loss in the face of overwhelming competition from prospecting companies, and overseas recruiting is being explored at every opportunity with some success. The re-organisation of the staff has allowed greater emphasis to be placed on progress rather than sectional activities, and all investigations are closely programmed. Departmental geologists have played a major role in the organising of the Mines Department drilling programme for both coal and metalliferous ores. The activities of the survey encompass a full spectrum of geological activity, and it can be seen from the demands made on the survey's staff and facilities that the work they are doing is more than appreciated by the industry.

As a result of the intensification of mineral prospecting, demands on the information and advisory services of the Geological Survey continue to increase. These include the facilities of the reference library with text books, periodicals and open-file reports, the sale of maps and publications, the free mineral testing and assay service, the core and cutting library at Redbank and personal consultation with professional staff. There has been an increase in the volume of information issued by the Geological Survey through its published reports as well as shorter publications in the Queensland Government Mining Journal.

The introduction of natural gas into Brisbane and some other far-eastern Queensland centres during the last financial year has placed a heavy burden on the staff of the Government Gas Engineer and it would have been more than over-optimistic to expect the conversion to natural gas to be implemented without any problems. In a programme of this magnitude the human factor was quite considerable, and discipline of operation was a major factor. The department recognised its responsibilities to assist both the gas companies and the consumers in every possible way, and no effort was spared in this regard.

It was felt that the department should liaise very closely with the gas companies to help pin-point, identify and solve problems so that appropriate action could be taken at the very earliest moment. Priority was given to conversion of meters and the work-load required a superhuman effort on the part of the officers concerned to ensure other functions were not neglected. Action taken by the staff of the department stands on record as being a considerable factor in the conversion. Regulations for the protection of high-pressure mains were promulgated during the period, which climaxed a long period of preparation during which many complex problems and overlapping responsibilities had to be critically analysed.

The result is a first basic code of practice in regulation form for protection of underground mains. However, while this was a start, there is still a need to make progressive amendments to ensure undisciplined excavation does not cause damage. It may be necessary for an amendment of the Gas Acts to bring about this desirable aim. Equipment used by the Government Gas Engineer and his staff has been continuously brought up to date to meet the demands of a both complicated and vital sector of the energy field. Much has also been accomplished with a programme designed to ensure that all of the liquefied petroleum gas equipment installed in caravans in Queensland is safe.

In the first six months of 1969, the total value of all minerals produced in Queensland was almost \$100,000,000. During the same period of 1970, the total value of all minerals produced in the State was just short of \$147,000,000, which represents an increase of almost 50 per cent. This result is made all the more remarkable when one considers that each successive year for mining is a record. An industry that is capable of recording an increase of nearly 50 per cent. in a six-month period, in the face of a previous record year must, of necessity, be in an extremely healthy condition. I know that figures in themselves do not mean very much, but one cannot ignore the import of what stands behind these particular figures.

Of importance too is the fact that the increase does not represent a rise in the value of production of only one mineral. Movements in the production values of eight minerals have combined to bring about this remarkable result. Surely it is ridiculous to suggest that an industry that is injecting so much into the economy in the way of capital and development at every level is not operating in the very best interests of the State.

However, this is a charge that has been made time and time again, both inside and outside this Chamber. It is my pleasure to go on record as saying that I have the very highest regard for what the men and women who have controlled our mining industry are doing for Queensland, and I am

extremely proud to have played perhaps only a small part in the development that has taken place.

I know, too, that my sentiments in this regard are shared by the great majority of Queensland people. I believe that the biggest problems facing our society in the years ahead surround the co-existence of mining, with its environment, and the population. We cannot eliminate the environment, nor can we eliminate the desires of the population, and I think that events in this State to date have shown that we certainly cannot afford to eliminate mining.

At this point I should like to introduce a matter which has given me a great deal of pleasure, both personally and officially. My Under Secretary, Mr. E. K. Healy, who, I know, is well and favourably known to members on both sides of this Chamber, has had a distinction bestowed on him which reflects credit on the Government as well as on himself. He has been informed by the Mt. Isa City Council that it decided unanimously, at a meeting, to name a new and most modern suburb being created in Mt. Isa the "Healy Estate". This suburb includes some 400 modern homes, park lands, a school and shopping facilities. In advising Mr. Healy of this honour, which I believe is unique among State public servants, the mayor of this most progressive northern city said—

"My council does believe that the orderly development of Mount Isa has been possible through the tremendous support and co-operation that you have given us.

"I am certain that it will be one of the most outstanding residential projects we have ever had in Mount Isa.

"The naming of this estate is some recognition of the service you have given us and for your personal interest in the progress of this area."

As is well known to members, Mt. Isa would have probably the most acute housing problems in this State. With mining development proceeding at a fantastic pace, it is virtually impossible to fully anticipate housing needs. My department has made substantial sums available for housing projects. Some \$200,000 has been directed to the creation of building allotments, levelling, street surfacing, grading, channelling, etc. This type of development has arisen within the department for the first time to meet the great development change. Auctions of land for housing and industrial purposes have been arranged to endeavour to defeat trafficking and profiteering in real estate.

I wish to stress that the action of the Mt. Isa City Council is a distinct expression of praise for the policies of this Government in framing its miners' homestead perpetual lease policies to meet modern needs. The mayor and aldermen of the council have repeatedly expressed their appreciation of how the Government has handled this extremely difficult situation. I feel most

gratified at the way matters have progressed, and that I have on my staff a public servant who has been so honoured.

Queensland's future as a State, and indeed Australia's own future as a nation, is intrinsically tied up with the future of the mining industry. Already mining has done a great deal for Queensland, and it stands to do a great deal more in the years of development and progress that lie ahead for this great State.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (4.58 p.m.): We have heard from the Minister this afternoon a very detailed account of the ramifications of the departments under his control. A look at the reports presented to Parliament by the Under Secretary for Mines and the Commissioner of Main Roads reveals the great extent of the work of those departments. Certainly one looks almost in awe at the great increase that there has been in recent years in motor vehicle registrations, and the broad ramifications of the entry of mining companies into Queensland to operate leases in this State.

From the earliest days, the mining industry in Australia has been geared to the export market. During the time of its early development, the population was considerably increased by an influx of Asiatics and others who sought their fortunes on the Australian goldfields. Those were the days of the shallow-miners—the gougers. They no longer have a place in the mining industry of this country. Mining today is, in the main, deep mining, requiring expensive diamond drilling and other forms of sophisticated technology. Previously, with a small population dependent mainly on primary production, the development of Australia's rich mineral deposits was not practicable. The huge expenditure involved in making the recovery from ore profitable would not have justified the opening of many mining fields.

I might mention that the large mining companies—the giants—have been really international in their outlook because they have had to compete on world markets at prevailing world-market prices. However, many of them have a somewhat selfish point of view and will not embark upon a venture unless it is highly profitable. I concede that a company must make profits. If it does not, it will go to the wall and so will its employees. But I certainly am completely opposed to the comments made by a very eminent member of the Federal Parliament—Mr. McMahon, a former Treasurer—who recently told a society of accountants, when speaking of the changing philosophies of the mining industry, that it was quite unjust for Governments to make it mandatory for mining companies to go into many stages of production—for example, the production of the basic material and the fabrication of metals such as aluminium. In my opinion, it is very necessary for Governments to write into contracts a condition that a company that has as its primary objective the

production of ore for the export market has a clear responsibility to the young people of this country to create secondary industry that will provide job opportunities for them and eventually give the country the maximum benefit from its mineral resources and make it self-sufficient in the metals produced from them. That is only common sense, and I repeat that I am completely opposed to the salient point made by the Federal Treasurer on that occasion.

Companies should be allowed to make a reasonable profit, but it is completely wrong that they should be making colossal profits from the export of ore, no matter how high the initial outlay. If the young people of Australia are not given opportunities for employment and opportunities to involve themselves in the new technology that is sweeping the world, the companies are not playing their part and Governments should take corrective action.

The Minister spoke in glowing terms of the increased mineral production in Queensland. Although what he said is true, similar increases in production are taking place all over Australia. I want to destroy the idea advanced by hon. members opposite that it is purely because of Government intervention, Government interest and Government legislative enactments in the past 10, 12 or 13 years that production has increased in this State. That is far from the truth. I have here a copy of "The Sydney Morning Herald" of Monday, 26 October. In it one sees "W.A. Government concept of iron ore development"; "Coal largest contributor to NSW mineral output"; "Mineral sands hit record levels"; and "Bauxite might replace iron ore as top mineral".

A Government Member: Liberal Governments.

Mr. HANSON: I could produce other newspapers to show the hon. member what Mr. Dunstan and the Labour Government in South Australia are doing. That is not something that is occurring only in Australia; it is occurring throughout the world, and it is part and parcel of an over-all expansion in mineral production. It is not because the Country Party and the Liberal Party have a majority of members on the Government benches. Far from it!

In a few minutes, I hope to point out a few inadequacies that exist within the administration of the Mines Department, and I hope that some cognisance will be taken of what I say in order to improve the future of the mining industry in this State. We are told by the Minister that this year the value of mineral production in Queensland will exceed \$200,000,000. It was a little over \$200,000,000 last year, and I admit that it is a very significant figure. It exceeds the value of production from the sugar industry, and I think it runs a very close second to the value of production from the cattle industry. The rate of increase in the mining industry is faster than that in many others.

I agree with all this, but it is imperative to sustain this increase because I think we have only just scratched the surface. This will become evident when we have the equipment that will be available in the years ahead.

I hold that at present, because of Government inadequacy and policy, a limitation is placed upon the rate of development in the mining industry in this State. This limitation has been brought about by the inability of the Government to assist the Mines Department to cope with the great onslaught of requests for leases and authorities to prospect. The limitation certainly does not rest solely with the inability of the mining companies to locate areas or to provide the finance to engage in the search for minerals. As I said, the considerable limitation comes from within the department itself and is a result of the administration of the Mining Acts.

In a number of instances delays of from six to nine months have taken place in the consideration of applications for authorities to prospect. I do not blame the very fine officers of the Mines Department—they are considerably overworked—but a delay of six to nine months in processing an authority to prospect holds back the development of this State by six to nine months.

Mr. Armstrong: Are you blaming the Minister?

Mr. HANSON: I blame the general over-all policy of the Government, which is responsible for it. If hon. members opposite claim that the mineral development in this State and the fact that 7,000,000 tons of coal will be exported through the port of Gladstone calls for 100 per cent. praise of the Government, they must also take 100 per cent. of the responsibility for delays that occur.

Mr. Armstrong: Whom are you blaming?

Mr. HANSON: I am blaming the Government for the delay. Certainly it rests solely at its feet and results from its hopeless inadequacy. Would the hon. member be satisfied if he went to a business up the street seeking to purchase something for his farm and had to wait six or nine months? I am certain he would not be happy. This is a very unfortunate position indeed.

It has been charged, rather unfortunately but successfully, that Australia as a whole has a crippling shortage of geologists, for instance, thus exploding the theory that we have an urgent and potent desire to develop our country.

Mr. Armstrong: So we have.

Mr. HANSON: I maintain that the blame for the shortage in this State rests at the feet of the Government. Over the next 50 years with the advent of Labour Governments we will see even greater development—undreamed of industrial expansion, not only in the exploration for ore and its extraction from the bowels of the earth but also in the

industrial exploitation of the wealth that is in the ground. At present we have no well-laid guide-lines or sound planning, except possibly in the export of our minerals and ores. Besides the shortage of geologists, there is a crying need for geophysicists and mining engineers and surveyors.

Mr. Ahern: Where do we get them?

Mr. HANSON: Put Labour on the Treasury benches, and we will get them. As I said this morning, in the post-war years the Labour Government of the day was faced with an extreme shortage of qualified dentists in hospitals and institutions, and it turned to the United Kingdom and brought qualified dentists to this State. It did not fool about; it got on with the job. If a Labour Government was charged with the responsibility of administering the Mines Department it would ensure that Mr. Healy and his staff are not overworked, as they are at present.

An examination of page 66 of the Estimates reveals that in the Geological Survey section of the Mines Department the number of geologists has been reduced from 68 to 62. Is the Government happy with that situation?

Mr. Ahern: No.

Mr. HANSON: Certainly it should not be.

The matters that I am referring to are important and call for urgent attention. The Government needs to adopt an over-all policy for the examination and development of Queensland's mineral resources, and unless it takes urgent action to swell the ranks of scientists and technologists in mining, international consortiums and firms will do the job for it. And if they do, there will be more than a quid pro quo!

Greater financial assistance than that presently provided must be given to universities and institutes of technology. They must be given the money, the equipment, the opportunity and the encouragement to get on with the job.

The annual report of the Department of Mines reveals that a total of 9,741 people are employed in the mineral industry in this State, which is an increase of 830 on the figure for the previous year. But where are the specialised men? They are the ones about whom the Government should be worrying; yet Government members are critical of any member of the Opposition who dares refer to them. In a smug, self-satisfied way, the Government is crawling along at snail's pace.

I fully realise that the demands made by private companies have accentuated the problem that is confronting the Mines Department; but that is a challenge to the department, and one of the greatest it faces. Does the Government expect to stand idly by in the light of these circumstances and hope that

time will cure all ills? It seems to me that the Government wishes to do that. If the Government members who have been so critical endorse that policy, we on this side of the Chamber will be only too happy to enter their electorates and inform the electors of the lack of responsibility that those Government members display in this Chamber.

Associated with the Vote for the Mines Department is that for the Main Roads Department. It is indeed alarming that the requirement of the Main Roads Fund this year is approximately \$75,000,000. That is an astronomical figure. It was unheard of years ago, for instance, in 1920, when a very fine Labour administration founded the Main Roads Department. Previous conservative Governments tried to ruin the transport system of the State. They did not have the farsightedness of many of the old Labour pioneers.

The Minister brought the maintenance of roads to the Committee's attention in a striking way when he said that this year road maintenance called for the sum of \$9,600,000 compared with \$10,100,000 in 1969-70. Speaking of the economics of road maintenance, he said that existing assets must be maintained at predetermined minimum, tolerable standards. That is quite true. I maintain that inadequate roads are far greater killers than speed or grog. I do not doubt that that statement may be disputed by Government members, but it is substantiated by an eminent authority, namely, Mr. J. Stodart, president of the R.A.C.Q., who, when speaking on this matter only a few months ago, said—

"I don't think speed is the main killer. It is the condition of our roads.

"Responsibility for their improvement rests with the Federal and State Governments. The latter can only work through finance made available by the Commonwealth.

"Unfortunately not all petrol and associated taxes are put into road improvement. Some goes into Consolidated Revenue."

(Time expired.)

Mr. TOMKINS (Roma) (5.17 p.m.): Unlike the previous speaker, I congratulate the Minister on the good work that has been done in the past year. I find it hard to believe that our road system is not good enough and, as I continue, I will outline some of the improvements in main roads construction in the last 12 years. The Estimates this year disclose that \$94,000,000 has been set aside for expenditure by the Main Roads Department compared with \$86,000,000 last year. The additional allocation indicates that the work of the Department is increasing, and the standard of work is certainly better.

I propose to deal mostly with main roads matters, but I want to refer to one point outlined by the Minister when dealing with

the Estimates for the Department of Mines. He referred to natural gas, which, whether we like it or not, comes to Brisbane from the Roma electorate through a pipeline 300 miles long. Gas is supplied to the Austral-Pacific complex, the South Brisbane Gas Company and to Toowoomba and Ipswich. A problem has arisen in my electorate where natural gas is used in the Roma Power House. The capacity of this undertaking has increased out of all proportion in the last few years. It now supplies electricity to Yuleba, Injune, Surat, Mitchell, Mungallala, and reticulation is being expanded rapidly.

I am pleased that the Minister in charge of electricity is sitting on the front bench. I point out to him that the electricity undertaking in our district is excellent. However, one facet of it worries me and the Roma Town Council, namely, the negotiations with overseas people on the price of gas. A price was negotiated before the gas was supplied to Brisbane, but difficulties are now being experienced in negotiating a price after supply has been connected to Brisbane users. It is a two-edged argument. In theory, gas should be cheaper out there because it has not to be reticulated any great distance. The other argument is that it should be cheaper in Brisbane because it is supplied in such large quantities. I hope that the Minister will keep an eye on the agreement between the Roma Town Council and Associated Pipelines, because one price should be related to the other. There should be a periodic review, and some relationship should exist between the price in Brisbane and the price out there.

Mr. Houston: Are the local people subsidising the industry in Brisbane?

Mr. TOMKINS: I would not say they are doing that, but it is very hard to compare the price out there on a small throughput and the price in Brisbane on a large throughput. There should be some relationship. A developing industry out there should not be penalised. This is part of the grass roots of decentralisation. Keeping the price down is one way of keeping our western towns afloat.

I congratulate Mr. Healy on having a suburb in Mt. Isa named after him. It is a real tribute to his department. I am sure that he would say that he is part of the system.

Mr. Davies: What benefit have you derived from gas being introduced into your area?

Mr. TOMKINS: As I indicated, we have a healthy electric light system, and the price of electricity in the area served by this gas is comparable with that in other areas; in fact, if anything, it is a shade cheaper, so we are not penalised, and, therefore, the system must be working all right.

The Main Roads Department has done a fantastic job in the area of Queensland in which I move. Mr. Lowe, Mr. Hansen, and

Mr. Andrews deserve the highest credit for the work they do not only in country areas but also in Brisbane.

Recently, it was my pleasure to go with the Minister to the opening of the new Main Roads Department building in Toowoomba. This is an indication that the department is on the ball and looks after its staff in Toowoomba, which covers south-west Queensland. The divisional engineer, Mr. Dar-mody, is in charge of that division.

I should like the department to give consideration to erecting headquarters in Roma where there is a substantial staff under Mr. Agnew working in a building that is far too small for their requirements. Roma is a progressive inland centre. Most Government departments have branches there.

This division covers the town of Roma, and the shires of Bungil, Taroom, Murilla, Bendemere, Warroo, Booringa, Murweh, Paroo, Bulloo and Quilpie. Those shires have a total Main Roads allocation of \$2,844,000 (most of it for work administered by the shire councils), of which \$1,274,722 was spent in the Roma electorate up to 30 June this year. This is a substantial \$3,000,000 industry and I think it is a fact of life that it needs headquarters. To get the best out of people in Government employment, we must provide conditions comparable with those to be found in private enterprise.

It is a fact that in the last 12 years or so—certainly after the change of Government—much progress has taken place in road construction in this area. I know only too well that it was possible to get bogged on the Condamine Highway in 1957. That road was improved and completed shortly after the change of Government. The hon. member for Warrego would agree that the Warrego Highway is now a good road. It is now possible to travel for a considerable distance west of Longreach on a bitumen road 18 feet wide. The road from Roma to Injune, constructed by the shire council, is now extremely good.

At this stage I should like to commend the co-operation between the Main Roads Department and the shire councils in the carrying out of this work. This means that councils in western areas are able to maintain substantial work-forces of people who live in their areas.

As the Minister said, a programme of decentralisation in the administration of the Main Roads Department has been followed. It is true that the whole set-up of the Main Roads Department has been decentralised. The drawing of plans, most of which had to be done previously in Brisbane, and which, at times, used to hold up work, is now carried out locally, even in western areas. This type of work is now completely decentralised. The Taroom, Murilla and Bendemere Shire Councils also do considerable work for the Main Roads Department. This helps to keep people in those areas, and it helps the economy of the towns. The

decentralisation policy carried out by the Main Roads Department has much to commend it.

Because extremely good roads are now being built, I should like the Minister to give some thought to increasing the maximum permissible speed of 60 miles an hour. When one gets beyond a radius of about 80 miles to 100 miles from Brisbane on to open roads, 60 miles an hour is, in my opinion, too slow. I discovered when I was in Western Australia recently that the speed limit in that State is 65 miles an hour, and, from inquiries that I made, it seems to be working extremely well. I should like to think that the time will come when, in certain areas where the country is flat and there are either no obstructions or no obstructions that cannot readily be seen, the speed limit will be increased to 65.

Mr. Low: What about kangaroos?

Mr. TOMKINS: In most cases they can be seen. They are, as it were, just an occupational hazard, and I would not worry too much about them.

The other matter I wish to raise is the development of what I choose to call north-to-south roads. I accept that there must be roads from the West to the capital city. However, the real deficiency today, as I see it, is in north-to-south roads. I know that at present a considerable amount of work is being done on the Leichhardt Highway, the road from Theodore and Taroom, down through Miles and Meandarra, to Goondiwindi. The road from Injune to Roma and down to Surat, St. George and Mungindi, which is known as the Carnarvon Highway, is also very important. These roads have proved their worth in time of drought, but surely the seasons will change.

Mr. McKechnie: They are carrying a lot of industrial traffic from the south.

Mr. TOMKINS: That is correct. I believe that the movement of both cattle and sheep from north to south has been possible because of dry conditions. However, the need for an all-weather road will become apparent when the wet seasons return and 50 miles of the road between Surat and St. George is not an all-weather road. When it has been completed, people who once sold stock to the south will go south and bring stock back. The fact that stock will be able to move in each direction will be a very good drought-prevention measure.

I know that the Main Roads Department is working on the problem. I have seen its 5-year plan, and if it can maintain its present programme the objective will be achieved. The road from Cunnamulla to Charleville is equally important. The days of big losses of livestock in western areas could largely be avoided by the provision of roads such as these, and I hope that the Main Roads Department is able to keep to the programme it has set. Rapid road transport has

improved conditions greatly. People from my electorate could buy stock at Tamworth and other places if they knew that they could get them home. Of course, they are in trouble if it does rain, but they have not had many problems in that direction in the last four or five years.

Another matter, which may not strictly come within the ambit of the Department of Main Roads but which is affected by its policy, is the saving of stock that could be effected by the more realistic use of the principle of drought-declared shires. Let me refer particularly to the St. George irrigation area. It has done a very good job of supplying lucerne hay and fodder to drought-stricken graziers. Under the present system, no 40-mile limit is in operation, and a freight subsidy of 5c a ton applies from the word go. I should like to think that the Minister for Mines and Main Roads could use his influence to allow that subsidy to remain in force when the seasons return to normal.

Let me put it this way: a 12-ton truck carrying lucerne hay on a subsidy of 5c a ton mile would attract a subsidy of 60c a ton mile. Without subsidy, the charge for cartage on the lucerne hay would probably be 80 or 90c per mile, so the grazier, with the subsidy provided, would have to pay only 20 or 30c. That would be a very great inducement to people to buy fodder and store it, and I believe that they should be encouraged to do so. When seasons are good, people who have high-quality hay for sale cannot sell it. They are able to sell it only when things get tough. If the subsidy could be retained and made available to primary producers who were prepared to buy lucerne hay and store it properly for use in times of drought, I believe that would assist tremendously in saving livestock. I should like to think the Minister and Cabinet would give some consideration to my suggestion, because all sorts of schemes are put forward to save stock and some of them are not very practical.

I am not one who believes that a person breeding cattle or sheep is necessarily the best person to grow lucerne hay. If a man is using his property to breed stock, he wants to do it and make a good job of it. If he diversifies and grows hay, wheat or something else, he generally neglects what he set out to do. On the other hand, at St. George—and I am only mentioning St. George as an example—there is an irrigation set-up and as a result quite a number of people are in the business of growing lucerne hay. They are geared to go and, if they could get a throughput year in and year out, it is obvious that they could possibly reduce their costs. A few weeks ago I was quoted a price of \$60 a ton for lucerne hay. At the present time it can be bought for half that. If these people could get fairly substantial sales of lucerne hay right throughout the year, the price would probably be even a little bit cheaper than that and it would still be good business

for them. Freight is such a big item in the price of lucerne hay that it has to be considered. Anyway, so much for that.

Again I congratulate the Minister on the activities of his departments. Of course, I do not come in contact with the Mines Department as much as I do with the Main Roads Department, but I can say that the Main Roads Department in Queensland has, over the years, done a fantastic job. I hope it is able to continue to do so. Under the new Commonwealth—States arrangement I think this will be possible. As time goes on I hope that it can perhaps expand its work, because roads are the lifeblood of country areas. It is absolutely essential that we slowly but surely service all the settled areas where roads are needed. Until we do, these areas will not be fully effective. I know quite a few areas that I believe in due course will develop extremely well once roads are put in. As I indicated earlier, the Main Roads Department's practice of using shire councils to carry out its work is extremely good.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HARRIS (Wynnum) (5.37 p.m.): First of all, may I take this opportunity of congratulating the hon. member for Port Curtis not only on the very able and capable way in which he presented the case for the Labour Party but also for castigating the Government for some of the things which, in his opinion and in mine, are contrary to the best interests of this fair State.

I was a little surprised at the very short time the Minister devoted to dealing with the Main Roads Department. I suppose one could be forgiven for thinking that the great silver dollar would possibly dazzle the eyes not only of the Minister for Mines and Main Roads but also of his colleague the Premier and many other members of the Country and Liberal Parties, especially when the Minister spent three-quarters of his time elaborating on the mining industry.

I sometimes wonder just how much consideration the Minister and the Main Roads Department give to the motorist. Before I get onto the registration of motor vehicles, let me point out that the Minister did mention how many miles of main roads have been completed and how much money had been spent on the maintenance of those roads. In this connection, I should like to quote this short passage from the journal "Road News":—

"Roads determine the shape and siting of communities as railways determined the shape, size and site of towns and cities a century ago. In the countries with which we compare ourselves, the standard of roads is an accurate reflection of the

standards of the community. In developing countries, roads, health, education and housing are the four great criteria of their material progress."

I compliment the Minister on the work that he had done on the roads. I point out that this is about the only occasion when Government members have not blamed the drought for the condition of our main roads. However, the hon. member for Burdekin, I think it was, referred to the condition of roads for the movement of stock.

I hope the Minister will provide additional funds to develop main roads so that country towns that have suffered tragically during the drought will not remain in their present condition. In many western towns the conditions under which local residents are forced to live are shocking, and some of those conditions are attributable to the poor access provided to those towns.

I wish to refer to the Minister's remark about the registration of motor vehicles in Queensland. These are the figures since 1940—

Year	Vehicles Registered
1940	129,000
1950	207,000
1960	405,000
1970	700,000

Again I ask the Minister: what has he done to provide facilities to motorists, other than those in country towns, to pay their registration fees and have their vehicles checked?

In the Wynnum electorate a new court-house has been erected, and on previous occasions I have complimented the Minister for Works on the job that has been done. In questions I have referred to the fact that in that court-house there are two vacant rooms, and I have asked if the Minister would give urgent consideration to establishing an office of the Main Roads Department in the court-house in an endeavour to overcome the necessarily long queues at the great complex at Spring Hill. On each occasion the Minister has told me that it is not the policy or practice of the Government to make such facilities available in the metropolitan area. I suppose that 20, 15 or even 10 years ago that argument would have been valid; however, in 1970 it is not, particularly in the light of the Minister's admission that this year 700,000 motor-vehicles are registered in Queensland.

I have said that there are two vacant rooms at the court-house, which could adequately house an office of the Main Roads Department. That office could be staffed by certain residents in my electorate who are employed by the department and are fully qualified to perform their job efficiently.

Nine motor companies have showrooms in the Wynnum electorate. They employ between 200 and 300 people. I should like to quote these figures which were obtained from a survey of new cars sold by these

companies during the eight months from 1 January, 1970, in the Wynnum electorate only—

Month	Number
January	44
February	58
March	75
April	67
May	52
June	55
July	65
August	80
	496

It could be logically assumed that if the motor houses sell approximately 500 new vehicles they will sell the same number of used vehicles, so that approximately 1,000 motor vehicles would have changed hands in the Wynnum electorate during that period of eight months. On that basis, between 1,100 and 1,200 vehicles a year would require either a new registration, or a transfer of registration.

Perhaps all types of vehicles would not be sold in my electorate, but they would be sold somewhere throughout Queensland. This is a list of some of the vehicles that could be registered in a suburb that had a branch of the Main Roads Department: cars, trucks, utilities, panel vans, tractors, station sedans, caravan cars, ambulances, cabin chassis, cabin trucks, prime movers, buses, school buses, semi-trailers, solo motor-cycles, motor-cycles with side-cars, tricycles (powered), and invalid chairs.

I stress the importance of giving the motor companies some assistance in vehicle registrations. They all allow three hours for the registering of a motor vehicle, although they are only 11 miles from the Brisbane City Hall. That is the minimum time, without any hold-ups or delays in the Main Roads Department. Frequently there is such a long queue that it takes much more than three hours to complete the transaction.

When a used vehicle is sold, form M201 has to be completed by the police, certifying to the engine number and chassis number. A vehicle cannot be registered until the verification by the police is given to the seller of the vehicle to take to the Main Roads Department to get his number plates and registration certificate. On many days two or three sales are made, and hon. members can well realise the time lost in completing the M201 forms at police stations.

When a new vehicle is sold, an M202 form has to be completed. It can be completed only by nominees, such as managers, directors, or executives of a company, who have been approved by the Main Roads Department. The department accepts their word on the engine and chassis numbers, so that does not present such a great problem. Nevertheless, a visit has to be made to the city to effect registration and, if necessary, get the number plates.

I am sure the Minister will agree that this service should be provided not only in Wynnum but throughout the metropolitan area generally. These transactions can be conducted in Cleveland, which is only 2 miles from Wynnum, but is not within the Greater Brisbane area. Imagine how much less traffic there would be on our roads, and the saving of the time normally taken to travel from Wynnum to Brisbane in the morning or afternoon peak hours, if such an office were established in Wynnum. I mentioned the court-house, not because the facilities are available there, but because it is adjacent to the police station and the whole transaction could be conducted at the one time.

The companies at Wynnum employ 200 men, and the managements claim that if these errands to the city could be avoided by having an office in that area, the time of five men would be saved. Therefore, I implore the Minister to give earnest and serious consideration to establishing a Main Roads office in Wynnum. If this were done—and I think it must come about—we would have an office where licences could be issued.

Take, for instance, the case of a person who has been a loyal citizen over the years and who is now a member of that great band of men and women who are possibly still the salt of the earth, namely, our aged citizens. He has to travel all the way to the city to renew his registration. I realise that he could post his renewal certificate and his cheque, but it is possible that he would have a problem he wants to discuss with an officer in the department. Quite often, because so many rules and regulations govern police activities and travel on our roads, he would consider that to travel to the city by train would be safer for both him and his vehicle. This should not be the case, because these people are justly entitled to the facilities that the department should provide throughout the length and breadth of this city.

The chairman of the Opposition's committee on main roads, the hon. member for Port Curtis, dealt briefly with the Main Roads Department. He also outlined Labour's policy on mining matters. It is interesting to note that the hon. member for Mulgrave is not in the Chamber. We on this side of the Chamber have not decided whether this is his swan-song or whether he was simply muttering and mumbling in his usual ill-informed way.

I consider that the Mines Department has done a very good job in the production of coal and minerals. However, the way it has allowed sand-mining companies to get away with what they are doing in the supposed revegetation and regeneration of sand dunes is a shocking disgrace.

We have heard on so many occasions what is happening in sand-mining. The most valuable mineral sands extend from the Hawkesbury River area, in New South Wales, to Curtis Island, off the Queensland

coast, and what the companies are getting away with is simply shocking. One has only to go over the border into New South Wales to see the condition of some areas that have been mined. I might also mention that some of the areas that were mined and revegetated are now being turned over and mined again. Is that going to be the position at Cooloola? Is that going to be the position throughout the sand-mining industry? Or is it just an isolated case? In one instance, credit must be given to the Government for doing everything possible to revegetate one area in Queensland. A remarkably good job has been done there.

When one thinks of what is taking place on Stradbroke Island at the present time, one must not forget that this is one of the islands of Moreton Bay that could possibly be turned into one of the great tourist attractions of both Waterloo Bay and Moreton Bay. It is a crying shame the way the sand dunes have been left, and the way the sand-mining companies have been allowed to get away with what is virtually a murdering of the flora and fauna. Irrespective of the angle from which one looks at this matter, it is having a great effect on part of our heritage. It will not be very long before some of the flora and fauna of this island will be lost not only to this generation but to generations to come.

Nor do I speak of just this one island. What is to happen to the Great Barrier Reef? I think all members know that the southernmost point of the Barrier Reef is just off Pt. Lookout. What is to happen there?

Again I return to Waterloo Bay and Moreton Bay and ask what is to happen there when the Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Ltd. has prostituted the entire island by the extraction of coral. The Government claims that the company is to be permitted to take dead coral, but how is only dead coral to be taken and live coral left when the entire island is a coral island? I ask the Minister to watch closely what happens between King Island and the Karragarra Passage in the prostitution of coral reserves by the Queensland Cement and Lime Co. Ltd.

(Time expired.)

[Sitting suspended from 5.59 to 7.15 p.m.]

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (7.15 p.m.): I do not think any hon. member would deny that mining, as an industry in this State, is the most exciting development in every respect that is taking place at present. The years in which we live have been called the "mining seventies", and it is with this in mind that I wish to make a few comments on these Estimates.

First I extend my thanks to the officers of the Mines Department, particularly Mr. Kevin Healy, for the courtesies they have extended to me on many occasions during the past couple of years.

Since coming into this Chamber about 2½ years ago, I have been astounded to hear the tirade of criticism directed against the mineral development taking place in Queensland. Firstly, it was out-and-out opposition to the over-all mineral development. It was said that the development would produce only holes in the ground and that profits would accrue only to overseas companies.

Mr. Hinze: It could be said that the A.L.P. has tried to scuttle mining in Queensland.

Mr. AHERN: That could be correct.

Secondly, the emphasis changed from criticism of the overall mineral development to mere criticism of the royalties involved. Thirdly, that criticism has now been extended to criticism of the Department of Mines and the effect of mineral development on the environment in which we live. I think it is fair to say that I have heard a tremendous amount of criticism of many aspects of the mining industry expressed in this Chamber by hon. members opposite in the years that I have been privileged to be a member of this Assembly.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. AHERN: If the Government established a factory at Acacia Ridge through its agency, the Department of Industrial Development, which resulted in a manufacturing industry employing 600 men and providing them with excellent working conditions and wages, which made a worth-while contribution to the housing needs of the State and provided a network of roads and ancillary services of great benefit to the State, the Government would be hailed as being very progressive. It would be commended for showing initiative in bringing such an industry to the State, providing employment for so many men, and improving the standard of living which, after all, is what we are trying to do. But when the Government tries to do something in relation to the mining industry—I remind the Committee that mining is only another secondary industry—and provide employment in inland areas of the State by decentralising industry, all the considerations relative to a manufacturing industry are overlooked and suddenly many conditions that do not apply to a manufacturing industry are applied to the mining industry. I think that is more than a little unreasonable.

I was privileged recently to make a trip with the Minister and officers of his department to view the mineral developments taking place in Central Queensland, and there we saw very tangible evidence of the planning that has been done to promote the development of a mineral industry in that part of the State. From my point of view it was proof positive that the Government has provided an economic climate in which development of that type could evolve, and

that it would not have evolved if some other Government had been in office in Queensland.

I was rather astounded to hear the hon. member for Port Curtis say that this development would have occurred anyway, that it had an inevitability about it. This is categorically untrue. This development has been carefully planned and it has only been made possible by creating the climate for it to happen profitably. Does any hon. member think it might happen in Queensland in the climate created by the Labour Party which, when an extensive mineral development that has made an excellent contribution to this country suddenly turns out to be quite a profitable enterprise, confronts it with the threat of nationalisation, which was recently declared as policy by the Trades and Labour Council's spokesman, Mr. Jack Egerton. I suppose that is also the policy of the Australian Labour Party. Does anyone here think that the present mineral development would occur in Queensland in that sort of political climate? I say that it very definitely would not.

This Government has provided the economic climate that has attracted many people into active mineral development in Queensland, and it has had many great advantages to the State. Firstly, and most significantly, it has provided employment for men on salaries that are higher in many respects than those received by many members in this Chamber. When I visited the mineral development in Central Queensland, I was astounded to learn, while talking to men working on the job up there, that some of the skilled and semi-skilled workers about the mine were on better salaries than were hon. members in this Chamber. I know that no-one will deny that.

It is also true to say that the vast increase in living standards today in this State, and throughout Australia, has been the result of the leadership of the mineral industry. All industry knows this, because it has had to meet the wage conditions created by this climate of economic boom, which in turn has been created by the mineral industry in this country.

Mr. O'Donnell: You said that the Government had created it.

Mr. AHERN: Indirectly, it did. The Government created the climate for the mining boom, which in turn created this economic climate. The hon. member does not seem to understand the situation.

As we travelled through Central Queensland, we noticed the tremendous number of ancillary benefits that the mining boom has brought to Central Queensland. We found local authorities very anxious for new developments to take place in their areas—new road developments, new service industries, more people coming into the area to take advantage of the higher wages being paid.

On many occasions the subject of royalties has been bandied about this Chamber by the Leader of the Opposition. The royalty return to this State from its mineral industry has been very significant. It was a highly significant feature of the State Budget before us at the moment, but I think the most significant feature, and one that is too often overlooked, is the great revenue that the mineral industry provides to our railways.

When I was speaking on the Financial Statement and made that statement, the Leader of the Opposition contested it and said that it was not in the Budget. I should therefore now like to quote this statement by the Treasurer in his Budget—

"Before leaving the subject of railways, let me add that the revenue expected to be derived this year from the carriage of minerals is some \$35 million, or approximately one-third of the total railway receipts."

This is a magnificent contribution, but hon. members opposite have had the temerity to criticise this over-all development which has been of such value to Queensland at this particular time. I do not think their criticism has the support of the people.

It has also been said that very little planning has taken place in the development of the mineral industry. This shows a basic ignorance of the real facts. If we study the situation in the coal industry we realise that extensive planning has been carried out towards providing future coal reserves for Queensland. The Minister has said that for every ton of coal mined two more tons must be proven underground. As well, excellent planning of railway and port development has taken place. It was a pleasure to see the developments in Central Queensland, at Moura, Blackwater, Blackwater South, Goonyella, Peak Downs, Norwich Park and Saraji, and the foreshadowed developments by Clutha, Conzinc Riotinto, B.H.P. and others.

Mr. Wright: Do you think the meat trade should be centralised?

Mr. AHERN: That has nothing at all to do with this debate. The point I want to make is that a tremendous amount of planning has been done in the development of the coal-mining industry in Central Queensland. When it comes about, I believe it will be a tremendous tribute to the foresight and initiative of the Minister for Mines and Main Roads. He has seen what this coal development on an integrated, planned basis could do for Central Queensland, and he has had the courage to see it implemented.

Undoubtedly in the future some conflict will arise between the mining industry and our environment. I agree with the Minister that in the future a greater onus must be placed on the mineral industry to get across through public relations the great value of that industry to Queensland's economy.

I turn now to the administration of the Main Roads Department. I record my thanks to the Commissioner, Mr. Lowe, and to Mr. Bill Cock and Mr. Tom Roper, who have assisted me very greatly during the past couple of years.

In my electorate some criticism has been levelled against the administration of the Main Roads Department. It is always interesting to look at figures and compare them. This year the Estimates for the department represent an investment of \$94,000,000. In 1957, which is a long time ago, the figure was \$22,000,000.

Mr. Hinze: You would call it "peanuts".

Mr. AHERN: It was "peanuts" in those days. It was nowhere near enough.

I am not going to claim that sufficient money has been spent on the construction of access roads to the Sunshine Coast. I feel that, as the area is expanding greatly, and much beyond our wildest dreams, additional funds will have to be made available in the future. However, I am prepared to give credit to the Main Roads Department where credit is due. Approximately six miles of four-lane highway has been constructed between Brisbane and Nambour, and, as well, the access roads to Brisbane on the outskirts of the city have been greatly improved. Previously very bad traffic hold-ups occurred on the northern perimeter of Brisbane, but during the past few years they have been eliminated at great expense to the State. It was necessary to remove them in order to facilitate access to the Sunshine Coast.

It is significant to record that advance planning is under way for a four-lane highway from Bald Hills to the Caboolture Shire boundary, and construction of it will commence shortly. If forward planning estimates are fulfilled, the project will be completed by 1974-75. People travelling to the Sunshine Coast will then have a four-lane section from Brisbane to the Caboolture Shire boundary. It will not be completed without overcoming great engineering difficulties, and it will have to be virtually completed before it can be put into use. It takes such a direct route that very little of it will be usable before it is completed. I understand that the department is considering constructing a two-lane road in the first instance, although some engineering difficulties will be associated with this idea. The department plans to commence work on this section soon.

By the time the four-lane section is completed, a new pavement from Brisbane to Nambour will have been completed during this Government's term. A large amount of main roads work will also have been carried out between Nambour and Gympie, and other places farther north.

Mr. Hinze: Have you a freeway section leading out of Brisbane on the north side?

Mr. AHERN: No. That is exactly what I am referring to.

As I travelled around the State with the Minister on a recent tour, I noticed a network of roads throughout the State which reflects great credit on the Main Roads Department. When the new pavement from Brisbane to Nambour is laid—the greater part of it is already complete, and the final section to be done is between Beerwah and Landsborough—early action is to be taken to bypass the townships of Beerwah and Glasshouse. That will mean a completely new road alignment from Brisbane to Nambour.

Plans are being made to resurface and realign the Landsborough-Maleny road. This will be an expensive job, and will be undertaken in two stages. It is vital to my electorate because it will cap the last two achievements celebrated at Montville a few weeks ago when the Minister, with 600 people in attendance, opened the new roads replacing the two missing links between Montville and Mapleton, and Montville and Maleny, respectively. A network of bitumen roads will thus be provided through the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast and will be of great benefit both to that area's tourist industry and to the local residents.

I would be remiss when discussing the Estimates for the Main Roads Department if I did not refer to the problems associated with the increased traffic on what is commonly known as the "coast road", from Caloundra to Noosa. When this road was first envisaged it was not intended to take the great volume of traffic it handles today. But for the Coastal Roads Development Act there would be no Sunshine Coast as we know it at present. It is the thread—the ribbon—that ties all the resorts of the area into one entity or unit. It now carries such a significant portion of the over-all Bruce Highway traffic that it will not be able to carry it much longer without imposing significant loads on local authorities. The Minister has rendered good support in the past, but more support will be required in the future.

The department is considering an over-all plan for the long-term future needs of main roads throughout this area. In the long term, a greater percentage of the Bruce Highway traffic will travel through this area, perhaps across the Bribie Island bridge, up through the island, across the projected bridge to Caloundra, on to Noosa, and then further north. This will mean a considerable increase in the amount of traffic using it, and the Main Roads Department will be required to take new initiatives in this regard. I commend the Minister on the Estimates he introduced.

(Time expired.)

Mr. AIKEN (Warrego) (7.36 p.m.): In spite of the Government's promise that the Charleville-Cunnamulla road, which is the main outlet for stock and traffic generally from the North, North-west, and Central

West to the southern States, would be kept in good, trafficable condition, this has not been done. I travelled over this road only last Tuesday, and its condition is anything but good. I am not surprised that transport operators have placed a surcharge on the carriage of stock on this road, to cover the excess wear and tear on vehicles. They have no alternative route and must tackle it.

Fifty points of rain is enough to make it completely untrafficable, and on occasions I have witnessed poor stock held up for a week because bogged trucks have made this road impassable. Heavy costs have resulted to stockowners who have been forced to unload stock either in the towns or along the road and feed and supervise them until the road is re-opened to traffic.

I feel sure that many of the so-called beef roads would not carry the volume of traffic or the number of stock that this road carries. I consider it criminal that this Government has delayed the forming and bituminising of this necessary main arterial road for so long. I sincerely implore Government action on this road.

It is considered by local and interstate operators to be an absolute horror stretch. It is costing stock dealers and buyers extra money to have their stock conveyed. It is a heavy blight on stock-trading activities throughout the whole of western Queensland. I know one Charleville transport operator who took a brand new truck on its maiden run over this road. He found that the cost of repairing damage caused by the shocking condition of this road was as high as \$400. I am sure that the Government has been made well aware, and has been aware for some considerable time, of the vehicle-wrecking condition of this road. No work of a major nature has been done on it, despite the promises of the Minister to put it in good, trafficable condition.

No wonder the people of the West are an unhappy lot. They are plagued with broken promises and are served by an apathetic, uncaring Government. The wheels of Government action, like the mills of God, grind slowly. How long will it be before the Government recognises the value of this necessary and vital outlet from the major regions of this State and moves to make it a formed and sealed highway? My arguments, I might say, apply also to the Leichhardt Highway and other highways leading interstate west of Roma.

The hon. member for Kedron spoke this afternoon of the millions of dollars spent by the Government in the wooing and "sweethearting" of foreign investment companies, much to the detriment of Queensland generally. When is the Government going to stop pandering to the big capitalists and give due consideration to our own Queenslanders? Apparently, as the hon. member for Kedron stated, there is money for projects such as the Moura-Gladstone railway line,

the Goonyella line, and the Weipa development, but the lavish spending in the coastal regions has no parallel at all in the West. Is it not true that the 15 per cent. of the State's population who live in the West are valuable contributors to the State's economy, and are largely responsible for the present affluence? Why then, in God's name, are not we of the West being treated fairly and squarely? Let me tell you, Mr. Ramsden, that the previous great supporters of this Government, namely, the wool-growers and beef producers of the West, are wondering what their loyalty has meant to the Government. All it seems to have brought them is contempt.

If the Government has any feelings of pride on its achievements in the development of the West, let it go and talk to the councils of Blackall, Tambo, Murweh, Paroo and Bulloo shires, who have made constant appeals to the Government on the state of the Cunnamulla road, only to be snubbed and ignored. I believe that police "blitzes" and road safety propaganda are of little value in attempting to halt the carnage and spiralling death-rate on the highways. Inadequate roads, of which the Charleville-Cunnamulla road is a classic example, are the primary cause of accidents and tragedies. We must act, and act now, to halt the problems that come with rising demands for road development and a consequent rise in the number of road tragedies. We must improve our highways, and concentrate on obtaining the best possible results in traffic engineering and control.

The Land Acquisition Act, implemented in a heavy-handed way by the Government, is a matter of serious concern. When right-of-way is required by the Main Roads Department, in far too many cases the feelings of landowners have been ruffled by misunderstanding and confusion. The Department must concentrate on a public relations plan to help the people, particularly elderly widows and pensioners who, because of previous poor public relations, are distrustful of Government action under acquisition rights. Legal action, so frequently imposed on these people, is expensive and frightening, and I am sure that many of the problems associated with acquisition of land could be smoothed over by skilled public relations.

Property acquisition costs, which must include compensation charges, represent a large percentage of road construction costs. Because of this, the New South Wales Government has requested the Commonwealth Government to contribute to a fund for the specific purpose of acquiring land needed for the construction of roads. In the case of New South Wales, the suggested amount was \$20,000,000, and I believe that the making of such a claim should suggest similar action by Queensland. A recent Australian road survey has established that the property-acquisition component is about 12 per cent. of road-building costs. I believe that a skilful public relations plan, to expedite

transactions and assist in this important field, should be a prime objective of the Main Roads Department. The delay in property resumptions, which has proved both costly and obstructive, could be obviated, to the mutual benefit of the landowner and the Department of Main Roads.

The development and consolidation of industries will continue to depend greatly on the policies of the department, and lip-service can no longer be tolerated. If the State is to continue to grow and become great, we need strength of purpose and definite signs that the Government will implement a policy of "Queensland First" and refuse to pander to the golden dollar.

Mr. WHARTON (Burnett) (7.46 p.m.): First, I pay a tribute to the Minister for the way in which he presented his Estimates to the Committee. He gave a very comprehensive indication of what has been done by both the Department of Main Roads and the Department of Mines.

Mr. Bennett: He is boxing pretty well with the Premier, too.

Mr. WHARTON: I prefer not to listen to the hon. member's comments. Under the guiding hand of the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, there has been considerable progress in both those spheres of activity. Main roads have improved greatly, and I do not think the mining industry has ever advanced more than it has since the Minister took over the portfolio, and he should be complimented for that. His portfolio is a difficult one, but it is made even more difficult by members on the Opposition benches who do not understand the situation and who are not prepared to adopt a broad attitude to the question.

I do not wish to say very much about mining—I shall refer principally to main roads—but I should like to comment briefly on what was said by the hon. member for Port Curtis. Of course, I endorse what the hon. member for Landsborough said relative to the Government's attitude to mining in Queensland. The hon. member for Port Curtis said that development would have taken place in any case, that no credit was due to the Government for what has happened. He said, in effect, that the Government had not done anything to encourage mining development. If he wishes to engage in exercises of that sort, he should consider first what Mount Isa Mines Limited and other mining companies have to say. They applaud the action taken by the Government to encourage the development of the State's mineral resources.

Let me turn now to main roads and consider for a moment the work that has been done under the Minister's guidance. Anyone who remembers the conditions of earlier years will readily concede that wonderful progress has been made in providing suitable main roads. New roads have been built;

older roads have been widened. One sees progress in every part of the State—in Brisbane, and in all country areas.

Mr. Davies: The Government has not even put a bitumen surface on the road between Maryborough and Boonooroo, the biggest fishing port in the State.

Mr. WHARTON: The hon. member for Maryborough would be the biggest fish there. I do not think the Minister should cater for his needs.

I was speaking to the Lord Mayor yesterday, and he had a good deal to say about the Government's not providing sufficient money for road construction by the Brisbane City Council. I shall mention the amounts that have been allocated under the Commonwealth Aid, Local Authority Roads, Fund. Urban arterials have been allocated \$13,460,000, which is the largest allocation in the State; rural arterials have been allocated \$7,700,000 and other rural roads \$13,060,000, which is nearly the same as the Brisbane allocation; and planning and research has been allocated \$2,500,000.

I make the point that Brisbane received the largest share of the State's allocation of Commonwealth aid. We as a Government have seen to it that Brisbane got this share, and obviously all the roadwork done in Brisbane has not been done solely by the Lord Mayor; this Government has played its part. The State Government has contributed its share of funds to build the roads and free-ways, which are undoubtedly a credit to both the council and the Government. Surely hon. members opposite must admit that the Government has played an important role in the development of Brisbane and environs, particularly the freeways and other road-works being constructed.

Mr. Davies: Are you satisfied with the amount being spent on the South Coast road?

Mr. WHARTON: We in this State have to share the available funds, and we cannot be too jealous of what someone else gets. Allocation is based on population and traffic flow, and that sort of thing. My concern is to get a slice of the cake for my area. I do not mind if somebody else gets a slice, so long as it is not too big proportionately.

I want to say something now about the roadways in my own electorate. I am fairly proud of the roads in the Burnett electorate, which is reasonably well served with roads. Although we have not all that we need, great progress has been made since I entered Parliament. A lot of bridge work has been done too. To mention but a few, the Walla-ville Bridge the Cumonju Bridge and the James Campbell Bridge, recently opened by the Minister, have been completed. The only point I want to make is that I think the Main Roads Department should allow the councils to do some of the work on the approaches to the bridges it builds. After all is said and

done, each council has a work-force on hand and it is necessary to maintain employment in country towns.

I appreciate the problems of the Main Roads Department, but surely the major jobs beyond the capacity of the local authorities could be done by the Main Roads Department and the minor tasks left to the local authorities. I know that to some extent the Main Roads Department criticises some councils for wanting to do these jobs, but the same criticism can be levelled at the Main Roads Department as it is becoming a monster.

Mr. Bennett: You mean the Minister is a monster, too?

Mr. WHARTON: No, he is not too bad. I was making the point that we should surely be able to allocate some of this work to the shires. They each have a work-force waiting and perhaps some unemployment. The Main Roads Department should look at these things and see that the local authority and those who work for it are gainfully employed instead of bringing the Main Roads work-force into a shire area.

I know that there is some argument in favour of it, but even if some councils are getting too big and overdoing these jobs, the Main Roads Department also should retract somewhat and not try to handle on its own the whole of the expanding road-work in the State.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: If the hon. member did not say so, nobody else would think so. Funds have been allotted under section 19, and I pay tribute to the Minister for his consideration in this matter. Local authorities—the Miriam Vale Shire Council is one—have problems, particularly where their areas are large and their populations sparse. They have not the ability to build all the roads necessary in their areas. Under section 19 the Main Roads Department has allocated sums of money towards developing these roads, one case in point being the road running to the Macadamia nut farm.

Mr. Jensen: Would you like to see a processing factory built in Bundaberg?

Mr. WHARTON: I would be glad to see a factory built somewhere near Bundaberg. That would be all right with me. It is near my electorate and would have an important effect on it. The project that I mention is an extensive and long-term one. It involves the planting and harvesting of 600,000 Macadamia nut trees. To a certain extent the area is being irrigated, and it is essential that a road be constructed. Funds must be applied to the completion of the road, so I hope they will be made available.

Mr. Jensen: Is it just for the C.S.R. Company?

Mr. WHARTON: No, it is not. Obviously it will serve the C.S.R. Company, because it owns the property, but the employees on

the project will have a need for the road. As the number of employees increases, so must the demand for road access to the area increase.

Mr. Jensen: You cannot spend a large amount of money on a road for only half a dozen workers.

Mr. WHARTON: I thought the hon. member for Bundaberg would have agreed with me.

Mr. Jensen: Let the C.S.R. Company build the road, as the coal companies have constructed railway lines.

Mr. WHARTON: If the project is a worthwhile one, it deserves good road access. It is essential that the product be brought out of the area, so a road is needed. It will be of great benefit to many people.

I wish to deal now with the construction of a road from Rosedale to Lowmead and Miriam Vale. It is a coastal road, and its construction has been commenced. Portion of the funds that will be allocated to the Macadamia nut plantation road will be diverted to this coastal road. It is essential that it be completed, because it will link important coastal areas with Bundaberg.

In the near future I would like to see the construction of a roadway from Maryborough through Bundaberg to Miriam Vale, and linking up with the coastal road.

Mr. Jensen: Get right into that one. The Government should spend money on that instead of on the Queensland nut road.

Mr. WHARTON: I do not want to have funds spread around outside my electorate; nor would the hon. member for Bundaberg want them spent outside his. He should not argue against the project; he should not try to spoil my case. I am trying to get across to the Minister the message that if practically all Queensland's coastline is served by a road, the stretch between Maryborough and Gladstone should also be so served. Tourist resorts such as Bargara, Moore Park and Elliott Heads miss out. That is a very important area. I believe that in time the road could go from Maryborough to Pialba, then out to Elliott Heads, through Bargara and Bundaberg and up along the coastline. It would be a very scenic route and would be of great benefit to the people in the area. If a coastal road is good enough for the greater part of the State, it is also good enough for the short stretch of coastline between Maryborough and Gladstone. Much of that area is undeveloped—some of it almost untouched—and it contains popular tourist resorts.

Mr. Davies: We want a road from Noosa to Maryborough first.

Mr. WHARTON: Members of the Opposition can argue that if they want to. They can try to help the hon. member for Isis.

I wish to mention the construction of a road that will cross the Burnett Highway at Binjour.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! The hon. member for Burnett has the floor.

Mr. WHARTON: Thank you, Mr. Ramsden.

The point I want to make is that surveys must be completed before new roads can be constructed. New surveys are necessary for new roads. In my electorate a highway runs from Gayndah to Monto, and at Binjour a brand-new road will cut through a rich farming property of 160 acres with a good water supply. The farm will be virtually bisected simply to provide a fairly straight road.

Mr. Bennett: What are you going to whinge about now that we have had rain?

Mr. WHARTON: I was going to whinge about the hon. member, but I realise that if I do he will keep on crying. I do not want to burden the Chamber with his weeping.

The owner of this farm will be deprived of part of his livelihood merely to provide a straight road. It could easily be diverted to the end of his property and through the business centre of Binjour. He would not mind losing a few acres at the end of his property, but it is ridiculous to cut it in half as there are many sharp bends on the road from Gayndah, even 90-degree turns. I cannot see any valid reason for cutting a farmer's property in half merely to provide a straight road.

Mr. Jensen: Just to let the speed hogs have a go.

Mr. WHARTON: That may be, but it is wrong in principle. There are many kinks in the road that are much worse than the bend that is to be eliminated. I make a plea to the Minister on behalf of the residents and business people of Binjour, and of this farmer who is being so seriously affected. I repeat that he would be glad to surrender land at the end of his property, and the Minister should see if a new route can be surveyed for the road. Even if the business people in small towns only see the dust and hear the noise of passing traffic, it makes them feel that something is happening and that some development might come to their neck of the woods.

We have made real progress in mining in Queensland. As the Minister has said the benefits have not flowed to the State by royalties alone. I point out that in any case royalties are a tax or an imposition that someone has to meet. We should not always think in terms of taxing people. The royalties that have been imposed are reasonable. They have encouraged people to stay here, and have not deterred them from engaging in development.

Mr. Bennett: They have been so reasonable that some of the companies should be paying gift duty to the Government for giving them the minerals for nothing.

Mr. WHARTON: I do not know what to say in reply to the interjector, but no-one goes to more extremes in this Chamber than he does.

I suppose it could be argued that the development engaged in by the mining companies is a gift to the State. I emphasise that other benefits are derived from the development that is taking place. We have earned a lot in railway revenue, and the over-all revenue is what is important to the State. However, I am concerned that in this mining development we seem to be thinking of building a railway line here and another one there. That may be excellent, but I hope a detailed survey has been carried out to ensure that the deposits are of sufficient magnitude to warrant the building of a railway line that will be in use for many years to come. In the early days railway lines were built to Mt. Perry and other mining areas, but the mining activities ceased and the railway lines were torn up. We want permanent progress and to that end we must ensure that the mineral deposits are fully surveyed so that these railway lines will be in use for many years to come.

Mr. Jensen: Are you advocating that they pull it up before it is paid for?

Mr. WHARTON: The hon. member's interjections are worse than those of the hon. member for South Brisbane—and they could not be much worse.

Mr. Jensen: They pulled up the railway line in your area.

Mr. WHARTON: I know. It had served its purpose. The Mt. Perry people do not want to go back to using a railway line. More minerals could be found there with the surveys and boring and drilling that are being conducted, and some people might want to put the line back again.

I am glad to see an increase in the number of drilling plants, because they are very necessary. I wish they could be used to bore for water so that we could determine our water supplies and have the benefit of that information.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (8.6 p.m.): We are discussing very important Estimates. I would say that the Minister for Mines and Main Roads would have the easiest job of all Ministers in presenting his Estimates, because, owing to the final agreement of the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government to allocate additional finance for roadworks, Queensland is getting more money than it did in previous years for road-construction work.

I do not think any member of the Opposition would disagree with the Minister's comment that the current mining boom in Queensland is assisting the economy of this State in more ways than one. However, I consider that the Minister was wrong when he said that at no stage had mining contributed more to the economy of the State and that it could not come at a better time.

There have been earlier times when this State relied on the mining industry to keep going. When this State was founded, the coffers were almost empty and the State was badly in debt. Until the discovery of gold at Gympie, Queensland had difficulty in raising finance. It has not looked back since then—that is, until 1957.

Undoubtedly, for every Moura, Blackwater and Moranbah, there is a Cooktown, Ravenswood and Croydon. They were towns that blossomed and developed in their heyday into major mining centres where substantial buildings were erected and the people said to themselves, "This is it. We are made for life. This is a wonderful town in which to live." In those towns, which are now 80 and 90 years old and only shadows of their original size, there are edifices that appear to have been built for permanence.

History has a habit of repeating itself, so I shall touch on other developments in this State. I mentioned that the State Government's early problems were overcome when gold was found at Gympie. This carried on through the 1860's and into the early 1870's when the pastoral and agricultural industries of this State became established. The pioneers rode the harsh country of the West and the North and opened the great pastoral lands; the early sugar-cane growers started developing the richer coastal lands for agriculture; and the men on the Downs moved into grain and other crops. Agriculture was becoming established. So the State struggled along, becoming settled under the shadow of the mining boom.

Came the 1870's, and again there was an economic drop. Fortunately, the agricultural and pastoral industries were then able to carry the mining industry, whilst prospectors roamed farther afield combing the rocks, hills and mountains, and even the plains, in an endeavour to find minerals. I suppose the evidence of the thoroughness of these men is exemplified today in the Minister's statement that almost every major, known mineral deposit in this State is now under an authority to prospect of one type or another. I believe the Minister, the Under-Secretary for Mines, and other officers of his department would agree that almost without exception these mineral fields were known back in the 1880's by those hardy men, the early prospectors, who moved out to find the mineral wealth of this land.

Because of their efforts, the mining boom picked up again in the 1880's during the time of a drought in the west. Whilst the present drought may be the longest on

record, perhaps it is not the most severe ever to have been experienced in this State, because in the 1880's cattlemen did not have dams, water conservation schemes, and today's technical know-how. Consequently the economic wealth coming to the State from those industries dropped, and mining took over and again carried the State on its back.

Again came a crash in the mining industry. In 1884 and 1885 the stock-market was booming, and big mining companies had moved in, the overseas investors being, in the main, British, but by 1889 the great crash came in the mining industry. This continued till the 1890's. There was still the drought; there were problems on the land; and the whole economy was again brought down. Many older members may remember their parents talking of those days, and of how, in an attempt to obtain some income, cattle and sheep were boiled down to make tallow. This was the position at the time of the crash in the mining industry.

Agriculture carried on again into the 1890's. The pastoral industry turned to breeding horses for the Indian Army and the South African war. This helped some people over their problems. Then again mining returned, so much so that in 1902 it was said that the City of Charters Towers alone carried the economy of the State on its back. Just as today the Premier, the Treasurer and others say that the mineral wealth of Mt. Isa is assisting Queensland to a very considerable degree, so Charters Towers was the economic strength of Queensland in those days. Those who do not believe what I am now saying have only to go to Charters Towers today and see there still the remains of the large brick and concrete edifice that was at that time the greatest mining stock exchange in Australia.

By 1910, the crash had come again, and most of the companies at Charters Towers died. Mining almost ceased on the Charters Towers field, and, for various reasons, on most of the other fields of the State. Consequently there was another drop in the State's economy. People struggled on, because the same lesson was again there—minerals were not being used to develop other industries that would bring wealth and assist in the setting up of a manufacturing nation.

Of course, after the collapse of 1910, the First World War came, and, after that, agriculture came into its own. By 1920, the sugar industry reigned supreme in Queensland as a producer of wealth. Of course, that was because in 1915 a great Labour Government introduced legislation that put the industry on a sound basis and made it what it is today—the strongest primary industry in the State. It will remain the strongest primary industry because of that legislation, which successive Governments, even Country-Liberal Governments, have not been able to improve upon.

At that time, the mining and pastoral industries were in the doldrums, but they revived and the economy improved. Hon. members know what happened in 1929 and the 1930's, the years of the great depression. Mineral prices dropped throughout the world; the economy of the State was at a standstill; people walked the streets.

Now, of course, one sees the mining industry coming into its own again. Undoubtedly it is booming. Copper production is very high, and the production of lead, silver and zinc also are high. Tremendous quantities of coal are being sold to companies overseas. Perhaps I should qualify that by saying that they are tremendous when compared with the tonnages that were exported previously from this State.

Again I think history is repeating itself and Queensland is not learning from the omissions of other generations. We are failing to use the huge mineral wealth to make Queensland a great manufacturing State. My principal criticism of the agreements that have been entered into in recent years by major mining companies, such as those for the development of Weipa, Moura, and Goonyella, is that no provision has been written into them relative to the establishment of industries that will guarantee the use of this State's own materials and labour.

Certainly overseas companies are investing a considerable amount of money in this country. But where are they getting it from? They are borrowing it from banks and corporations overseas, and they are using as collateral the natural resources—coal, bauxite and other minerals—of this State. On that basis, they are signing agreements for 10, 15 or 20 years.

In my opinion, both the State and Commonwealth Governments could obtain finance in a similar way, and I strongly support the proposal put forward by the shadow Treasurer, the hon. member for Barooma, in an earlier debate in this Chamber, that the development should be undertaken by Government and private enterprise jointly, again using the great mineral wealth of the State as collateral to obtain finance. In that way there would be a guarantee that the people of Queensland, through the State Government, would gain a greater share in, and derive greater benefit from, the development of that wealth. That is what members of the Opposition are seeking; that is what they would all like to see. The State would be using its own raw materials and labour to best advantage, and there would be a guarantee that it would be further enriched by the establishment of manufacturing industries.

One has only to look at the economy of various countries today to see that those with the largest manufacturing industries are the richest. I need go no further than Japan and Germany, both of which were on their knees in 1945. They have staged perhaps the greatest economic recovery that the world has seen, and their ability to negotiate agreements such as those covering Weipa, Moura

and Goonyella, in Queensland, and Pilbara and Hamersley, in Western Australia, has contributed greatly to that recovery. They have the ability also to take raw materials and process them into manufactured goods.

Surely since 1945 the men and women of Australia have developed their own manufacturing skills. If backed by the Governments of the State and the Commonwealth, they could, in conjunction with private enterprise, develop our own natural resources. I do not necessarily mean Australian private enterprise if we have not ourselves the technical know-how; and I do not necessarily mean Australian enterprise if we want to tie up with people overseas who purchase our goods. The Labour Party has never condemned overseas investment in this country, whether for mining or any other purpose. We have said that we believe in using such capital for the development of Australia by Australians for the benefit of Australians. This is how we should be using it in this State, not for the board of directors of some overseas mining company and its shareholders. We do not deny them a profit for investing in this land, but the major benefits should flow to our own people and our own generations yet to come.

Let me turn now to the other States and the Commonwealth. We hear so much about Queensland being the mineral giant of Australia. In the production of coal, we all know that the State of New South Wales is producing far more than Queensland. When the companies that are at present commencing operations get into full swing we will start to catch up with them, but even in the production of lead, zinc, tin, gold and iron, other States are far ahead of us. Because of the great industrial giant Mount Isa, we lead the rest of Australia in the production of copper, and, because of the existing development at Weipa, we lead the other States in the production of bauxite, but this will not necessarily be so when the Commonwealth, in conjunction with other companies, develops the Gove Peninsula and when the Western Australian Government further develops the mining enterprises it has there.

The big problem that faces us is not only our own production compared with that of other States but the production of our base minerals in Queensland compared with those of other nations of the world. Whilst I have not last year's figures, those for the year before show our copper production is only one-quarter of that of Canada and only one-sixth of the production of Russia. I cite those two nations as major competitors in this field. The same thing can be said of lead and zinc. Certainly, we are well up in the production of bauxite, but again, by comparison, we are far behind the field in the production of coal. The point I want to make is that we are at the mercy of overseas buyers and shipping companies in the development of our nation and the returns we receive for our base mineral products. This is a very serious position.

Let us now look at the attitude of some of the other States and the Commonwealth towards the return from development that they finance or assist in order to get it on the move. I need do no more than quote what the Prime Minister, Mr. Gorton, said he required when looking at the development of the Gladstone power-house. He said that taxation revenue from an aluminium smelter alone, should such development reach fruition, would make the power-house at Gladstone a good proposition for the State. On the figures he was looking at, it would appear that within 8 or 10 years he would get in taxation a complete return of the amount of money lent by the Commonwealth to the State, but the State would still be required to repay the loan.

Look at Noumea, which is a very small nation. Japan wanted to negotiate a further deal with Noumea on that small nation's nickel production, and it is well known that Noumea is one of the world's major nickel producers. Owing to the fact that Japan imported 91 per cent. of its nickel from the island and had recently placed an order for an additional 4,500,000 tons, the Noumean representatives were able to threaten Japan with the closure of their nickel mines unless the Japanese companies concerned provided finance to establish a new smelting plant on the island instead of taking raw nickel away, as they had been doing for some considerable time. In many ways we are inclined to look down upon the French; yet in one of their Pacific possessions, which they are likely to lose in the future to an independent government, they insisted upon a better deal than they had in the past and the establishment of processing works before they would negotiate a further agreement with Japan.

(Time expired.)

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (8.26 p.m.): I take this opportunity to speak on these Estimates and to refer to the outstanding development that has taken place in the mines and main roads of this State, firstly, under the late Ernie Evans and, more recently and more spectacularly, under the present Minister, Mr. Camm. In the current year a sum of \$94,500,000 is to be spent on the construction of new roads and the widening and reconstruction of existing narrow strips of bitumen. This expenditure is especially evident on the Cunningham Highway.

I appreciate the planning and construction of the Main Roads Department, and I specially mention Mr. Harry Lowe, the Commissioner, and Mr. Tony Davidson, the district engineer at Warwick, with whom I come in close contact and discuss the planning of main roads in my electorate. I appreciate the advice and assistance that I have received from both of those gentlemen, as I have from many other officers of their department.

Mr. Lowe is presently serving his 40th year with the Main Roads Department, and that is a long time in the service of that department. As well, to-day is the 50th anniversary of the appointment of the first chairman of the Main Roads Board. On 29 October, 1920, Mr. J. R. Kemp, later Sir James Kemp, took up the appointment as chairman of the Main Roads Board. He came from the Country Roads Board of Victoria, which had been established in 1913. The Main Roads Department has been designing and developing the roads of this State for 50 years.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I don't know whether the Labour Party existed in 1920; I am not too sure of my history on that matter. I do not worry which Government sets up new bodies, as long as they provide a service to the community. The Main Roads Department has been doing that for 50 years.

It is interesting to note that shortly after the time I have mentioned, Mr. Ted England was appointed secretary of the Main Roads Board. Another interesting fact is that in 1920 one of the permanent works jobs approved in the Allora Shire was undertaken at a cost of £6. It is amazing to think that a permanent road schedule, with repayments over many years, could be undertaken for a £6 job. It is hard to imagine going to all that trouble today in drawing up all the necessary forms for a \$12 job.

Mr. Davies: Before that, you could get bogged between any two towns in Queensland in wet weather.

Mr. McKECHNIE: That is so. I understand that the tracks of wagons bogged in 1920 can still be seen in places on the Darling Downs. Admittedly there was very little development in those days, but main roads have developed, more so in the last 10 years. In those 10 years, not only has the length of bitumen roads been doubled, but an equal length of narrow roads has been widened and reconstructed. In the last 10 years, too, we have seen spectacular development in main roads works. In the current year \$94,500,000 will be spent by the department on the construction of new roads, the widening and reconstruction of others, and maintenance works generally throughout the State. That sum represents a considerable increase on the high level of spending in the previous year.

Last Saturday, 24 October, the Honourable R. E. Camm officially unveiled—

Mr. Bennett interjected.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The hon. member for South Brisbane wants to know why I spent so long at Texas last week-end. He has given me the opportunity to say that I was very happy to welcome the Honourable R. E. Camm to Texas, when he officially opened the Texas-Inglewood road by unveiling a plaque halfway between the two towns, at

Brush Creek. It was a very pleasant celebration, held in the rain, and attended by many people. It was the culmination of many years of work in building the road.

When I became the member for Carnarvon a little over seven years ago I undertook to try to see that those 36 miles of rough, dusty road would be bituminised in 10 years. At the time, I thought that was a fair aim. The happiness of the celebrations can be well imagined, seeing that this 36 miles of 18 ft. wide bitumen road was opened three years ahead of schedule. That is symbolic of the work performed by the department throughout Queensland. Planning is carried out, and well ahead of time, and a good job is done. I have thanked the Minister for the completion of the road, and I look forward to an extension of it north from Inglewood towards Millmerran.

I pay a tribute to the Inglewood Shire Council and its employees, who constructed the 36 miles of road exceedingly well. This road is much appreciated because Texas was a somewhat isolated spot for many years. Ten years ago there were no bitumen roads around it but now they extend in three directions. That is symbolic of the development throughout Queensland.

I am considerably concerned about the method of road-building in shallow-soil country throughout Queensland. Considerable areas of country here and there along the roadside are denuded by the scraping away of four, six or eight inches of surface loam to be used in the construction of roads. This is necessary, but these scalded spots on the sides of roads are an eyesore. The Forestry Department insists that in cypress-pine country, which provides ideal loam for the construction of roads, the trees be left. This is a waste of time. It is a nuisance to the Main Roads Department and of no benefit to the Forestry Department because, within 12 months of the removal of the surface soil, these trees die. Therefore, it is desirable that these cypress pines be rooted up in the first place and that some use be made of them, and that the Main Roads Department or the local authority be allowed to take the soil out without wasting time working around the trees.

I should like to think that a means could be devised so that the Main Roads Department could dig deeper and denude less country, but I know this is a problem in shallow country where there is clay, which is not suitable for road foundations, six inches below the surface. I should like the Main Roads Department to approach the Forestry Department and point out the futility of keeping these pine trees, which die within 12 months.

The hon. member for Wynnum said that the state of our roads was a complementary cause of drought. The people in my area believe that the drought would have been much worse and that its implications and

effects would have been harsher had it not been for the considerable improvement in our roads during the last 10 years.

Mr. Bennett: I thought you were going to complain about the floods.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The hon. member has never heard me complain about floods. A fortnight ago was the first time the creek near my house has run in the eight years that I have been a member of Parliament. As a general rule, floods do more good than harm in my country, and I should like to enlighten the hon. member for South Brisbane on that score. Admittedly, floods cause damage when they enter towns, but as a general rule they spread out gently on the flood plains along the Macintyre River and have a more beneficial than harsh effect. They deposit silt on the country and build up fertility, and thoroughly soak the country, which is very desirable in my part of the world.

The construction of roads during the past 10 years has been a wonderful contributing factor in getting stock out. During the present drought, stock, particularly cattle, have always been saleable as long as they can be got out. We have been able to get stock out from all over Queensland and sell them instead of letting them die in the paddocks. The Main Roads Department, the local authorities, and everybody else associated with road construction can take credit for saving stock from death and producing income for the State and for the individual, and also for warding off some of the worst effects of the drought because the slaughtering of stock has left more room for the breeders that have been retained.

Like many people in my area, I appreciate the job done on these roads. As the hon. member for Roma said, the north-south access could be better. I grant that, but it is far better than it was years ago. In the past 10 years, the Leichhardt Development Road has been opened and, while it still requires a good deal of work done on it, it has been the means of taking stock to New South Wales and bringing fodder back. It has been worth a lot of money to stockowners, to the people in the towns, and to the whole State.

In addition, the cost of cartage from railhead to property in my area has not increased in the past 30 years. I pay the same price today to have goods, hay and fodder hauled from the railhead to my property as I paid in 1935. It was then £2 10s a ton; today it is \$5 a ton. That is the result of good management of roads.

Mr. Jensen: Somebody is helping to pay for it.

Mr. McKECHNIE: It is being paid for by good management in the Main Roads Department and the local authority. They are doing their work happily and well, and the roads are so much improved that the

trip now takes only one hour instead of the four hours that it previously took, and, for the most part, it is on bitumen, which saves wear and tear on vehicles. Consequently, cartage costs have been contained.

Another matter that I wish to raise is a special allocation for tourist purposes. Under section 19 of the Main Roads Act, special grants can be made for opening up new country. I trust this can be used for tourist purposes. I look forward to the Minister's making a grant under that section for use on the road from below Wallangarra through Wyberba to the Girraween National Park. I am sure the Minister in charge of tourism would join me in recommending that national park to people who wish to see beautiful wild flowers and glorious scenery.

Mr. Herbert: Hear, hear!

Mr. McKECHNIE: I thank the Minister for his support.

The road is not surfaced for the last couple of miles into the park, and it could be considerably improved. I look forward to the extension of a bitumen road into this area.

The Estimates before the Committee are those of the Mines Department and the Main Roads Department, and I am sorry that discussion on them could not be split into two sections. Whilst main roads are of more concern to me than mines, I am nevertheless interested in mining. As it is, I have spent almost all my time dealing with main roads. Whilst I am quite happy to see mines and main roads under the administration of one Minister, I feel that if, for the purpose of debate, they were split into two sections for separate discussion at greater length, there would be more cohesion in the debate.

Mr. Casey: Do you think there should be extra Ministers appointed, one for each section, so that you might get a job sooner?

Mr. McKECHNIE: No. I do not wish to go into that matter. Ministers have to divide their time between the departments they administer. However, main roads and mines are two large and important activities in this State, and I think it would be better if they were debated separately. Apart from water supplies, education and health, I consider roads to be the most important item for country dwellers. Mining is, of course, of vital interest to the whole of the State. When I say "interest", I mean in terms of finance and development. Consequently, if main roads and mines could be split and we could concentrate our efforts on each one in turn, the debate would be improved and we would have a better opportunity to follow a cohesive line of thought.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (8.44 p.m.): In the short period of 20 minutes it is quite impossible to elaborate to any great extent on the very important Estimates of the Mines Department and the Main Roads Department. At the outset, I should like to pay my respects, and give my thanks, to the Commissioner of

Main Roads (Mr. Lowe) and his staff for the courtesies that they have extended to me during my period of office in this place and when, for years before that, I was in the local-authority field. From time to time it was then necessary for me to approach the Main Roads Department for information, and at all times I received every courtesy and the information that I sought. I also congratulate Mr. Lowe on his long years in office. Like many other public servants in Queensland, he is a dedicated man who has made a career of the service. In his 40 years of service Mr. Lowe has set an example in loyalty and dedication to the service.

I wish to deal first with the main roads system, and I shall deal briefly with the mining industry if I have time. Although the main arterial roads outside the boundary of this city are being improved—greatly improved where they pass through certain electorates—I and many other people in the City of Brisbane believe that road improvements should begin from the city centre and branch out. I point out to the Committee that motorists approaching the city strike considerable traffic congestion as the roads diminish in width, and problems are created when main arterial roads cease abruptly on the perimeter of the city. I use the main North Coast Road quite extensively, and I agree wholeheartedly with travellers who complain that it is almost frightening, after travelling along the highway at an adequate speed, to experience the traffic congestion at places such as Aspley and Chermiside on the road leading into the city.

I know it can be said—probably this thought is running through the minds of some hon. members opposite at the moment—that it is the city council's problem. To a certain extent that is true, but the council can develop inner city roads only if adequate finance is allocated to it. Like many other former aldermen of the Brisbane City Council, I will never cease demanding that more money be made available to the council to enable it to overcome the problems that now arise on roads leading into the city from the North and the South, and they are getting worse each year.

The hon. member for Landsborough mentioned the four-lane highway from Bald Hills to the Sunshine Coast. It has been planned, and it will make travelling easier for motorists on that section of the highway. However, it will further accentuate the problem on inner-city roads, and I remind the Committee that tourists from the South have to travel through Brisbane before reaching the highway.

Many people who use public transport during the week use their cars at the week-end, and many aged people also use their cars at the week-end. On the main roads round the city traffic is frightening. The person who drives every day usually is more skilful than the week-end driver, and

people who drive only occasionally often find themselves in great difficulties when they come to the narrow streets leading off main arterial roads. In fact, one can see a pattern in their behaviour.

As I said, the problems are becoming worse. I still believe that we are working back to front in expanding the system of main roads. Some years ago, when the extension of arterial roads was discussed, it was proposed to take them from the centre of the city. In my opinion, that should have been done. I have problems in my own electorate arising from the present system. The corner of Braun and Board Streets, Deagon, is very dangerous for traffic. It is on a main road that comes under the Main Roads Department. In fact, it is called the main Clontarf road as it passes through that area. In the Sandgate electorate, the inmates of "Eventide" are menaced every day because the main North Coast highway passes the boundary of the home. Although we were notified some time ago that the main North Coast road would by-pass Sandgate, many people will share my disappointment when they discover that this is not to be so. The same problem is encountered on the Hornibrook Highway. This will be the only crossing servicing the main North Coast road. One has only to see it at the week-end now to realise what the future position will be. If one car breaks down there is an almost immediate accumulation of vehicles stretching well back past "Eventide".

Mr. Wallis-Smith: Are there any pedestrian traffic lights there?

Mr. DEAN: No, not yet. We have been informed by people who should know that in the near future we can expect installation of pedestrian traffic lights for the people at "Eventide". This will be more important than ever when the main road is continued through that area to the North Coast.

The very narrowness of most of our roads has the effect of restricting speeds to some extent, but, of course, this only applies to the sensible motorist. The stupid motorist who, irrespective of the circumstances, exceeds the speed limit is the greatest menace on our roads. Late this afternoon, I think, an hon. member opposite suggested raising the speed limit on some of our highways to 65 miles an hour. That might be all right in some cases, but I do not think we have a road in the State on which it could be said that one could safely travel at 65 miles an hour.

The many distractions erected along our highways certainly do not add to motoring safety, and I appeal to the Minister to use his influence in an endeavour to have advertising signs reduced to a minimum if not eliminated altogether. Our main arterial roads are not enhanced in any way by these signs, and, from the viewpoint of safety, flashing signs at night-time have the effect of distracting the motorist's attention. As a

matter of fact, they have almost the same effect in the day-time. I do not think we will get a speedy solution of our highway problems until we co-ordinate under one authority all our road and transport systems. While we have divided authority we will not make much headway. We need a central authority to control these systems.

Mr. Herbert: These advertising signs are not on the highway; they are on private land adjoining the highway, and the local authorities decide whether or not advertising signs can be erected. There are none on Main Roads land.

Mr. DEAN: The South Coast is a classic example. All kinds of signs advertising all kinds of products are plastered all along the highway. I have been as guilty as anybody myself of allowing my attention to wander to a certain extent when reading some of these advertisements. I think they are very dangerous.

Mr. Herbert: They are not on Main Roads property but on private property.

Mr. DEAN: That is why I appeal to the Minister to use his influence in the right place.

Mr. Herbert: It is the local authority that determines that—the Albert Shire.

Mr. DEAN: Well, we have a Minister for Local Government, and he could make suggestions to the local authorities.

This afternoon the hon. member for Wynnum made a plea that consideration be given to motorists in renewing their registration fees. I suggest that the local C.P.S. office could be used in this way. There is such an office in my electorate, and if motorists could renew their registration certificates there they would be relieved of the inconvenience of travelling to the city and finding parking space in order to pay their fees. I do not see why the local C.P.S. office cannot accept registration fees. Adequate staff are employed at the office to provide that service, so I cannot understand why a re-arrangement in the method of payment has not been made. I hope that the Government will consider the suggestions made by the hon. member for Wynnum.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT (Chatsworth) (8.57 p.m.): It is probably true to say that in recent years no portfolio has had to face up to more vicissitudes than that of Mines and Main Roads. Over the past few years Queensland has witnessed a tremendous explosion in mining development, and public controversy has raged over the granting of certain mining leases and the application for others. Consequently, it is easy to understand the pressures that have been applied to the present holder of the portfolio. I venture to suggest that he has stood up to that pressure remarkably well, and at all times has shown himself to be in complete control of the situation.

It is not my intention tonight to enter the argument about royalties. The case has been argued so compellingly and so frequently that it almost runs the risk of being branded as tedious repetition whenever it is advanced.

A few weeks ago I went to one of the popular service stations and bought a little rubber man which stands a few inches high and has a weight in the base so that no matter how hard it is punched it always bounces back. It reminded me very much of the specious arguments on royalties that are constantly put forward by the Labour Party. No matter how many times we tell the Labour Party that royalties are only one small aspect of the problem, no matter how many times we remind Labour of the development that has come in the wake of mining, and no matter how many times we tell that party of the employment opportunities that are offered, it bounces back again and again and again.

As I have said, the Labour Party reminds me of that little india-rubber man that I bought for my children. However, eventually that india-rubber man wore out, and I am quite sure that ultimately, under the pressure of good, solid argument and presentation of the truth, the Labour Party will be worn down.

On occasions the strange argument is advanced by rather emotional people that we are running the risk of reducing Australia to a giant quarry surrounded by an oil slick. That sort of statement is terribly emotive and challenging, and it might carry us away completely if we do not return to some degree of rationality.

This is the age of conservation; this is the age when, belatedly, we have developed some conscience about our environment. I suspect that because we have raped our environment for so many years we are now motivated by a sense of guilt. It is therefore terribly important that we have organised, orderly development, and that a better study of all aspects of our countryside be undertaken before mining is pursued. To that end, I wholeheartedly support the argument that the hon. member for Mt. Coot-tha so frequently advances in support of regional planning.

In a developing country, we cannot have development grinding to a standstill. While I repeat that restriction and care must be the order of the day, I emphasise that we create a great folly when, out of hand, we say that the extractive industries are the bad boys of the piece. We should identify the fact that our society is very much dependent upon the products of the extractive industries. While we control them, we must nevertheless learn to live with them.

I refer particularly to the arguments advanced on occasions about the exploitation of our coal deposits. There are people who would even suggest that we should curtail our coal trade. I would accelerate it as fast and as far as possible. I say that, for this reason:

on the figures I have been able to establish of known deposits, and at the present rate of recovery, the coal resources of Queensland will last for some 200 years. Secondly, we know that under the Goonyella agreement, the companies are tied to a situation whereby they will leave 2 tons of coal in the ground for every ton they take out. Therefore, the short-term possibility of exhausting the resources is completely nil. More important is the fact that, in the foreseeable future, coal itself will be a superseded commodity. As far into the future as we can see, it will have a use as a base content for chemicals. But that represents a very small demand indeed.

The time is fast approaching when coal, as a fuel, will be in demand no longer. I put to the Committee quite bluntly that if we left the coal in the ground, generations to come would condemn us for not taking advantage of a natural resource while it was still in demand. I repudiate out of hand the arguments of people who say that we should not exploit our coal resources, and I base my argument solidly on the grounds outlined.

Mr. Tucker: I think it is a spurious argument.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: The hon. member is entitled to his opinion. I do not think much of it, anyway.

I wish to make some comments about the development of our main roads and, more importantly, the way we maintain them. I know that the hon. member for Sandgate will hasten to support my comments, because he and I are privileged to serve on a body called the Keep Australia Beautiful Council. I represent the Government on it, and the hon. member for Sandgate represents the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Bennett: He does most of the work.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: If the hon. member for South Brisbane says that the member for Sandgate does more work than I do, that might be true. But I assure the hon. member for South Brisbane that I do four times as much work as he does, which means that his colleague does eight times as much as he does.

Mr. Bennett: Four times nothing is nothing.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: It is delightful to learn, after all this time, that the member knows something about elementary mathematics.

I think that due acknowledgment is the order of the day for the fine road engineers that Queensland is privileged to have on its payroll. I have heard it said in other quarters that the men who design and plan the main roads in this State hold their own, in engineering ability, against any in the world. That is a pretty fair claim, and evidence of their work is available to us any time we drive around this developing city. In five years time, or less, when Brisbane's major

road development is complete, the evidence will be before each of us, and I want to go on record as acknowledging the competence of these road engineers and applauding their very fine work in the metropolitan area at the moment.

Mr. Bennett: Why don't you make the Minister pay them a decent salary?

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: Opposition members constantly go off half cocked. One of the hon. member's colleagues decried the fact that we did not pay our "Hansard" staff enough.

Mr. Bennett: That was me.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: Well, that is typical, because the hon. member is dead wrong again. One of his Labour colleagues in Canberra, during one of the Estimates debates a few weeks ago, decried the fact that the Queensland "Hansard" staff is paid more than the Commonwealth "Hansard" staff.

Mr. Casey: That was a misprint.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: Of course it was. The hon. member is like the hon. member for Norman, who denies the accuracy of statistics when they do not suit his case. They are impossible people to argue with because, if certain facts do not suit them, they disregard them. I suggest to the hon. member for South Brisbane that he check that claim because he is once again in conflict with one of his Federal colleagues, Mr. Clyde Cameron from South Australia.

What I am trying desperately to refer to, if the hon. member for South Brisbane will contain his exuberance for a few minutes, is litter on our main roads. As I have said, the hon. member for Sandgate and I serve on a committee that devotes itself to this problem. He shares my satisfaction that, at the Brisbane Exhibition, the Main Roads Department placed some emphasis upon it by displaying a very useful sign urging people not to litter rest places, stopping places and, more importantly, main roads.

I know that the Minister will be delighted to learn that this display is referred to in the November issue of "N.P.A. News", which is the National Parks Association of Queensland newsletter.

Mr. Sherrington: Yet they allow main roads to be cluttered up with hoardings right and left.

Mr. W. D. HEWITT: We are not in conflict on that point. I think we can do something about it. However, let us tackle the litter problem for a start.

The "N.P.A. News" says—

"QUEENSLAND IS A BEAUTIFUL STATE—
DON'T YOU AGREE?"

"This is the wording on a brochure distributed by the Queensland Main Roads Department to hundreds of thousands of visitors to the R.N.A. Show, Brisbane, in August 1970.

"It carried sketches illustrating the folly of LITTER and finished with this message which really applies to metropolitan streets and parks also.

"Queensland Roads are not RUBBISH DUMPS. As a contribution to Road Safety the Main Roads has established some 200 Rest Areas for your enjoyment and relaxation. These are Public Property—established and maintained with your money.

"BE A TRUE AUSTRALIAN!

"KEEP QUEENSLAND BEAUTIFUL!"

One of the main aims of the committee that the hon. member for Sandgate and I serve on is to prompt the Government to introduce adequate litter laws so that people who indiscriminately rubbish rest areas can be dealt with by the processes of law. I am pleased that the Main Roads Department has seen fit to recognise this problem and do something about it.

There are more suggestions that the department might usefully consider. I notice that there are signs on New South Wales roads indicating that rubbish areas are ahead so that people can assemble their rubbish and dispose of it five miles further along the road. One of the provincial cities is encouraging a throw-away area so that people can throw their rubbish into a hole beside the road as they drive along.

We certainly must do everything possible to encourage motorists to be litter conscious and to respect the countryside they drive through. Unfortunately, there will always be a few miserable Australians who will spoil their environment and have no consideration for those who follow. They will leave litter and rubbish lying about indiscriminately. We must deal with them by force of law. I hope that the Main Roads Department, in collaboration with the Local Government Department, will very soon see its way clear to do something about the litter problem.

I wanted to express those sentiments tonight because I am sure that at least one Opposition member is in full accord with what I say. Again I applaud the efforts, particularly of the Main Roads Department engineers and the very competent officers in the Mines Department. I am pleased to associate myself with this Vote tonight.

Mr. O'DONNELL (Barcoo) (9.10 p.m.): It is rather significant that whenever the hon. member for Chatsworth speaks in this Chamber he is condemnatory of the Australian Labour Party. I wonder what the hon. member really desires? Does he want an Opposition that placidly agrees with everything that the Government does? Does he want an Opposition that offers no constructive criticisms from time to time? It is rather surprising that he should adopt that attitude. When people discuss political parties, they mention the Country Party, the Liberal Party, and then the Australian Labour Party.

It is very important that they mention "Australian", because that is what we are. We, as members of the Australian Labour Party, are here representing Australian opinion. I feel that Government members at times fail to adhere to loyalty to the country of their birth.

It rather surprises me to find the hon. member for Chatsworth coming into the Chamber and obviously endeavouring to bolster up the Minister for Mines by a statement on policy concerning the exploitation of coking coal, which is a matter prominently before our eyes and looming large in our interests. He would realise, if he had any sense, that the Minister is quite capable of looking after himself. Indeed, he has been very pointed when he has been disturbed, and sharp in his criticism.

Let us get back to what the hon. member for Chatsworth said about mining. I should like to know at what time the Australian Labour Party objected to royalties. What it said on behalf of Australia was, "We think the royalty should be more. We feel somewhat disturbed that there is an excess of foreign capital coming to this country, and it is to the detriment of this country that dividends obtained from that capital will go out of the country." Those are simple and obvious points, of which any Australian should be critical. Nobody—certainly nobody on this side of the Chamber—objects to mining development, but it is important to realise that an expression of criticism has to be made when we, as Australians, think that we are not receiving full benefit from the exploitation of our natural resources. It is incumbent on me, as a member of the Australian Labour Party, to tell the hon. member for Chatsworth that the Minister for Mines is quite capable of representing his department. He must, in his own right, be given that credit, and it ill behoves a back-bencher to get up and use this debate not so much to support the Minister as to make a political attack on the Opposition. That is the only reason why the hon. member for Chatsworth spoke as he did.

Let us now deal with mining. No-one objects to mineral development. We know that it is fraught with difficulties. We know that a great deal of money will be invested in it. We know that there is also a danger that things might not go according to plan, and that some people are taking risks. But, when looked at from several points of view, it will be found that criticism does produce positive results. Members who are competent to judge have said in this Chamber that mistakes have been made by the Mines Department and by the mining companies, and, in the result, benefits have accrued from a change of attitude.

Tonight the hon. member for Chatsworth tried to point out that for every ton taken out of the ground, two would be held in reserve. That was advocated by members

of the Opposition from the very first day it was suggested that the mining industry was developing.

Mr. Camm: What rot! They did not say that.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I refer the Minister to a speech that I made in this Chamber some years ago in which I said it, and other members of the Opposition have said it from time to time. It is only logical to retain reserves in case they are needed for Australia and Australians.

I point out to the Committee that I have discussed this very matter with mining companies in recent months. I can produce a letter that I wrote to a mining company in which I said, "Be careful, before you sign any contracts, that you discuss with the Mines Department how much you have to keep in reserve, because it would be disastrous to your interests if, after having signed your contracts and having made a survey of the field and your opportunities, the Government said at a later date, 'You shall not take any more than a certain quantity.'" I said that in complete honesty.

I ask the Minister for Mines: before the Thiess-Peabody-Mitsui consortium signed its contracts, did the Government tell it that it had to keep so much coal in reserve? I should like to ask the Minister this further question relative to TPM: was his department satisfied with the survey made by TPM before it went into operation? I think I would probably receive the answer "No" in each instance. That is why I think it is important that constructive criticism should come from the Australian Labour Party in Opposition. The criticism is tendered for the benefit of Australians, and that is why we are proud of our title, which is repeated daily by people associated with our political party and by people referring to it.

I wish to make one last point relative to mining. I should say that there will be sensational development in my area if present plans come to fruition, and we want them to come to fruition. However, such development does bring forth a certain amount of criticism from Australians in other industries. I have mentioned this before in the Chamber. It is quite logical for them to react in that way. What has the development brought? Naturally, it has brought mining production, the setting up of lines of communication, whether by rail or road, and other associated benefits. In addition, houses, etc., have been constructed. Under the circumstances, and to meet the needs of the people concerned, certain action has been taken by the Government to assist the development.

I know very well that approval has just been given for the erection of 30 houses at Moranbah. That assistance is to be provided by the Housing Commission and is a logical result of development—housing for people associated with the mining industry. But people in other towns, who are

looking for accommodation, immediately react and say, "Well, this is not being done for us."

Let me take another illustration. Hon. members know very well that there has been a very disastrous drought in this State, and people associated with primary industries—this is a fact, whether one belongs to the Australian Labour Party or the Country Party

Mr. Camm: The Australian Country Party.

Mr. O'DONNELL: The Minister is stressing it, but nobody else does.

In the drought areas people are critical of how much is being done in these developing areas, which, on this occasion, are mining areas. The hon. member for Warrego made a spirited speech tonight. What impelled him to do so? Naturally, the plight of the primary producers in his area. He referred to the disadvantages in his area and put them down to the fact that these people, living in a comparatively isolated portion of the State, were not receiving the benefits being provided in developing areas.

Hon. members opposite might think that this is not good, sound criticism. Maybe it is not, but in itself it is an expression of resentment that has been boiling up in these people because of the drought and the decline in their own industries. Naturally, this is given expression in some way, and it becomes criticism of the Government.

When a prominent farmer-grazier in my area, who has extensive assets—probably close to \$1,000,000—stands in the streets and talks about the holes in the ground, he is referring to mining. He stands in the street talking about the payment of electricity bills. Somebody's electricity had been cut off, but he had heard a sound rumour that T.P.M. were so far behind with their electricity bills that they appeared to have almost reached the point of getting favoured treatment. He also comments on the fact that, although certain things are not allowed to him, they flow on to the mining companies. It is undoubtedly unfortunate that this should happen, but it does happen, and we have to realise that this criticism is coming from people who feel that they, because of their geographical and industrial position in this State are not receiving the benefits and amenities that they claim they are entitled to as Queenslanders.

I put this to the Committee because the Minister is concerned not only with mining but also with main roads. This is important to the point made by the hon. member for Warrego, which was based on treatment through the Main Roads Department. I know people who have a strong sense of resentment about the developing areas getting amenities that are not available to them. I should like the Minister to understand that we, as an Opposition, are entitled to criticise. It is our bounden duty to do so if we think we can stir the Government into better action.

I should like to refer now to the main roads situation in Central Queensland. I am not going to limit it to my own electorate. I suppose I am fortunate in many respects in the deal I receive from the Main Roads Department, but I am less fortunate than some others in that in my electorate I have not only the Capricorn Highway but also the Gregory Highway, the Peak Downs Highway and the Dawson Highway. Some of these highways are not complete, and as I move around my electorate I am besieged, wherever I am geographically, about the need to "push" the particular highway on which I am standing at that time. I know it is a very difficult situation.

Mr. Camm: It puts you in a spot, does it?

Mr. O'DONNELL: It does not put me in a spot but it puts me in the position of having to say that the money that comes into my electorate has to be divided amongst four highways and cannot be fully allocated to one. I try to get this message across because, as I say, people look at the world from their own position.

Mr. Ahern: You have done very well.

Mr. O'DONNELL: As I said before, it is good representation. Whilst it is human nature for people to feel like that, they can also be resentful.

This year I referred a certain matter to the Main Roads Department, and I was, to some degree, disappointed by the department's decision. The Barcaldine Shire Council had approached me and said that, as the Main Roads Department was going to finish off the Capricorn Highway in the Barcaldine section of my electorate, it wished to be the constructing authority. I knew that a similar situation existed in the Jericho Shire, because it is proposed to complete the section of highway between Jericho and Barcaldine. I put it to the Main Roads Department that, as the Barcaldine Shire Council had made the request, it should be given the right to be the constructing authority, and I hoped that I would attract attention to the position of the Jericho Shire Council. I know very well that the Main Roads Department has its plans, and I know, too, that it does excellent work—I do not dispute that—but in the circumstances I thought that it had a golden opportunity to give to those two councils the right to construct those sections of the Capricorn Highway and to release the department to do other work.

Mr. Camm: Would you put the Main Roads Department out of work?

Mr. O'DONNELL: No. I am coming to that; I am about to refer to the other work that it could do.

Mr. Camm: Highway work?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Yes. I think that the Minister should look at the condition of the road between Rockhampton and Emerald.

Mr. Wright: And also the Drummond Range.

Mr. O'DONNELL: As the Minister knows, that highway is, largely, a single-lane highway and narrow. As well, it is broken along its shoulders. The result is that the highway has become a death-trap. It runs practically due east-west, and a motorist who is driving along that narrow bitumen track with the sun in his eyes is in trouble when passing vehicles coming from the opposite direction. Not only does he have the sun in his eyes but also, as the other vehicle goes off the narrow bitumen track to pass, he is forced to drive through a great pall of dust that rises from the shoulders of the road. It is dangerous, particularly at night. Deaths have occurred on that road as a result of its narrowness and its bad state of repair.

Mr. Low: When was it put down?

Mr. O'DONNELL: In the life of this Government, but apparently it has not stood up to the traffic that has used it. The reconstruction of that highway is the type of work on which the Main Roads Department could be engaged.

The hon. member for Rockhampton South interjected about the Drummond Range. I am very anxious that that section of the Capricorn Highway should receive attention. I am aware of the difficulties on the Drummond Range, but if it was worked on persistently a great many people would be satisfied that it was a continuous project. I appeal to the Minister to see if that can be done.

Earlier I was diverted by the hon. member for Chatsworth. In future I hope he does not speak before I do. I have referred to mining and main roads. You, Mr. Wharton, and I, who go to Central Queensland, know that the people of that portion of the State are very fine people and do their best for Queensland. The other night I devoted 20 minutes to the Public Service of Queensland. I assure the Minister for Mines and Main Roads that all of the staff in both his departments were meant to be referred to in my eulogy. Mr. Healey, Mr. Cook, and all the staff of the Department of Mines, and Mr. Lowe and all his staff are worthy of the highest commendation.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BALDWIN (Logan) (9.31 p.m.): Mr. Wharton—

A Government Member: You have copious notes.

Mr. BALDWIN: Yes, I have, too, and I intend to go like a bat out of hell.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order!

Mr. BALDWIN: These two aspects of the Estimates interest me, particularly because of the situation in the Logan electorate. The opposition's shadow Minister for Mines and Main Roads, the Labour member for

Port Curtis, when ably launching the debate for the Opposition, opened a line of attack that I intend to follow. Summed up briefly it was that, in effect, the mining boom is a world-wide phenomenon, more a result of our generally changed mode of living than of the munificent reign of the Country-Liberal Party Government. In this boom, Queensland and Australia are benefiting less in real return than they did during the mining boom of the 19th century and for the same reason, namely, that Queensland then also had a State Government under the domination of overseas interests, that is, huge British companies directed by the British Colonial Office.

It is truly said that history repeats itself, and it always will while the Legislature is in the hands of a socially immature group dominated by sectional interests and self-seekers. This was true in the latter half of the 19th century and it is more so now, with the same results, in that the mass of the people in this State are getting nugatory returns from their share in industry. I intend later to give a necessarily hasty exposition of how that comes about.

Labour's shadow Minister for Mines and Main Roads referred to the crucial shortage of skilled staff and mining operators. His criticism is amply borne out by recent statements in the Press by educationists and university specialist staff. One of the eminent men in charge of the mining department of the Faculty of Engineering a couple of years ago said that if Queensland was going to completely staff its exploration, mining and refining processes, it would need to put out 10 times as many graduates in the next decade as it did in the last. That is not occurring, and we are also losing many of those that we have to private enterprise.

This lag, this failure to educate sufficiently well, from lack of kindergartens to lack of graduates, is the root cause of our subservience in the mineral world. While we do not aim at the goal of getting at least a half share in the refining and usage of our minerals within the next 20 years, we are guilty of gross dereliction of duty to our country and to our children.

It is not enough to mouth great praises about employment benefits, in the face of high taxes and killing costs of living. Our bauxite, coal, mineral sands and other mineral wage-earners are relatively little better off than their gold-mining predecessors, who had to pay 50 cents for an egg, \$20 for a pair of boots, and extortionate taxes by way of miners' licences levied by Governments of a vein similar to those of today.

The pattern of exploitation of the worker then and the worker now is remarkably similar. The chief beneficiaries are the Japanese, American and other foreign mining companies and the rapacious Federal Government in its tax grab. Most of the mining enterprises in this State are conducted on the basis of the greatest good for the fewest

people. If Government members number themselves among that small group, they can look out on the real producers of the wealth through rose-coloured windows put there for them by those big men whom they brought here, and they can say, "What a wonderful thing it is for us." But it is not for the workers of this State.

The whole of the mining industry is built on a basis of reducing assets. It must be by its very nature. Is not the tragic history of the ghost towns that followed the gold rushes close enough for Government members to learn a lesson from it? History tells us that the miners, members of the A.M.A.—not the modern A.M.A. down the road, but the Australian Miners' Association—of the 19th century, practised conservation. It was conservation of the mineral resources they knew. By their concerted action they were able to slow down the output rate of gold for a while to such an extent that the export price actually rose and there was a greater return to the country and to the worker. We cannot do that by direct action now of the kind the miners took then, but we should be carrying on the same battle on a higher plane.

Look at what Canada had to do to save its mineral future. The Canadian Federal Government and the Governments of the provinces placed penalty royalties on all raw-mineral materials being exported and forced foreign companies to set up refineries and factories in Canada, thus giving the people a long-lasting stake in their own resources.

It is because of this, and because other countries, conscious of conserving their resources for themselves have taken similar action, that the eyes of these foreign investors have focused on Australia—not the dollar beckonings of the Ministers of this Cabinet. They turn to this glorious give-away State.

The give-away is progressing at such a rate, and foreign influences and economic control are entering at such a rate, that the Mines Department will soon have to get together with the Education Department and rewrite some parts of the Grade 4 social studies book. A new name for the State could be made up by taking a letter or two from the names of some of the overseas companies. One I can think of is Krimmptcut. I shall leave it to erudite hon. members who have a knowledge of the inroads into our resources to work out the names of the companies for themselves.

The opening lines describing this new State could read like this—

"Krimmptcut is a huge State richly endowed with vast deposits of Japanese coal and iron and American oil and bauxite."

I could write a completely new textbook.

The weak rationalisation of the hon. member for Chatworth on the mining panic—that we should sell the coal now while we can

because it will not be any good to us soon, that no-one will want it, and that as a fuel its days are numbered—is rather strange. It shows his lack of knowledge of some of the main uses of coal, particularly as a chemical reducer as well as a fuel and in smelting processes of many mineral ores; for we export the coal as well as the ore and then buy the product back at cut-pocket prices.

From the figures given in the departmental report, no section of mining illustrates the magnitude of foreign exploration more than mineral sands. From the figures given, it can be calculated that the average price received for these processed sands is in the region of \$165 a ton. The State gets very little of this. More than 90 per cent. is sold on the world market, and to say that it has that value or is worth this much is misleading. The average royalty is about \$1.65 per ton, little less than 1 per cent. of the market value that we know and less than a farmer gets as royalty and less than the Governments gets for moulding loam or concreting sand.

One company, Q.T.M., sells to a consortium at \$40 a ton. This company is wholly foreign owned. I have been told that this is one of the companies that is very interested in mining Cooloola and Bribie, and that at that price its Australian operations could well show a loss. It would pay no tax at all, and I believe that Comalco operates on a similar consortium principle.

While I am not prepared to conserve flora and fauna at the expense of human advancement, I am one of those who believe very strongly in conserving our mineral resources to such an extent that we can get the highest possible price. I refer the Committee to a document put out by a group of university economists on the economics of Cooloola.

I believe that a Government, conscious of the present good and the future of every section of this State, would cause a wide diversion of this outflow of wealth to raise our own potential and our own real wealth by education and training, and by building our own refineries and factories, to a far greater extent than this Government is doing. The coal catastrophe, the Rough Range "roft", the nickle nobble of Poseidon and many other companies, have cheated our own investors most shamefully by fraudulently obtaining from them funds for their own operations.

The hon. member for Mackay touched on this point further by showing how these companies have used our resources to compete on our own finance markets and further rob us of finance that we could be using to educate and train our own technicians and to set up our own refineries and factories. He touched on our price subservience, and our vulnerability to such a situation on the world mineral market. No single industrial incident has more served to illustrate our

vulnerability than the Mt. Isa strike a few years ago. Look at the fantastic rise in the home-market price of copper that followed that turmoil. Look at the huge shift in shares from Australia to overseas that took place. The industrial side of the conflict was the screen for the whole manipulation by which this State's percentage equity in, and percentage return from, the Mt. Isa mine was drastically reduced.

I do not blame the Mines Department staff for any of this. I lay the blame for the mineral sell-out squarely on the shoulders of those who should bear it, namely, the Country Party Cabinet and their party sychophants. Yes, I agree with all these sychophants on the point that there is huge mining development in Queensland, but I do not agree that we own much more than 5 per cent. of it.

The Minister also dealt with main roads. No person connected in any way with the electorate of Logan could help but feel the importance of main road development in this State. Last year, when speaking during the debate on these Estimates, I mentioned, amid the ignorant guffaws of the goons opposite, that Logan was the gateway to the South, and that no electorate would have a greater volume of through traffic at week-ends than Logan, which has three sets of arterial main roads cutting through it, namely, the Mt. Lindesay Highway, the Pacific Highway, and the Cleveland-Redland Bay highway.

On summer week-ends and holidays, the four-way highway to the Gold Coast and New South Wales is choked. If one is to measure time by the traffic flow, a six-lane highway is overdue. If the development in the east and south-east of the electorate continues, and if the satellite suburbs planned come into being, a six-lane highway would be choked soon after it was built—and the four-lane highway is not yet continuous. The bottle-necks at Eight Mile Plains and Pimpama still exist as single lanes. Let us hope that they do not exist for much longer.

The overflow from the highway along the back roads through Rochedale to Capalaba, Mt. Gravatt, and Cooper's Plains, is placing an unbearable strain on these roads at such times. These overflow alternatives must be brought up to at least 24-ft. width and with all necessary safety devices, or the accident rate will rise too steeply. The growth of the Redland Shire and the northern end of the Albert and Beaudesert Shires is so great that that population alone has outgrown the road-safety capabilities. A year or so ago the Redland Shire could boast a fatality-free year. Last year there were five fatalities that I know of.

The Moreton region of South-east Queensland, which contains Logan, holds 67 per cent. of the population of the State, and 74 per cent. of the 405,000 vehicles that the Minister mentioned were on the roads

of that region. That is nearly 300,000 vehicles! In one holiday week last year it was estimated by road count that 150,000 cars passed through the Logan electorate along the Pacific Highway. That is no laughing matter; that is a fact.

In view of these facts and figures, the amount allowed for main roads development and maintenance appears to be far too small. I do not lay the blame for this at the feet of the Minister as much as I lay it at the feet of the Premier and the Treasurer, who went to Canberra to get money for this State. I lay most of the blame, of course, at the feet of their Canberra cohorts, who are depriving this State of much-needed revenue, particularly for main roads development. The \$40,000,000-odd from Commonwealth road aid grants is far too little in terms of urgency, need, and the justice of financial equity as shown by revenue-return figures.

The figures published in the Commonwealth Oil Magazine, 1968-69, are very revealing. They show sales tax and spare-parts tax from Queensland as about \$32,000,000, and customs and excise as about \$6,000,000, a total of \$38,000,000. In the same year the Commonwealth aid grant was about \$35,000,000. The revenue from vehicles and fuels, licences, etc., from Queensland to the Federal Government is not the only revenue that comes from this State. There is other revenue amounting to almost \$4,000,000. Therefore, in 1968-69 the Federal Government made a profit of at least \$7,000,000 on the Queensland vehicle business in general. That is a financial injustice. Even if one allows \$2,000,000 for administrative costs of their Federal sinecures, etc., that is far too much, and an additional \$5,000,000 should have been given to this State.

I think I have made a case for the assistance of the Minister for Main Roads, but I point out to the Committee that, although I look at the facts of life around me, I do not necessarily condone them. I do not agree with the situation that has created this awful traffic flow. I think that dissemination, dispersion and decentralisation should be proceeding apace. Of course, I do not mean the kind of decentralisation that one sees in New South Wales at Mt. Druitt, 30 miles outside Sydney—no industries, and people paying up to 30 and 40 per cent. of their weekly income in fares and car expenses. That only adds to the pollution of the inner city.

We are planning for that self-same thing at the northern end of the Albert Shire, and even in the Beaudesert Shire. I hope the Minister for Industrial Development, the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, the Premier and all the other Ministers will get together and try to prevent it happening. The freeway will not be free within 20 years if the developments envisaged by huge overseas companies such as Inter-capital Realty are

carried out. Incidentally, I think they are consortiums of the big petrol companies, because no-one but a petrol company or G.M.H. would have a vested interest in doing such a stupid thing as proposing the establishment of a city with a population of 200,000 25 or 30 miles from Brisbane, with no provision that I have seen on the plans for any kind of industry to make it a self-contained unit. In any case, it would be a stupid place to put it.

Mr. Hughes interjected.

Mr. BALDWIN: I am giving my opinion, and I have a very short time in which to enlarge on the subject. If the hon. member went out and read some of the reports instead of sitting there interjecting he might see what I mean.

The problem of pollution will not be solved by putting coke-catchers on exhausts. Everybody who knows anything about chemistry and the reaction of sunlight on carbon dioxide in our oxygenated atmosphere knows that it is the major and deadly source of pollution. It is over-density of living with which the report relative to main roads is to some extent concerned. How do we take our roads round this high-density population without polluting the atmosphere even more? I do not see how this is going to be achieved by the road network proposed in the Wilbur Smith scheme. In fact, Brisbane could be like Tokyo, with people on the streets having to wear gas masks.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.50 p.m.