

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 1970

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ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

- Audit Act Amendment Bill;
- Evidence (Reproductions) Bill;
- Ambulance Services Act Amendment Bill;
- Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Pensions) Act Amendment Bill;
- Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme Agreement Bill.

ORDER IN CHAMBER

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I would appreciate it if honourable members on my left refrained from audible conversation when messages are being read.

CIRCULATION AND COST OF "HANSARD"

Mr. SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Chief Reporter, State Reporting Bureau, on the circulation and cost of "Hansard" for the session of 1969-70.

PAPERS

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

Reports—

- Minister for Education and Cultural Activities, for the year 1969.
- Insurance Commissioner, for the year 1969-1970.
- Commissioner of Transport, for the year 1969-1970.
- Department of Works, for the year 1969-1970.
- Commissioner of Housing, for the year 1969-1970.
- Department of Harbours and Marine, for the year 1969-1970.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

- Medical Act 1939-1969.
- The Industrial Development Acts, 1963 to 1964.
- The Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1968.
- Water Act 1926-1968.
- River Improvement Trust Act 1940-1968.
- The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.
- The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1964.

Regulations under—

- Chiropodists Act 1969.
- Radioactive Substances Act 1958-1970.
- Water Act 1926-1968.

Statute under the James Cook University of North Queensland Act 1970.

TUESDAY, 10 NOVEMBER, 1970

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

GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

RESERVATION FOR ROYAL ASSENT

Mr. SPEAKER reported receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor intimating that this Bill had been reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure.

Reports—

Company Law Advisory Committee to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General on (i) Special Investigations; (ii) Disclosure of Substantial Shareholdings and Takeovers; (iii) Accounts and Audit.

Fourth Interim Report of the Company Law Advisory Committee to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General.

The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland, for the year 1969-1970.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR RAIL EXTENSIONS, WILBUR SMITH SURVEY

Mr. R. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

Has the Commonwealth Government indicated the form of assistance that will be extended to build new rail extensions as recommended by the Wilbur Smith Transportation Survey and, if so, what will be the basis of the assistance?

Answer:—

“No.”

AMENITIES FOR RAILWAY EMPLOYEES, TOWNSVILLE

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

Further to my Question of October 10, 1969, regarding the provision of amenities at the Townsville diesel shed and his Answer that plans would be ready to allow for the calling of tenders for the work in April, 1970—

(1) Have the plans been completed?

(2) Have tenders been called and, if so, when will work commence and when is it anticipated that the work will be completed?

(3) Has the Department agreed to the provision of steel lockers, of the standard size agreed to by the Commissioner, for each employee?

(4) Will the Department provide a car park for diesel shed employees with a properly-graded access road and accommodation for motor-scooters, motor-cycles and bicycles?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) “Plans are in the course of preparation and it is anticipated tenders will be invited early in December.”

(3) “Standard size lockers will be provided.”

(4) “The selection of a suitable site for a car park is still under examination.”

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE, PIKE CREEK DAM

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

What progress has been made relative to Commonwealth financial assistance for the construction of Pike Creek Dam as part of the Border Rivers Scheme?

Answer:—

“No reply has yet been received from the Commonwealth Government on this request.”

JUNIOR AND SENIOR EXAMINATION RESULTS; UNIVERSITY ENROLMENTS

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

(1) How many students sat for and how many passed (a) the Junior Public Examination and (b) the Senior Public Examination in each of the years 1967 to 1969 and what is the number expected to nominate for 1970?

(2) In the same years, what were the enrolments at Queensland Universities?

Answers:—

(1) “For a number of years there has been no such thing as a pass in the Junior or Senior Examination. Candidates receive a certificate setting out the grade of result in the subjects examined. The numbers of candidates in public examinations from 1967 to 1970 are set out below.

	Junior Examination	Senior Examination
1967	26,725	9,902
1968	28,024	9,952
1969	28,494	10,801
1970 (nominations) ..	30,107	11,844”

(2) “The enrolments at Queensland universities for the years 1967-1970 as shown in Statistics published by the University of Queensland were—(a) University of Queensland, St. Lucia

Year	Full-Time	Part-Time Internal	Part-Time External	Total
1967 ..	6,959	5,051	2,709	14,719
1968 ..	6,938	5,145	2,643	14,726
1969 ..	7,203	5,167	2,549	14,919
1970* ..	7,610	5,482	3,281	16,373

* Figures as yet unpublished.

(b) Townsville University College (1967-69), James Cook University of North Queensland (1970)

Year	Full-Time	Part-Time Internal	Total
1967 ..	341	191	532
1968 ..	381	235	616
1969 ..	485	369	854
1970* ..	703	463	1,166”

* Figures as yet unpublished.

COMPOSITE SCHOOL CLASSES, BRISBANE;
ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS

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

(1) How many composite classes presently exist in State primary schools in Brisbane, what grades do they comprise and how many schools have them?

(2) How many one-teacher schools are operating in Queensland and what is the enrolment of each school?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) On the school census date, August 1, there were 115 composite classes in Brisbane State primary schools. (b) Information on the grades comprising these composite classes is not readily available since the class-size return does not show the particular grades comprising each composite class. (c) 56 schools."

(2) "(a) On the school census date there were 324 one-teacher schools operating in Queensland. (b) The Honourable Member will realise that because of the numbers involved, it is impracticable to list the enrolments in each of these schools. The following table gives an indication of the sizes of one-teacher schools throughout the State.

Size of Schools	Less than 10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	More than 30
Number of Schools	12	79	75	77	50	31 "

CLASSROOM ACCOMMODATION, COORPAROO
STATE HIGH SCHOOL

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

How long have the temporary classrooms been in use at the Coorparoo State High School and when will the school accommodation problem be alleviated sufficiently for them to be removed?

Answer:—

"Demountable classroom buildings in varying numbers have been in use at Coorparoo State High School since 1964. Permanent classroom accommodation has been provided since that time as the financial position has permitted such work being undertaken. Replacement of the existing demountable buildings at this school in the near future is not anticipated having regard to present fund position."

TRAFFIC LIGHTS, KELVIN GROVE ROAD
INTERSECTION

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

With reference to (a) the approval by the then Minister for Mines in August, 1963, of high priority for traffic signalisation at the intersection of Kelvin Grove

Road and Prospect and L'Estrange Terraces, (b) his own letter of November 22, 1965, confirming my request that in the transfer of certain responsibility under the Traffic Acts to Brisbane City Council this would be a transitional undertaking with funds earmarked accordingly to maintain its priority and (c) his further letter of April 19, 1966, stating that the Town Clerk had been advised verbally of \$40,000 in loan funds allocated for the work and that with parkatarea parking transferred to the Council and the initial instalment paid to it from the Traffic Engineering Trust Fund it was a matter for Brisbane City Council—

(1) Is he aware that (a) whilst some associated road works have been carried out the intersection still awaits signalisation, (b) there have been more pedestrian fatalities at or near the intersection, which is virtually a junior "Normanby", and that there is often traffic chaos there and (c) police are fearful for their own safety in manning the present marked crossing adjacent to major primary and high schools, which is also used by many hundreds attending night classes?

(2) As the Main Roads Department's declaration of Kelvin Grove Road to Prospect Terrace brings his Department back into the picture and as there is a suggestion that the Council has sought a further allocation in this regard, will he state the present position and endeavour to expedite this long-overdue project?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) Yes. (b) I am advised there have been two pedestrian fatalities since 1965. (c) No. Enquiries do not substantiate your claim."

(2) "Funds were originally allocated to Brisbane City Council from the Traffic Engineering Trust Fund for the installation of traffic signals. This work was not carried out while this road was the responsibility of the Council. Now with the declaration of Samford Sub-Arterial to Prospect Terrace, the Main Roads Department has a direct responsibility. It is unlikely that the Council will be interested in financing roadworks in this location. This work is listed by the Main Roads Department as one requiring early attention but as such has to be considered in relation to the priority of other urgent works and the funds presently available. No firm date can be given for the release of this work."

SAND-MINING LEASES

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

Have sand-mining leases Nos. SML 322 to SML 332 been drawn up? If so, (a) on what date, (b) on what date were they signed and who signed them and

(c) have the companies been notified and, if so, when, by whom and on what authority?

Answer:—

“No.”

ROYALTY ON NATURAL GAS SUPPLIED TO BRISBANE

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

Further to a Question by the Honourable Member for Belmont on December 3, 1969, concerning Roma gas—

(1) Is royalty being paid on natural gas piped to Brisbane? If so, what was the date of commencement and what was the formula and method used in its calculation?

(2) Will the rate of royalty be reviewed in the future? If so, what is the date set down for the next review?

Answers:—

(1) “The first payment of royalty was received on February 4, 1970. In accordance with the Petroleum Act, royalty is paid at 10 per cent. of the well-head value. This value is defined as the selling-price realised by the producer less expenses downstream from the well-head.”

(2) “At present there is no proposal to review the royalty rate.”

NATURAL GAS PRICES

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

(1) What is the price paid for natural gas by (a) Roma Town Council and (b) Austral-Pacific Fertilizer Company at Gibson Island and what are the terms?

(2) Will he consider a more equitable price, so that the residents of Roma can obtain benefits from their own natural gas products by cheaper generation of electricity for Roma?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) “The matters raised by the Honourable Member are outside the jurisdiction of my Departments. It must be kept in mind that the price of natural gas to the Roma powerhouse is a matter between the suppliers and the buyers. However, the good offices of the Government Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner have in the past been available and will continue to be available to assist them.”

DENTAL CLINIC, MITCHELL

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

(1) Has the present dentist at Cunnamulla been appointed to Mitchell? If so, when will he take up duty?

(2) Is he aware that equipment for the Mitchell dental clinic has been stored at the railway station for some time?

(3) Are building extensions to take place at the Mitchell Clinic?

(4) Is a doctor's surgery and residence to be built alongside the present dental surgery?

Answers:—

(1) “It is proposed to transfer the Dentist in Charge of the Cunnamulla Dental Clinic to take up duty at the Mitchell Dental Clinic in late December 1970 or early January 1971.”

(2) “I am informed the Secretary of the Roma Hospitals Board advises that certain items of equipment for the Mitchell Dental Clinic were stored at the railway station but these items have been delivered to the Hospital where they will be stored until required.”

(3) “No. Certain minor internal alterations are to be undertaken by the Roma Hospitals Board.”

(4) “No.”

TRAINMEN, IPSWICH AND TOOWOOMBA RAILWAY DEPOTS

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

(1) Why are trainmen stationed at Ipswich being taught the road to Toowoomba?

(2) Is this an indication that these men will work trains into and out of Toowoomba?

(3) What is the average time per fortnight worked by trainmen at Ipswich and Toowoomba respectively, since July 1, 1970?

(4) If the average time at these two depots is comparable, why is it necessary for Ipswich men to work into Toowoomba?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) “I lay upon the table of the House a statement showing the average equated time per fortnight worked by trainmen at Ipswich and Toowoomba since July 1, 1970. Trainmen stationed at Ipswich are being taught the road to Toowoomba to allow of a more balanced efficient and economical working.”

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

BEACH EROSION, YORKEYS KNOB, MACHANS BEACH AND NEWELL

Mr. B. Wood, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) What investigations have been carried out to date, by the Beach Protection Authority, of beaches at Yorkeys Knob, Machans Beach and Newell?

(2) What further surveys of these beaches are being carried out and who is responsible for the work?

(3) What recommendations have been made to the Mulgrave and Douglas Shire Councils following the various investigations?

Answers:—

(1) "Inspections of the area were carried out by officers of the Co-ordinator-General's Department in 1962, 1968 and 1970. A survey team employed by the Beach Protection Authority commenced an investigation of the Yorkeys Knob, Machans and Newell Beach areas in October and is expected to be in the area for approximately two months. Information being obtained includes offshore and beach contours, current measurements and sand movements and this survey will supply basic data for recommendations for combating the erosion to be made to the councils after a sufficient length of investigating time and evaluation of the data collected."

(2) "Further surveys will be carried out by the Beach Protection Authority at approximately yearly intervals to determine long term trends."

(3) "General information on beach preservation was supplied to councils as a result of the 1962, 1968 and 1970 inspections mentioned in (1). No recommendations have yet been made to councils on an 'overall' plan basis due to lack of basic information."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

ABORIGINAL CHILD DEATHS, CAMOOWEAL AREA

Mr. AHERN: I ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs if his attention has been drawn to a report in this morning's A.B.C. news of the deaths of six Aboriginal children in the Camooweal area, and the comment by Commonwealth authorities that the responsibility for these people rests with the Queensland Government. Who is responsible for these people, and what action does the Minister propose to take in relation to this matter?

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: Naturally, I was gravely concerned at the report in the A.B.C. news of the deaths of six Aboriginal children in the Camooweal area, and I immediately set in train inquiries to ascertain full and detailed information. The information that has come to hand is that three of the children, who died from gastro-enteritis, were flown from Avon Downs Station, in the Northern Territory, to Mt. Isa. The other three children also came into Queensland from the Northern Territory and were domiciled on a camping reserve at Camooweal, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Mt. Isa City Council.

In addition, the Director-General of Health was asked for a full report. Fortunately, at the present time, Dr. Livingstone, the Deputy Director-General of Health, is in Mt. Isa, and he will be making a full investigation into the matter. If necessary, the health inspector at Townsville will be flown to Mt. Isa, from where he will proceed to Camooweal. The hon. member can rest assured that the position will be examined. As these children came from the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth Government must accept a certain amount of responsibility.

STATEMENT BY MEMBER FOR WAVELL ON CONDITIONS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Minister for Health: Has his attention been drawn to the statement by the hon. member for Wavell in "Sunday Truth" of 8 November on conditions in public hospitals, particularly the Brisbane Royal Children's Hospital and Lawson House? As the hon. member for Wavell does not speak for the Opposition on health and hospital matters, are the views expressed by him those of the Minister's department or of the Government? If not, with what authority does the hon. member for Wavell issue these statements? Does the Minister confirm or refute the charges made by the hon. member for Wavell?

Mr. TOOTH: I have read the article attributed to the hon. member for Wavell.

Mr. Bennett: It disturbed your week-end, they reckon.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member for South Brisbane interrupts when a question is being answered, I shall have to deal with him.

Mr. TOOTH: The length of the question prevents me from dealing seriatim with the points raised, but let me say that the hon. member for Wavell has a capacity for talking more nonsense in half a minute than the average person can talk in half an hour. He certainly does not express the views of the Health Department in respect of conditions at the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

If the hon. member for Nudgee cares to be more specific on the points raised by the hon. member for Wavell, I shall endeavour to accommodate him with an answer.

POLICE PROMOTIONS

Mr. NEWTON: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Will the three weeks' course undertaken by police officers at the police college at Taringa have any bearing on future promotions within the Police Force?

Mr. HODGES: No.

DELAYS IN PAYMENT OF HOSPITAL
STAFF SALARIES

Dr. CRAWFORD: I ask the Minister for Health: Is he aware of any deficiencies or delays in paying salaries to nursing and medical staff at either the Royal Brisbane Hospital or the Princess Alexandra Hospital? I understand that these payments are controlled from the former hospital.

Mr. TOOTH: I am not aware of any delays in the payment of nurses' salaries at either hospital. If the hon. member gives me some specific information on the matter, I shall have it investigated and give him a reply.

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR RAIL
EXTENSIONS

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Premier: In view of his reply in the negative today relative to Commonwealth assistance for rail extensions, has Queensland approached the Commonwealth Government for a grant under section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution, to coincide with the reports of similar representations by Victoria and New South Wales for railway works totalling \$40,000,000?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The Treasurer gave a reply in the House to a similar question. The answer is "No."

RAILWAY UNIFORMS

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: Has the issue of two uniforms a year to sections of railway staff been reduced to one uniform a year? If so, does this action indicate that the gear now being issued to uniformed staff is twice as durable, to be worn for double the period, and 50 per cent. less susceptible to perspiration, railway grime and coupling grease?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The latter part of the question seems to be rather sarcastic.

Mr. KNOX: I do not know whether the hon. member's question is serious, but I presume it is. I am not aware of the details of uniform issues, but I will get the information for him. I notice that the hon. member is wearing a new uniform which I hope will not become standard dress in this Chamber.

SAND-MINING LEASES

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I direct a question to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: In view of his answer to my question this morning concerning sand-mining leases Nos. SML322 and SML332, indicating that these leases have not been drawn up or signed, would the Minister inform the House why they appear on page 2 of an answer to a question by me, tabled in the House on 4 August of this year?

Mr. CAMM: It is true that I tabled a rather lengthy document on which are indicated mineral leases in effect in this State.

If the hon. member looks at the top of the page in question he will find that it is headed, "Applications for mineral leases." If it is not, it could not have come through on the duplicate copy. It was certainly on the original list.

Mr. Houston: Haw-haw!

Mr. CAMM: In reply to the "haw-haw" of the Leader of the Opposition, it has been the practice over the years for the Mines Department to list mineral-lease applications with mineral leases when answering questions asked in Parliament. This is because many lease applications which have not been documented and issued because they have not been surveyed are actually in effect. To obtain a mineral lease the area must be surveyed by the owner. If he does not do this, although it still remains a mineral-lease application it is in effect granted. Would the hon. member answer my question as to whether the page mentioned is headed, "Applications for mineral leases."?

Mr. Houston: Haw-haw!

Mr. CAMM: There seems to be some hilarity from the Leader of the Opposition, who knows nothing about mineral leases. Is the page headed, "Applications for mineral leases."?

Mr. Houston: Who is asking the questions?

Mr. CAMM: I am asking the hon. member for Salisbury if the page is headed, "Applications for mineral leases."

Mr. Sherrington: Page 1 is headed, "Mining leases." Page 2 is headed, "Lease or application number", which gives no indication of whether it is a lease or an application.

Mr. CAMM: It is headed, "Application number."

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the hon. member for Salisbury seek an interpretation of the regulations instead of arguing across the Chamber.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. The answer is very indefinite. It is couched in the terms "Lease or application number."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

PURCHASE OF CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S CHAIRS

Mr. WRIGHT: I ask the Minister for Health: What Government assistance is available to crippled children's organisations to help them purchase the special chairs required by crippled children? How is this assistance obtained by those organisations?

Mr. TOOTH: No direct assistance is given to crippled children's organisations for the specific purpose outlined by the hon. member.

However, there is a section of the Health Department which provides various appliances such as wheel-chairs, prostheses, crutches and artificial limbs. These are supplied on loan where this appropriate, and on a means test. In the case of indigent persons, in the majority of cases this service is free. If the hon. member has any specific problems, I should be very grateful if he would supply me with the information.

STATEMENT BY MEMBER FOR WAVELL ON
CONDITIONS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Mr. BROMLEY: I direct a question to the Minister for Health: In view of his statement in answer to the member for Nudgee today that the hon. member for Wavell speaks more nonsense in half a minute than anyone else does in half an hour, would he indicate some specific—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is prosecuting a quarrel.

Mr. BROMLEY: No, there is no quarrel.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BROMLEY: May I finish the question?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question appears to be out of order as it is prosecuting a quarrel. It is also supplementary to another member's question, which makes it out of order.

Mr. BROMLEY: I simply want to know what specific types of nonsense the member for Wavell talks.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I know that the hon. member is trying to be a little facetious. I cannot permit that.

ORDER IN GALLERY

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is too much chattering in the gallery. I ask the children to remain silent.

PETITION

MILLING OF EXCESS SUGAR-CANE

Mr. F. P. MOORE (Mourilyan) presented a petition from 39 cane farmers in the Innisfail-Tully area, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will—

(1) Consider the plight of the farmers in this area;

(2) Allow the farmers, particularly in co-operative areas, to mill their excess sugar-cane at their own expense, if they are in agreement;

(3) Allow the manufactured sugar resulting to be stored at the Mourilyan Bulk Sugar Terminal, which has only 70,000 tons of sugar in storage at present although its capacity is 200,000 tons;

(4) Allow this stored sugar to be counted as their first entitlement for the 1971 season, which will allow those farmers to plan for 1971 planting season.

Petition read and received.

SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—
FIFTH AND SIXTH ALLOTTED DAYS

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

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1970-71

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND MAIN ROADS
CHIEF OFFICE

Debate resumed from 29 October (see p. 1508) on Mr. Camm's motion—

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

Mr. HINZE (South Coast) (11.55 a.m.): In making my contribution to this debate, I do so with a sense of great satisfaction in the knowledge that both departments under discussion have had an exceedingly good year. I commend the Minister on his administration of these departments. I also commend the Commissioner of Main Roads and the Under Secretary, Department of Mines.

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

Mr. HINZE: We in Queensland can be very proud of our efforts in the field of mining.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! When I call the Committee to order and point out that there is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber, I expect the conversation to cease. It is very difficult to hear the hon. member for South Coast, although he is using a microphone. It must be very difficult for "Hansard" to hear him.

Mr. HINZE: We in Queensland, particularly the Government, have every reason to be proud of the efforts of both these departments. It can be said reliably that, in mineral development, Queensland and Western Australia, and Victoria to a lesser extent with its Bass Strait oil, are carrying the rest of Australia on their backs. Of course, we in this State are lucky, and I shall refer shortly to a number of mining projects which are either under way now or will be in the near future.

I was pleased to read in this morning's "Courier-Mail" that Cabinet has accepted the wishes of the joint Government parties, and the majority of the people of Queensland, and has agreed not to allow mining at Cooloola. I expressed some strong views in this regard. The Government has said, at this point of time in our development, that although there could be \$150,000,000 worth of mineral sands at Cooloola, no mining will be allowed in that area and Cooloola will be retained for the benefit of the people as a national park and State forest.

I shall now refer in detail to some of the mining projects under way in Queensland. Blackwater mine is 15 miles south of Blackwater and 115 miles west of Rockhampton.

It will export to Japan 21,400,000 tons of coking coal worth \$180,000,000 over the 10-year period from 1968 to 1978.

The Goonyella mine is about 130 miles south-west of Mackay. The port at Hay Point is about 18 miles south of Mackay by road. This mine will export to Japan 50,500,000 tons of coking coal worth more than \$500,000,000, over a 13-year period commencing in July, 1971, at the rate of 2,500,000 tons in the first year and 4,000,000 tons a year thereafter. It will create employment for 350 people. The company holds a 42-year franchise over the area.

Mr. R. Jones: It sounds like a travelogue.

Mr. HINZE: Yes, it is a travelogue, and we are very proud of it. The hon. member for Cairns would be proud, too, if he were a member of a Government that was responsible for bringing this about. His party has not been in Government for 13 years, so that it cannot take any of the credit that is due to this Government.

The Peak Downs project is 40 miles south of Goonyella. This mine will export to Japan 34,500,000 tons of coking coal worth more than \$341,000,000 over a 12-year period commencing in July, 1972, at the rate of 1,500,000 tons in the first year and 3,700,000 tons a year thereafter. It will provide employment for 265 people.

The Moura project is 110 miles west of Gladstone. It will export coking coal to Japan and supply steaming coal to Queensland Alumina Ltd. The planned production is 42,000,000 tons between January, 1970, and March, 1978, including 37,000,000 tons for export and 5,000,000 tons for local use. The annual production is expected to increase from the present 4,000,000 tons to 5,000,000 tons by 1972.

Next is the Westmoreland uranium project. It is located near the Northern Territory border, 230 miles north-west of Mt. Isa and 80 miles south of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Valhalla is about 28 miles north of Mt. Isa. The object is to mine uranium ore and obtain from it uranium oxide concentrate by processing.

The next project that I refer to is the Hilton mine, an expansion project of Mount Isa Mines Ltd., 13 miles north of Mt. Isa, which is to be served by a new railway line. The object is to increase the company's output of silver lead and zinc ore from the present 6,000 tons a day to 13,000 tons a day, and make it the largest producer of these metals in the world.

The next one is Mount Isa Mines expansion to increase copper production. The shaft for the new project is to be about 600 ft. east of the existing K57 shaft. The object is to increase copper ore production from the present 10,000 tons a day to 13,500 tons a day, and copper production from 100,000 tons a year to 150,000 tons a year by 1974.

Then we have the Weipa bauxite-mining expansion. Its location is in the vicinity of Weipa township, on Cape York Peninsula. The object is to increase bauxite production from the present 7,000,000 tons a year to 10,500,000 tons a year by 1972, and 15,000,000 tons a year by 1975, from proven and indicated reserves totalling more than 2,200 million tons. Already Weipa is the largest bauxite mine in the world.

The next project that I refer to is the Weipa alumina refinery, to be located in the vicinity of Weipa township, Cape York Peninsula, possibly on mined-out ground north-east of the port of Weipa. The initial object is to produce up to 1,200,000 tons of alumina a year, with subsequent expansion to 2,000,000 tons a year.

I could continue in this way ad infinitum, because of the years of fantastic development in the mining industry. I know that Opposition members do not like to hear these things. They got up on the stump during the last election campaign and criticised the Government on the development of mining interests.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HINZE: Of course, everybody knows the result of the last election. You are all sour; you cannot take it when I read to you this wonderful record of development of mining interests. You are all screaming whilst I am relating the wonderful efforts of the Mines Department.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member be kind enough to address his remarks to the Chair?

Mr. HINZE: I certainly will, Mr. Hooper.

The next project is the Gladstone alumina refinery, second and third expansion, at the port of Gladstone. The hon. member for Port Curtis would know something about this. Although he did not have much to do with it, he is getting all the bouquets that go with it. The object is to increase the refinery's rated capacity from the current 900,000 tons a year to 2,000,000 tons a year, following a previous expansion from an initial rated capacity of 600,000 tons a year.

The next one to which I refer is the Gunpowder copper project. Its location is Gunpowder township, about 85 miles north of Mt. Isa. The Mammoth mine is two miles from Gunpowder; Mt. Oxide mine is 20 miles from Gunpowder. The object is to mine copper ore and produce copper concentrate for export to Japan under a \$200,000,000 contract spread over 10 years, and to provide Gunpowder township with paved roads, shopping blocks, administrative buildings and other facilities. It is aimed to increase its population to 5,000. They will be good Country-Liberal supporters for sure.

I know that this narration may be getting monotonous, but it is about time that somebody said something about the great mineral wealth of Queensland. This State has gone through one of the worst droughts ever, and its economy would certainly have been much more adversely affected but for this great mineral development. As a man concerned with primary industry, I know what effect the drought has had on the State's economy. It has, however, been minimised because of mineral development, and these are things that I am proud to talk about when discussing the Estimates of the Mines Department.

The Blackwater coal project is the last to which I wish to refer. The location is the South Blackwater mine, 25 miles south of Blackwater, which is 115 miles west of Rockhampton. The object is to export 21,000,000 tons of coking coal worth \$252,000,000 to Japan over 15 years, with an option to extend the contract for five more years at a rate of 1,000,000 tons a year. The aim is to employ 340 people. One hears much talk of decentralisation. Every one of the projects to which I have referred in the last few minutes involves a settlement of 300, 400 or 500 people. If that is not decentralisation, I should like hon. members opposite to tell me what it is.

I have said enough, in the short period available to hon. members in this debate, to indicate my thoughts on the mineral wealth of the State of Queensland. The only other State in Australia that comes anywhere near it is Western Australia. I congratulate the Under Secretary for Mines and his officers on the wonderful job they are doing in making it possible for the State to receive an income that balances its payments. Possibly it is the only Australian State to do so. The Government has been able to use to advantage the State's great mineral wealth at a time when Queensland has been beset by the worst drought in its history.

Although I should like to spend much more time on the report of the Department of Mines, I shall conclude my remarks on it by saying how pleased I was to read in the newspapers this morning that there is to be no mining at Cooloola. Many people do not agree with the decision, but it is my democratic right to say that I think Cabinet has made the correct decision.

I am sure that all hon. members have perused the excellent report of the Commissioner of Main Roads. The references in that report to the varied projects that the department has in mind and the photographs of bridge and road construction make one aware of the tremendous amount of work being done by the department throughout the State. A good arterial road system is needed urgently, and I commend the department for the work it is doing in my electorate. I also commend the Commissioner on the presentation of his report.

The Gold Coast is developing to such an extent that I ask the Minister to consider setting up a divisional office of the Main Roads Department on the Gold Coast. I know that officers of the department visit the area many times during the year, but I am sure that the Minister in charge of Police would agree that officers of his department now have a great deal of work to do on the Gold Coast in connection with the registration of vehicles.

I have asked the Minister for Education to have a school built on the Isle of Capri. If that is done, the Main Roads Department could have an excellent block of land in the heart of Surfers Paradise, near the school, on which to set up a Gold Coast office. Similar action has been taken in other parts of the State. Much work is being done by the department at present; much more work will be done in the Gold Coast area during the next 15 or 20 years. If an office was set up at Surfers Paradise, I am sure that the Minister would not have any difficulty in finding officers who would accept the opportunity of being transferred to and residing on the Gold Coast.

I suggest to the Minister for Main Roads that an approach could be made to the Commonwealth Government for assistance to have the Gorge Road from Canungra sealed. The Commissioner of Main Roads is sitting in the lobby, and I recall quite vividly when, during my period as chairman of the Albert Shire, he and I walked through the gorge with the late Jim Sharpe, who was chairman of the Beaudesert Shire Council, to try to find a track. Now, after a number of years, there is a fairly well-graded gravel road through the gorge, and it would be a wonderful boon to the Gold Coast and its hinterland if that road were sealed.

I know that large sums of money are required for the construction of highways and freeways, and undoubtedly that expenditure is having some effect on the amount of money available for work on secondary roads and roads in country areas. However, I point out that the people who are using the gravel road through the gorge are asking, "When will the road be sealed?" The Canungra jungle training camp is in the area, and I think the Army would admit that the roads are detrimentally affected by its vehicles travelling over them. Therefore, I should like the Main Roads Department to make representations to the appropriate Commonwealth department—possibly it would be the Department of the Interior—for the surfacing of the road through the gorge. Canungra is only 20 miles from Southport via Gorge Road. It is not a steep road, by any stretch of the imagination. The grade and alignment are good. I have been trying for a long time to have it sealed and I should like to see some real progress in this work. My colleague the hon. member for Albert, who also represents part of the Canungra area, will support me in my representations.

I make a further appeal to the Minister and the Commissioner for Main Roads to give serious consideration to completing a six-mile section of the inland road through the Albert Shire, from Nerang to one mile south of Mudgeeraba. The completion of this section would provide the best value for money spent in my area, as it would cut out the use of Gold Coast City roads by heavy trucks from New South Wales. An origin and destination survey was conducted on the Gold Coast and apparently at the time the conclusion was that it would be necessary to construct a four-lane highway from Coolangatta through the Gold Coast. The Commissioner knows all about this six-mile section. He has discussed the matter with me, the late Ernie Evans, and my predecessor Eric Gaven. On one occasion we all met in Nerang and agreed that the sealing of this section would be by far the best way to develop the area. I again appeal to the Minister and the Commissioner to consider allocating more funds to the Albert Shire to enable it to be sealed. They can take for granted that as far as I am concerned—and I should know because the people have told me what they think about it—this would be the best thing the Main Roads Department could do in my electorate.

I have here a brochure that has been circulated in my electorate, referring to Gold Coast freeways. It is headed "Land Requirements—Gold Coast Freeway—Government Road to Nerang River". I think it is a step in the right direction. It was distributed to people whose land could possibly be resumed for freeway purposes. The problem, of course, is that these roads will not be built for 10 or 15 years and one can readily understand the tremendous traffic problems that will arise in the Gold Coast area in that time unless serious consideration is given to sealing the six-mile section to which I have referred.

I have made numbers of approaches to the Minister and the Commissioner on behalf of constituents who are greatly concerned about the absence of zebra crossings and pedestrian traffic lights on the 20-mile section of highway running through the Gold Coast city from Labrador to the New South Wales border. People are very worried when their children have to cross the highway on their way to school. They are exposed to extreme danger. Elderly people are constantly in danger when crossing this highway because there are not nearly enough zebra crossings. How could we have too many zebra crossings or sets of lights on a highway such as this? I should like the Commissioner to do his utmost to provide some relief in this regard. People complain to me about heavy trucks that rumble up and down this highway and crack the foundations of their homes—and they can prove it. In this area particularly homes are subject to this type of damage, because the foundations are in sand.

These are very real problems, and I should like the Commissioner to give them serious consideration, particularly the installation of more pedestrian traffic lights and zebra crossings, to alleviate the danger to pedestrians. There is a zebra crossing in front of the Miami Hotel but the road is so wide at this point that it is virtually impossible for anyone to cross it without taking the risk of being knocked down. Some sort of pedestrian safety island should be built in the middle of this road before a tragedy occurs and someone is killed. I should say that I have received at least 10 phone calls on this matter alone.

Mr. Davis: Is this the first time you have made representations about it?

Mr. HINZE: I have not heard the hon. member make representations on behalf of anyone since he has been here.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HANLON (Baroona) (12.15 p.m.): In this debate I had intended to devote my remarks to the Mines Department, but, in view of the Minister's very unsatisfactory answer this morning to my question about the delay in the installation of traffic signalisation at the intersection of Kelvin Grove Road and Prospect and L'Estrange Terraces and in fairness to my constituents and the residents of the Ashgrove and Brisbane electorates, I feel obliged to raise that matter. Those people, as well as motorists who live in outer suburbs and use Kelvin Grove Road extensively, are fed up to the back teeth with the delays and buck-passing that have occurred.

The best way of recording the matter in "Hansard" is to give a chronological summary of action taken relative to the installation of traffic lights at that intersection. This summary has been prepared by the Kelvin Grove State Primary School Parents and Citizens' Association, which, naturally, is interested in the matter because the school is located immediately adjacent to the pedestrian crossing involved.

The summary is as follows:—

7 September, 1962.—A letter was written to the Traffic Engineer stressing the need for pedestrian-activated traffic lights. No reply was received, which unfortunately is often the case in this matter. At that time the matter was under the control of the Department of Labour and Industry.

25 March, 1963.—A further letter was written, pointing out that a student had been struck by a vehicle and injured.

22 April, 1963.—A letter was received from the Traffic Engineer's Office saying that lights had been considered, and then making various excuses and misquoting facts relative to accidents. The letter concluded by saying that the lights would have to wait until consideration was given to the whole of the Kelvin Grove-Enoggera Road arterial road.

27 May, 1963.—A letter was written to the Traffic Engineer's Office deploring the grossly negative approach to the problem. Again no reply was received.

30 May, 1963.—Following my representations to the Minister for Labour and Industry, it was advised that the matter had been referred to the Traffic Commission.

17 June, 1963.—I wrote to the head-master of the Kelvin Grove State School pointing out my concern at the absence of lights at the subject crossing. I enclosed a copy of Mr. Dewar's letter.

6 August, 1963.—A letter was written by the Minister for Labour and Industry to me, saying that on the recommendation of the Traffic Commission the Minister had approved that this signalisation be given the highest priority. As long ago as August, 1963, the matter was to be given the highest priority.

30 August, 1963.—The p. and c. association requested the temporary relocation of the pedestrian crossing, pending installation of the signals. Again no reply was received.

11 December, 1963.—The Minister for Mines and Main Roads, the late Mr. Evans, advised me that he had approved for inclusion in the 1963-64 financial year a programme for the installation of traffic lights.

12 December, 1963.—I wrote to the head-master, enclosing a copy of the Minister's letter.

3 August, 1964.—A reminder was sent by the p. and c. association to the Traffic Engineer's Office, and once again no reply was received.

13 August, 1964.—I advised the head-master that I had again taken the matter up with the Minister, and intended to raise the matter in Parliament.

3 September, 1964.—I raised the matter in the Address-in-Reply debate.

21 September, 1964.—The Minister advised me that the Traffic Engineer expected to commence work on the detailed design early in the New Year, and that on receipt of an estimate on costs he would be in a position to give it further consideration for implementation early in the 1965-66 financial year.

22 September, 1965.—I wrote to the head-master enclosing a copy of the Minister's letter, and expressed my disappointment at the fact that more positive action had not been taken.

At about that time traffic responsibilities were passed over to the Brisbane City Council. In view of the widespread frustration and resentment among the residents in my electorate at the Government's lethargy in dealing with the problem, I sought an assurance from the Minister for Main Roads, Mr. Camm, that the local residents would not have to start all over again from scratch with

the council and be forced to go through the tortuous process again of trying to have the project implemented. The Minister gave me that assurance. In volume 240 of "Hansard", at p. 3294, he is recorded as saying—

"Transitional projects will be pushed ahead and the projects on hand when the change occurs will be completed. Anything that has been started will be completed."

I then directed the attention of my aldermanic colleague, Alderman Marshall, to the situation, and he proceeded to press in the city council for the expedition of the project. Once again I took the matter up with the Minister, Mr. Camm, and he wrote to me on 22 November, 1965, saying, *inter alia*—

"As you will recall, this project is being regarded as a transitional undertaking."

In 1970 it is still a transitional undertaking, but it is back with the Main Roads Department.

Mr. Camm: It has been with the council for five years.

Mr. HANLON: The Minister says that the council has had it for five years. I am interested in getting the job done. I do not care whether the council or the Main Roads Department is responsible for delaying the project.

I was rather staggered this morning to find that the Minister, in answer to my question, still could not give me a definite date for the release of this work. I understood from my aldermanic colleague in the Brisbane City Council that the council had included it in its budget for this financial year. That was when it was a council responsibility, before the Main Roads Department made the declaration relative to Samford Road, which brought the department back into the picture.

On 22 November, 1965, the Minister wrote in these terms—

"This project is being regarded as a transitional undertaking and will be financed from funds to be made available by the Main Roads Department. Upon receipt of the Council's design and estimate, a design of the traffic signals will be put in hand by the Main Roads Department."

In April, 1966, we still had not got anywhere, so I took the matter up again with the Minister, pointing out that he had assured me that this was a transitional project and that although the responsibility had passed to the council his department would follow it through in accordance with the undertaking he had given me.

On 19 April, 1966, the Minister wrote to me in these terms—

"Further to my letter of 13th April re the Kelvin Grove, L'Estrange Terrace, School Street and Prospect Terrace intersection, I have to advise that there is

no need for reference of the designed works at this point to the Department of Main Roads.

"With the amendment of the Traffic Acts which placed the responsibility for traffic works on roads, other than main roads, with the Local Authority, the design prepared by Department of Main Roads engineers was sent to Brisbane City Council.

"The Town Clerk has been advised verbally that an amount of \$40,000 in loan funds is being held to cover the cost of the work. In addition to these funds the parkatarea parking has been transferred to the Council and they have been paid a first instalment of \$60,000 from the new Traffic Engineering Trust Fund. They have been promised an equal amount later in the financial year.

"The carrying out of the work you ask for is therefore a matter for Brisbane City and I am unable to do anything to expedite the work."

That was the position in April, 1966, relative to a project which in 1963 the Minister in charge of traffic, Mr. Dewar, had given the highest priority, and which in 1964 the late Mr. Evans had directed to be expedited and included in the programme for that financial year.

In 1966 the Minister said that he had made the funds available to the council to get the project under way, and accordingly it was "a matter for Brisbane City". I accepted that in 1966, and to some extent—not through any particular desire—I even defended the Government's position. I criticised the Government for the delay between 1962 and 1965, but I pointed out—and quoted this letter repeatedly—to the Brisbane City Council that this was the situation as advised by the Minister for Main Roads in April, 1966.

In the meantime Alderman Marshall, my late colleague and friend till 1967, continually hammered the Brisbane City Council to get this project under way. His successor, my present colleague Alderman Charlie Rowland, has been pushing the council at every opportunity to get it under way. Some problems have arisen with site acquisitions and other matters associated with the work, and delays have been caused by the relocation of public utilities. All these things caused delays, but on 23 March, 1967, I received this letter from the then Town Clerk, Mr. Slaughter—

"Following on representations made on your behalf by the Chairman of the Health Committee, Alderman C. J. Greenfield, I am pleased to inform you that the proposed traffic signals and channelisation at the above intersection have now been approved, and it is proposed to proceed with this work at an early date."

However, the Minister pointed out this morning—

"Now, with the declaration of Samford Sub-Arterial to Prospect Terrace, the Main Roads Department has a direct responsibility. It is unlikely that the Council will be interested in financing roadworks in this location."

I understand from that answer that the Minister now accepts full responsibility for this project. As he is nodding his head, I take it that he does. It is quite clear that the council no longer has any responsibility in the matter. Of course, the Minister might say that the council has had the opportunity for some years to get the project under way.

The Minister's answer continues—

"This work is listed by the Main Roads Department as one requiring early attention but as such has to be considered in relation to the priority of other urgent works and the funds presently available. No firm date can be given for the release of this work."

I think I have been reasonable in this matter. I have described the situation since 1962 and now, in 1970, after this matter has repeatedly been given high priority, the Minister says that the work is listed by the Main Roads Department as requiring early attention. What use is that? It is not worth a crumplet!

This matter affects the people not only in my area but also in the areas represented by the hon. member for Brisbane and the Minister for Health. A serious traffic situation exists at this intersection. In answer to me this morning, the Minister said that there have been two pedestrian fatalities there since 1965. Other people have been injured. School-children have been injured when policemen have not been supervising the crossing. I suggested to the Minister that the police feared for their own safety when manning the marked crossing there. The Minister said that his inquiries did not substantiate this. I shall not mention any names in this regard, but I can assure the Minister that I have been told this by policemen who have manned this crossing. They say that it is not a very happy position to be in because the crossing is at the top of a rise in the road, which has several lanes, and because traffic approaches the crossing at a fast speed. If policemen on the crossing are scared, what chance have children and pedestrians of getting across the road? They take their lives in their hands to do so.

Mr. Camm: I would not reflect on the bravery of members of the Police Force.

Mr. HANLON: I am not. I am saying that policemen have told me that they feel they are in danger of being hit, even though they are directing the traffic, because the traffic approaches so quickly.

Mr. Davis: It is a five-way intersection.

Mr. HANLON: It is. As I described it in my question this morning, it is virtually a little Normanby. There are two major schools there, namely, the Kelvin Grove Primary School and the Kelvin Grove High School. Many hundreds of students attend night classes at the latter school, and a couple of weeks ago I attended its speech night. I am sure that the Minister for Health would agree with me that it was a real test of endurance to get a vehicle through the intersection, and that it would have been almost impossible for pedestrians to get across the road. Most pedestrians probably walked several blocks away to cross the road rather than cross it there.

Last week-end a young university student was injured when her car got out of control going down the long hill on the outbound side of this crossing. Traffic signals would slow traffic down before making the run down that notoriously bad traffic hazard. It has been radar-controlled extensively in an effort to restrict speeding.

I appeal to the Minister to review this matter and not give us this old malarkey about its being given high priority or early attention. He refuses to give any firm date for the release of this work.

Yesterday we read that the Premier had told his Ministers to get cracking. I hope they will not take seven or eight years to get cracking on whatever they are doing. I hope it will not take seven or eight years before we get final declarations on Cooloola, which the Premier has indicated are coming.

Mr. Camm: Be fair. I was in office for only two weeks when the authority was passed over to the Brisbane City Council. This is the first time since then that it has come under the Main Roads Department.

Mr. HANLON: I accept that, and I also accept that there is a Labour administration in the Brisbane City Council. However, it has now come back to the Main Roads Department, and the Minister is not able to state any firm date for the release of the work. Unless the Minister can assure me that this project will be completed this year, I shall have to tell the people out there that they will again get the run around.

This is not a political matter or something that concerns only my electorate, and it has caused much resentment and dismay among people in the area concerned. They have been very patient with the Government as well as the Brisbane City Council. When my present colleague in the Brisbane City Council, Alderman Rowland, assumed office in 1967, he suggested to the parents and citizens' association of the Kelvin Grove State School that they bring the urgency of the matter to the notice of the council by the presentation of a petition. Within a week they were able to place before the Town Clerk a petition containing 6,000

signatures. That was a remarkable response, not only in the number who were prepared to do the physical work of collecting signatures but also in the number who were prepared to sign the petition.

I request that the Minister give instructions to have this work carried out expeditiously. Whether delays are being caused by consideration of future developments, such as lead-up roads, under the Wilbur Smith proposals, I do not know.

In conclusion, I suggest that it might well be appropriate for the Minister to announce a time-table of events likely to take place on the north side in implementing the Wilbur Smith proposals. It is obvious that much groundwork, such as test boring and surveying, has to be done before final planning decisions can be made. People in my area, particularly at the Normanby, Petrie Terrace and Paddington, see extensive surveying and test-boring being carried out by the Main Roads Department, and there is consequently a good deal of unrest among some householders about what the future holds for them.

I hope that the Minister will give the people as much notice as possible of his department's intentions. Although I realise that it is not desirable to make available information from which some people can take advantage by means of real-estate transactions, there is nevertheless much confusion in the areas in which future road works are planned. Some estate agents are endeavouring to get people to sell their properties by telling them that roads will be going through them, and others are selling properties to unsuspecting people who do not realise what the transactions might involve.

The works presently being carried out on the south side of the city have given the Main Roads Department experience in dealing with this type of difficult situation. The hon. member for Norman has dealt extensively with the problems of people in his area.

Mr. Bromley: I shall be doing so again today, too.

Mr. HANLON: I am pleased to hear that. I have listened with interest to the hon. member and to other members, including you, Mr. Hooper, who have spoken of the upsets suffered by people in their areas, including those whose properties have not been resumed. That experience will undoubtedly be of assistance to the department. I am not attempting to denigrate the department, or its efforts in this matter. Obviously its experience will assist it to avoid some of the problems that have arisen on the south side of the city. Quite clearly this type of work cannot be done without causing some upsets and inconvenience for those who are obliged to find other properties. However, I appeal to the Minister to make available now as much information as it is possible to give, so that the members for

the areas concerned will be fully informed. After all, they receive much of the brunt of the attack by those who feel that they are adversely affected by the department's activities. I think it is in the interests of the department and the community for the local members to work in with the department. If they are not informed, they can hardly be expected to keep the public in touch with what is planned and assist people in their negotiations with the department.

I leave my comments on that note, and trust that in his reply the Minister will have time to cover the points I have raised.

Mr. NEWBERRY (Mirani) (12.35 p.m.): It gives me a great deal of pleasure to participate in the debate on the Estimates for the Departments of Main Roads and Mines and to congratulate the Minister for his excellent administration of these two very important departments.

Good main roads affect almost everyone, so the Main Roads Department has always been one of the most important departments in the State. There is no doubt that the people of Queensland have been very fortunate in the development of main roads in the past 10 or 15 years.

Until about 10 years ago, the Department of Mines was only a minor department. Of course, that has now changed and the department is contributing greatly to the wealth and development of the State.

Before saying anything further, I take this opportunity of complimenting Mr. Harry Lowe, the Commissioner of Main Roads, and Mr. Kevin Healy, the Under Secretary for Mines, on their excellent administration of their respective departments. I cannot overlook, either, the part being played by the assistant commissioners in the construction and maintenance of main roads throughout Queensland. When the late Ernest Evans was Minister for Main Roads, divisions were created covering the whole State, and I am sure hon. members will agree that the decision then taken has been of great benefit to the people of Queensland. I thank Mr. Hansen, Mr. Paul O'Keefe and Mr. Doug Morton for their wonderful work, and I pay a particular tribute to Mr. Doug Wild, the local district engineer, who has a very big job to do, for the way in which he is carrying out his duties.

The report of the Commissioner of Main Roads contains some very interesting information. For example, I note that 772 miles of road were brought up to bitumen standard in the last 12 months, and that, in addition, 65 new bridges were built. That represents a little over one bridge every week, which I think is an excellent result. I hope that the department will be able to maintain and, if possible, increase that rate of construction, but I am well aware that a considerable amount of money is required for that purpose.

Mr. Lee: There were some very costly sections.

Mr. NEWBERRY: There is no doubt, as the hon. member for Yeronga said, that there were some very costly sections in those 772 miles, and the excellent manner in which they have been constructed is partly responsible for the high cost. It costs a great deal of money to build good and safe roads.

It was interesting to read in the report the number of men and women employed by the Main Roads Department. The department certainly is playing its part in providing employment for Queenslanders. The field staff averaged 3,251 men, 1,472 of whom were employed on maintenance work. In the past 12 months, 395 schemes, estimated to cost about \$39,000,000, were released. That is a great deal of money, and I congratulate the department on its expenditure on roads. Of course, one has only to drive through Queensland to realise how much money has been spent in the past few years on upgrading bitumen roads.

Tremendous development has taken place and great improvements have been made in road construction in the Mackay district. Until about 1957, one could not leave Mackay on a bitumen road. The position has now changed considerably and one can travel out of Mackay in any direction on a bitumen road. Until a few years ago, the Proserpine Road north of Mackay, although bituminised, had some very winding sections and in places was also very narrow. The bends have now been taken out of this road and it has been widened, thus improving safety for those driving on it.

It is also very interesting to note the work that has been done on the northern outlets from Mackay, particularly on the Forgan Bridge. At the moment, considerable sums of money are being spent in this area in relieving traffic congestion on the route out of Mackay via the Forgan Bridge. Large sums have also been spent on the Mackay Harbour Road, much of it on improving bridges. Frequent complaints have been made about congestion in this area but I know that the Minister has the position well under control. Improvements have been effected to the Barnes Creek Bridge and I know that plans have been prepared for widening the Forgan Bridge on the down-stream side for traffic and on the top side for pedestrians.

For many years there were some very narrow sections on the Eungella Road and some sections were unsealed. The shortcut section via the township of Walkerton has just been completed, and no doubt this will not only eliminate the hazards caused by large transports driving through the Walkerton area but will also shorten the distance for the cartage of sugar. At the moment quite a lot of developmental work is proceeding on this road adjacent to Eungella, but I should like to renew my plea that something be done about the very bad corner at the

bottom of the Eungella Range known as Elephant Grass Corner. I inspected this corner in company with engineers from the Main Roads Department. The residents of Eungella feel that something should be done in the near future to eliminate this problem. I do not think the work would be extensive. The bad turn could be taken out. Although this would mean a slight increase in the grade, I feel that it would have very little effect on modern vehicles.

Another bad corner, near the top of the Eungella Range, is known as Windy Corner. I hope that the Main Roads Department will expedite the elimination of this corner also. This could be done by either widening the corner or providing a single-track lane through it for one-way traffic.

Across the range, there is need for bitumen sealing on the Bull Ring or Circle Road in the Crediton area. I say this because of the possible introduction of bulk milk cartage from that area. With the road unsealed as it is today, bulk milk carrying would be most difficult. I hope that the Minister will look into the matter and expedite forward planning of this work.

I turn now to the Peak Downs Highway, which runs through Walkerston, Eton and Nebo to Clermont. Thanks to the Minister and his staff, this road has been gradually improved over the last few years and is almost completely bituminised to Nebo. I understand that in the next 12 to 18 months the surface will be bituminised right through to Clermont. Of course, the Goonyella project is in this area and this makes more urgent still the completion to bitumen standard and the widening of the road.

In recent years a tremendous amount of money has been spent on the inland road to Rockhampton, but I ask the Minister to expedite the widening of that road to eliminate many of the hazards that face motorists. Since the coastal road was gazetted as a highway by the late Ernest Evans work has been carried out continually to improve it, although a good deal remains to be done. However, the Broadsound Shire Council and I realise that a large sum has been spent on the development of the back road in that portion of the Mirani Electorate and that we cannot have it both ways.

The tremendous development that has occurred in North Queensland in recent years has brought with it a great increase in the volume of traffic. Ten years ago cattle could safely be allowed to wander across the highway near my property unattended but at the present time, with as many as 1,700 to 2,000 vehicles using that road each day, a herd needs at least two attendants to get it across in safety. In the St. Lawrence area the highway crosses Cattle Creek, Middle Creek and Clairview Creek, and the construction of bridges over those creeks should be undertaken in the near future.

Mr. Thackeray: And the road from St. Lawrence to Ogmore.

Mr. NEWBERRY: I do not know whether the road would go to Ogmore—it is not in my electorate—but I understand it will go close to that town.

In the western portion of my electorate the brigalow lands scheme has brought about tremendous development. To keep pace with it, the Government is developing the roads in the area, and the graziers are very pleased with what has been done for them to date.

Before concluding I would like to revert to mining. As hon. members are aware, the Goonyella project is in my electorate. There is no doubt that that project will bring a great amount of wealth to the Mackay region. At the present time 1,900 men are employed on the project, and, contrary to the A.L.P.'s claims that the project would do very little to create employment in Mackay, all business concerns in the Mackay district are benefiting tremendously from the Goonyella project. Wages alone amount to approximately \$250,000 a week. If that is not a large sum of money, I do not know what is. The average weekly pay to employees engaged on the project is \$125. The development that is taking place is staggering. It is hoped that by the end of March next year the railway line will be laid, and it is expected that the carriage of coal to Hay Point will commence before the scheduled date.

I understand that within seven years Hay Point will become possibly the largest coal-export port in Australia. The people of Mackay and I are very proud of the development that is taking place in this project.

I point out that the Goonyella project is only the first of a long line of developments that will take place in Central Queensland. When the Goonyella mine is in production, it and those at Moura, Blackwater and Blackwater South will have a demand for electric power of 65 mW, and I understand that by 1980 the demand for power in the Bowen basin will be in the vicinity of 275 mW. That is a good indicator of the potential of the Bowen basin and the estimated growth in production. The Government did the right thing in adopting the Goonyella coal export project. The people of Mackay will never regret the decision. They are very happy to have the project in the area.

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane) (12.51 p.m.): In taking part in the debate on these Estimates, I first wish to agree with everything that the member for Barooona said about the need for traffic lights in the vicinity of the Kelvin Grove shopping centre and the Kelvin Grove State School. As he said, Alderman Rowland has been particularly active in this matter. I have attended functions at both the primary and the high schools, and the worry of parents about the need for traffic lights at this intersection is indeed great.

Whose responsibility is it? As the member for Baroona said, on the Minister's answer this morning the responsibility rests with the Main Roads Department. I hope we have the Minister's assurance that the work will be implemented.

I have a few comments to make about a main road that is far removed from my electorate. In June of this year I was invited to attend a meeting of transport operators consisting of two of the main tourist-coach lines in this State, half a dozen carrying firms; and four owner-drivers who each had one or two trucks in operation. Their main worry concerned the 200-mile stretch of road between Winton and Cloncurry, and they said they were fed up with the failure of the Main Roads Department to improve it. Some of their comments about the Premier, the Minister for Main Roads, and the Minister for Transport really had to be heard—

A Government Member: Did they burn your ears?

Mr. DAVIS: My ears were burning when I heard some of the comments about the Minister for Main Roads. I assure him that I came to his defence.

Mr. Camm interjected

Mr. DAVIS: I came to the Minister's defence. If he will listen, I will tell him what happened. I said, "I will give an instance of a road that is used tremendously by the people of Brisbane, namely, the road to the Gold Coast. Five years ago, when the Government pulled up the railway line to the Gold Coast, the Government said that in a short time there would be a double highway to replace it. That is over five years ago, but I would not go down to the Gold Coast on a Sunday at present because of the bottle-necks on the road. The Government has not lived up to its promise. It has not even built the bridges. They might be built in another two years."

Government Members interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: I defended the Minister. I came to his rescue.

All the transport operators were very bitter in their comments about the department. They were quite fair when it is remembered that operators like Pioneer Tours and Redline coaches have air-conditioned buses on the Winton-Cloncurry route worth over \$78,000 each. That is a lot of money, and the operators maintain that the units are being sacrificed every time they travel on this road. The dust gets into the units. My concern is that obviously the people who are paying for all this are those who patronise the tourist coaches. The tourist industry is being assisted by the coach companies, who could be accepting the statement of the Minister for Tourism a couple of years ago that the dirty old road is part of the lure of the Outback.

Mr. Lee: What area are you talking about?

Mr. DAVIS: If the hon. member listened, he would know. I am talking about the 200-mile section between Winton and Cloncurry, and if hon. members like the hon. member for Yeronga are interested they would know that this is one of the main supply routes between Brisbane and Darwin.

Mr. Lee: How the department built a few of the roads out there, I wouldn't know.

Mr. DAVIS: Did the hon. member build this road?

Mr. Lee: Yes.

Mr. DAVIS: Does his construction company know that it is falling to bits?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There are far too many irrelevant interjections.

Mr. DAVIS: Every operator complains that his cost per trip over this section of road increases every week. Many road hauliers state that Brisbane would lose nearly all its Darwin trade if there was a direct road from Adelaide to Darwin, because that would be a better way to send goods by road.

Mr. Camm: It would be a long way shorter, too.

Mr. DAVIS: I am concerned about this, and that is why I attended the meeting.

I have done a number of trips into the country, and three or four weeks ago I ventured out into the area represented by my very good friend the hon. member for Warrego. During this debate he mentioned the section between Cunnamulla and Charleville. This is another example of a stock route being called a main road. The road hauliers in towns in that part of the State—I came into contact with many of them before I entered Parliament—are vexed because they are paying road maintenance tax but are running over what are little more than tracks. When it is analysed, that is pretty fair comment. Why should they pay road maintenance tax when there are no roads? As a matter of fact, they claim that the Minister should be charged with false pretences for collecting maintenance when there is no maintenance and main roads tax when there are no main roads.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Who would say a thing like that?

Mr. DAVIS: I am speaking about the roads I have been on. If the hon. member does not want to listen to the truth, he does not have to.

Mr. Kaus: We know it. We have been on that road.

Mr. DAVIS: Does the hon. member approve of it? Does he reckon that the road between Cunnamulla and Charleville is a good road?

Mr. Bromley: He wouldn't know where it is.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: There you are, Mr. Hooper. He said it is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIS: The Minister would do well to relieve the burden placed on country hauliers by requiring them to pay only half the rate of tax when they are driving on dirt roads, or completely abolishing the maintenance tax on some roads.

I again bring to the Minister's notice what I consider to be one of the most unjust laws in this State. I refer to the provision that holds the driver responsible for overloading. I notice that the hon. member for Yeronga is always very interested in this subject.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Are you going to write your speech during the lunch recess?

Mr. DAVIS: No. I prefer listening to the hon. member for Windsor.

About five years ago I was a member of a Transport Workers' Union deputation to the Minister on this matter.

Mr. Lee: At least you can travel where you want to go now. It is not like it was when your crowd were in office.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Brisbane is entitled to some decorum when he is making a speech.

Mr. DAVIS: I cannot accept much from the hon. member for Yeronga. He has been an employer of truck-drivers for a long time and union records show what a shocking employer he is. He would be in favour of drivers being fined for overloading. Let us not have any more from him. If he has anything to say on these matters, let him get up and say it. He is in favour of drivers being fined for overloading. I maintain that the great majority of members have been approached at various times by drivers who have been summonsed for overloading breaches.

[Sitting suspended from 1.1 to 2.15 p.m.]

Mr. DAVIS: Before the luncheon recess I was discussing the gaoling of truck-drivers by the Minister for Main Roads. The Minister has frequently been asked by various members the number of drivers who have been gaoled for overloading offences. In fact, they are gaoled not for overloading offences but for the non-payment of fines imposed for such offences.

I, and I am sure many other members, have been in contact with many drivers who have been fined for overloading offences. Unfortunately, in this type of offence the amount of the fine imposed increases with the number of offences committed. Recently I came in contact with a person who had just been released from Brisbane Prison after serving a term for failing to pay a fine imposed for an overloading offence, and in his case the

fine amounted to about \$200. These fines are incurred whilst men are driving for firms whose profits they have been helping to make. When such firms are approached by drivers who have been fined, in the great majority of cases the fines are paid by the companies. However, there are always those occasions when a company says, "We have had enough of your overloading offences," and, even though the driver was not necessarily at fault, he has been left carrying the baby, so to speak, and, if he does not pay the fine, the only thing left for him is to serve time in one of the "Bastilles" throughout the State.

I have said before, and I now repeat, that if what is happening now is to continue, there will be much industrial unrest in the transport industry as no union worth its salt will see its members thrown into prison. They are not going to see the family life and finances of their members ruined by having to pay fines as a result of faults that are not necessarily theirs. The Government should amend the law and place the responsibility for overloading on the transport companies. If such responsibility were placed squarely on the owner, the Committee can rest assured that he would be the best policeman in the land. If the owner had to pay fines for overloading breaches, he would not employ drivers who continually overloaded deliberately.

It is not a matter of the Minister's not knowing about this injustice. He has known from the time he assumed his present portfolio how truck-drivers throughout the State feel about this unjust law. I ask the Minister to look into the matter, and to see that a more lenient approach is adopted.

I have mentioned in this Chamber in earlier debates cases of which I have personal knowledge involving drivers and employers. It is amazing how many firms will pay overloading fines until they reach a certain level, and that, of course, in many instances makes a driver not only unprofitable to a company but virtually unemployable. I asked the personnel officer of one of the biggest trucking companies in Australia, "If you were interviewing two people and one of them had a number of fines for overloading offences and the other had none, which would you employ?" He said, "I have to admit that I would employ the person who did not have any fines for overloading offences." So, although fines for overloading do not affect a driver's licence, they do affect his chances of employment.

I implore the Minister to again consider this question and see whether it is possible to introduce a provision similar to that contained in the New Zealand regulations, which puts the responsibility for overloading onto the owner. It says—

"To operate means to use or drive, or cause to permit to be used or driven, or permit to be on any road, whether the person operating is present in person or not."

In my opinion, the burden ought to be lifted from the drivers and placed on the shoulders of those who should rightfully bear it.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the hon. member for Burdekin, I shall repeat to the Committee what I said when the Estimates first came up for debate, because some hon. members were not present on that occasion. I did not call the hon. member for Brisbane to order, as he may not know the procedure adopted when Estimates are being discussed. This is what I said—

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

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

Mr. BIRD (Burdekin) (2.23 p.m.): I am very pleased to have the opportunity of speaking on the Estimates for the Department of Mines and the Main Roads Department. Although the Estimates for the two departments are being debated together, I shall probably confine most of my remarks to main roads. Progress in this State has reached an all-time high in many fields, but development and improvements in the field of main roads can be seen clearly by the public.

My congratulations go to the present Minister for Mines and Main Roads, Mr. Camm, and to the former Minister, the late Mr. Ernie Evans, together with the Commissioner of Main Roads, Mr. Lowe, the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Hansen, the Chief Engineer, Mr. Andrews, and other members of the Main Roads Department, for the wonderful effort that has been made in the past 12 or 13 years to improve main roads in Queensland. My sympathies go to the hon. member for Port Curtis, who had to lead for the A.L.P. in the debate on these Estimates. He must have had to speak with his tongue in his cheek because, as I said earlier, the public can see the great progress that has been made in this direction. The hon. member would have found great difficulty, no matter how deeply involved in the debate he became, in hoodwinking the public on this issue.

Mr. Hinze interjected.

Mr. Casey interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member for Mackay and the hon. member for South Coast want to have a conversation I think they should do so in another place.

Mr. BIRD: One has only to drive north from Brisbane to Mossman or through many areas in the West to realise what has been achieved by the Main Roads Department during the last decade. Earlier, in the Address-in-Reply debate, I mentioned the condition of roads in Queensland when this Government took office only 13 years ago and the remarkable achievements since that time. I can remember driving from Mt. Isa to Brisbane in 1955, a trip that in those days could only be regarded as a major undertaking. In those days, of course, most of the roads in this State were horror stretches. Today the position is vastly improved and one can hardly believe that in a large State such as Queensland, with low-density population, so much could have been achieved. The State today is serviced by many miles of bitumen roads.

A wide bitumen road now runs from Brisbane right through to Cairns and very many of the bridges on it have been upgraded. In years gone by the concept seemed to be to build bridges across creeks and rivers almost at sand level. These are now rapidly being replaced, at no minor cost, throughout the length of the Bruce Highway. I shall mention a few in my electorate. I am sure that other hon. members will mention the bridges and roads in their own areas.

I have already mentioned the fine Ana-branch bridge over the Burdekin River and the Sheep Station Creek bridge, which replaced the last of the narrow bridges on the highway between Ayr and Townsville. Further north, this is becoming rather commonplace. There is now a very fine, high concrete structure across Crystal Creek, and before very long on the western Flinders Highway from Townsville to Charters Towers we will see the opening of the new Macrossan Bridge over the Burdekin River near Charters Towers. I do not think anybody really expected that this major structure across the Burdekin would be completed in such a short time.

It is pointed out that the Labour Government built the bridge over the Burdekin River, but I understand that it sincerely hoped that the officers sent overseas to investigate the building of a bridge of this size on sand foundations would return with a report that it could not be done. Nevertheless, I admit that it was absolutely essential and I take off my hat to the Labour Government for building it. However, when we look at the achievements since then we must appreciate that this Government has done so much more than the Labour Government did during its many years in office. I know that its policy was not to build roads that would attract use by road transport vehicles in competition with the Queensland Railways, particularly in the northern areas. I feel that this policy was wrong. We now have splendid roads on which people can move freely throughout the State, from north

to south and vice versa, and bitumen-sealed roads reaching out in the direction of Mt. Isa. It is absolutely ridiculous to say that better roads mean less business for the railways, because many people do not want to travel by train and a great number of commodities cannot be transported by rail.

It is unfortunate that the bituminising of the Flinders Highway from Townsville to Mt. Isa is not being completed as rapidly as was hoped; however, that is due to the Commonwealth Government's direction as to how the finance that it makes available will be spent within the State. The people in the North are disappointed that the Commonwealth has directed that the greater portion of finance for roads must be spent in the Brisbane metropolitan area, but they hope that when the bulk of roadworks in Brisbane is completed the bituminising of North Queensland roads will be undertaken.

Within the past few years the approaches to the City of Townsville have been improved greatly. The roads have been upgraded and intersection traffic lights have been installed. The main road through Hermit Park leaves nothing to be desired, and the same comment can be made about the road leading north through Garbutt to Ingham.

Earlier I referred to the new bridge across Crystal Creek. In recent newspaper reports I read criticism of the large sweeping bend in the approach to the new bridge. I must admit that I wondered why the approach was constructed in that manner, so I was pleased to read that the Main Roads Department is looking to the future and the time when it will realign the road and eliminate the long bend that presently exists near the turn-off to Mt. Spec. In its planning to improve roads, the department looks not only at the present but also the future. However, I am not going to throw all bouquets; there will be one or two brick-bats, but they will not be as big as the bouquets.

There is a great need to improve the main roads in North Queensland, particularly the one leading out of Townsville to the southwest and passing the Ross River meatworks. It is a substandard road, and I feel that it could be upgraded.

In the appendix dealing with expenditure I noticed that \$518,661 has been spent by the Main Roads Department within the Ayr Shire. As I have said, that shire probably has the best roads in this State. I realise, of course, that that is not due entirely to the efforts of the Main Roads Department. The Ayr Shire Council has also played its part. In the shire a motorist is required only very seldom to drive on a non-bitumen road. However, it is necessary that some money be spent on upgrading the road from Woodhouse Station, over the range to Ravenswood. The condition of that road has deteriorated. In clearing the way for a new power-line, bulldozers have churned up earth and mud, and it is very difficult for a motorist to negotiate that road. I hope an allocation can be made

so that the road can be reformed and improved—perhaps not to bitumen standard but at least so that creek crossings are passable in bad weather—and signposted throughout.

Another road badly in need of repair runs from Mingela to Ravenswood. In the last 12 months \$3,327 was spent on the road. That was paid to the Dalrymple Shire Council for grading and maintenance of the road. However, the department may not be fully aware of the extent of traffic on this road. Ravenswood is a ghost mining town but it attracts quite a number of sightseers every week-end and, in addition, there is an ever-increasing volume of transport traffic bringing cattle out of the area. I do not ask for a fully bituminised road—probably frequent grading is all that is required—but it has some very bad creek crossings. At small cost cement inverts could be provided at creek crossings, which would overcome the problems of local residents when sudden downpours make the creeks absolutely impassable.

Mr. O'Donnell: Every shire council in Queensland has a similar problem.

Mr. BIRD: I do not doubt that. We all have problems, but if we do not bring them to the department's attention it takes much longer to get them rectified.

A month or two ago I wrote to the Minister about the resealing of the Kirk River bridge on this road. The volume of stock-transport traffic has caused complete disintegration of the bitumen surface. It is my firm belief, and that of the people in the area, that if the bitumen surface is not replaced quickly the cost of repairs will be much higher. Planks are becoming loose because of the disintegration of the bitumen surface, and if repairs are delayed the cost will rise considerably.

I congratulate the Minister on the new building constructed for the Department of Main Roads in Brisbane. When a department is doing so much, the least that we can do is to house its officers properly. The gentlemen employed in the department are certainly worthy of the building. I notice in the Estimates that it is proposed to build a new divisional office in Townsville at a cost of about \$600,000. The Townsville officers, too, are worthy of a new building. Those hon. members who have called at the Main Roads Department office in Townsville know how substandard the present office accommodation is. One almost has to be a rabbit to find the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Morton.

His office is in a different building, which has some very narrow passageways. It is heartening to know that the northern division will have a new office building in Townsville in the near future.

I congratulate the Under Secretary for Mines, Mr. Healy, who administers the department with the utmost efficiency. The

people of North Queensland are indeed pleased to note that agreement has been reached between the Government and Metalsex on the Greenvale nickel project. They realise how much it will mean not only to Townsville, but to North Queensland. Those who took the opportunity of inspecting the construction of the Goonyella railway line and of the facilities at Hay Point will agree that these projects mean a terrific amount to the North. The construction of the railway line is providing employment for a large number of men.

It is wonderful to see how the method of constructing railway lines has improved over the years. Unfortunately, we did not see any actual track-laying, but we did see the amount of work involved. At the top of the range we saw where huge slices had been carved out of the hillsides and where deep gorges had been filled to make a gradual incline over the hill. I am sure that we all look forward to having another look at this project when the work nears completion.

We also look forward to the construction of the railway line from Greenvale to somewhere in the vicinity of Townsville.

We in the North are concerned because mechanical harvesting is forcing many cane-cutters out of employment and they may be lost to North Queensland through lack of suitable job opportunities. However, these projects could do a great deal towards creating employment for these persons not only in the construction of the lines and the opening of these mining ventures but also in their continued operation. I wish that more of these tremendous mining ventures were being undertaken in the North. No doubt, as time goes on, many will be.

We are all very pleased to hear that Metals Exploration and the Government have agreed on a figure of \$45,000,000. It is \$5,000,000 less than the \$50,000,000 the Government asked for, but it is substantially higher than the \$28,000,000 originally offered by the company.

Mr. R. E. Moore: That is the minimum.

Mr. BIRD: That is a minimum figure only, and the agreement contains escalation clauses.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BROMLEY (Norman) (2.43 p.m.): While there are many matters of major importance to speak about in this debate I am again forced, by constant complaints and requests that I have received from my constituents, to raise the matter of the inconvenience caused to people by the construction of the South-east Freeway. I have spoken previously about the raw deal received by those whose homes were resumed.

The contractors seem to be adopting a couldn't-care-less attitude towards the residents of the area in question and although I hate to say it, it seems that this attitude has spread to certain people in the Main Roads Department, including site engineers

and those responsible for overseeing the construction of the freeway. In saying this, I am voicing the complaints I have received from people personally, by letter, and by telephone. People do not telephone me just to have a discussion about things in general, nor do they unnecessarily telephone the Minister's department, his office and the site engineer to complain about these things. They truly have a just complaint.

I intend to mention some of the complaints that I have constantly been investigating day and night, including Saturdays and Sundays. Streets are closed off without any regard for residents who may or may not have motor-cars. People are ill, or becoming ill, through the dust menace, which is certainly a hazard to health. Nerves deteriorate because of the constant noise of heavy, speeding trucks pounding the roads. At times those who have called taxis to take them to doctors or hospitals have not been able to enter the taxis at their homes. Instead, they have had to struggle—I use that word advisedly—to the end of their road or street to reach the taxi. Taxi-drivers have complained to me that street signposts have been knocked down, thus making it difficult for them to find their way to the homes of those who have called them. That is quite true; in fact, I was informed that one sign was knocked down and thrown into the back of a truck. The condition of asthma sufferers is becoming worse because of the constant presence of dust in the atmosphere, and they are having to be hospitalised.

Temporary access roads to homes adjacent to the freeway are becoming untrafficable to cars and pedestrians. No-one can be blamed for the recent heavy rains and they were good to see, but they have made it impossible to use some access roads. On two occasions owners complained to me that the front wheels of their cars had dropped into a large drain that had been bulldozed on a temporary road to allow rain water to get away. Each of them had to get a tow truck to lift his vehicle out of the hole in the road. In fact, I was in that area on Sunday and yesterday, and I found it impossible to get my car to the place where I wanted to go; I had to leave it and walk three-quarters of a mile to see a constituent in his home. This area is on the Ipswich Road side of the railway line.

Another person telephoned the Minister's office to complain that a temporary road was untrafficable. I might mention that, through the good graces of the department, I had that road constructed, and I am grateful for its provision. When this person complained to the Minister's office, he was told to ring the site engineer. This he did, only to be told by him that the road was not supposed to be used, anyway, and he would have it fenced off. This means that no-one can get in or out by car. It also means that anyone who wants to post a letter, or go to Ipswich Road to catch public transport, will have to make a detour of about a mile. There is no pedestrian access whatever to Ipswich Road.

In wet weather, mud ruins ladies' shoes and stockings, and men's shoes and trousers. Most of those who complain are pensioners, and they certainly cannot afford to buy new clothes.

Many people have been in touch with me complaining that rain has washed mud and clayey dirt underneath their houses or into their yards. In some instances it was up to 4 inches deep under the houses. I went and saw it. In fact, I spent last week-end and all of the previous two week-ends investigating complaints. They came particularly from the area from O'Keefe Street to Juliette Street, on the eastern portion, where the mud and dirt is running down into the houses close to the freeway. The small holding drains there are completely useless. They have been filled and are not holding back the water or the mud and clay. One old lady of 94 who lives alone has her toilet under the house. She could not use the toilet because she could not shift the mud and dirt under the house. I had to arrange to have it shifted for her. I did not mind doing it, but I resented the fact that these complaints had been ignored.

I wish also to bring to the attention of the Committee what is happening on resumed property off Cornwall Street. Oil has been drained onto the ground from the sumps of various large machines belonging to the contractors. I could say without exaggeration that at least 20 gallons of oil has been poured from those machines and washed into the yards of adjoining houses. Honourable members can imagine what it would do to lawns and gardens. I concede that, through the good graces of Mr. J. M. Muir, of John Holland (Constructions) Pty. Limited, it was cleaned up.

Following complaints, much of the welding and repairing of machines that was going on all night has stopped. However, some welding is still being done at night. It is affecting television reception very badly and, consequently, frightening elderly people.

Many other complaints have been received, but I have enumerated them in this Chamber before and I will not repeat them. Many of the residents in the affected areas realise, as I do, that some inconvenience must be caused in fairly big projects such as this. What we are concerned about is the "brush-off" that people receive when they lodge complaints. Admittedly, some of the complaints that I have lodged on behalf of people have been attended to.

I have here a letter of 23 September, 1970, signed by Mr. J. M. Muir, Queensland branch manager of John Holland (Constructions) Pty. Limited—it was courteous of him to send me a letter—containing information relative to operations by his firm on the South-east Freeway project. The information attached to the letter is marked "Confidential". Goodness knows why, because everybody living in the vicinity knows all the problems and worries that are being experienced. As I said, I have received many

complaints over a long period, and I do not think I am breaking a confidence in quoting from the information because, as I said, everybody knows the difficulties.

There is reference in the information to the dust problem, but before mentioning that I shall read Mr. Muir's letter to me—

"Dear Sir,

"Construction of the new South-east Freeway in Brisbane has recently come under criticism by members of the public, parliamentarians and Brisbane City Council aldermen.

"To assist you in your considerations as representative of that area, I herewith enclose a document containing some pertinent information on behalf of the construction company, John Holland (Constructions) Pty. Ltd.

"I hope that you will read the enclosed with interest and trust that you may find it useful."

I intend to find it useful. I propose to go through some of the items mentioned as having been referred to the company. They mention the dust problem and say that claims have been made that huge clouds of dust have been hanging over the area of Tarragindi through which the company's trucks must travel from the quarry site to the construction site. They talk about Tarragindi, but do not mention the route from Tarragindi, through Greenslopes and Buranda and into the Annerley area—through numerous streets which I have not time to mention in detail. The problem is very bad along the whole of the route. The company says—

"However, it must be pointed out that when one yard of soil is blowing in the wind it looks like 50."

I can assure you, Mr. Ramsden, that it looks like 5,000 yards. It is absolutely shocking; it is making the houses along the route filthy and causing people to be hospitalised.

The document goes on to mention the 300,000 cubic yards of fill being taken from the quarry to the construction site for the project, and says—

"It has 90 truck movements an hour on the road between the quarry and the construction site."

One can imagine 90 trucks speeding along this route, loaded in such a way, with the soil heaped up at an angle, that when a truck turns a corner, some of it falls off. I do not say the trucks are overloaded, but I do say that they are not loaded correctly.

The document continues—

"When it is considered that there are about 900 full truckloads of soil passing through the area a day, this is indeed an infinitesimal amount of soil lost by the trucks."

I point out that if there are 900 truckloads a day, with 90 trucks working it means that each of them is working 10 hours a day.

To continue—

"The company claims that much of the so-called dust menace comes from the dirt shoulders of section of the route which the trucks must use when passing vehicles coming in opposite directions."

I know this route very well and I can assure the Committee that it was fully sealed by the Brisbane City Council. Very few, if any, dirt shoulders existed until these trucks started hammering the roads and broke up the shoulders. They have broken up many of the sealed edges.

I cannot deal with the matter in detail in the permitted time, but the company goes on to say—

"The 45 trucks need only another two weeks to complete their present work."

This letter was written on 23 September, and 90 trucks an hour are still travelling over the route in spite of the company's claim that only another two weeks would be needed to complete the present work.

The company also says that it has a gang of men available at all times to ride the route, independently of the trucks, looking for piles of spilt dirt. On one page it says that no dirt and very little dust is being spilt, and on the next it says that they have men travelling the route picking up piles of spilt dirt.

The document continues—

"When these are discovered, immediate action is taken to dispose of the dirt."

The whole thing is a contradiction; one minute the company says that there is no spill or dust, and the next moment it says it has men picking up the dirt.

The company then refers to claims that some of the trucks travel at up to 50 miles an hour from the quarry to the construction site. I have asked the Minister whether he will have the route policed, and the hon. member for Greenslopes has asked him, too. It is not being policed, although very recently I saw two policemen in the area. I have timed some of the trucks that drive through the area. To cover the distance in the required time a driver would have to exceed the speed limit. Of course, the company claims that the route is well policed, and the Minister claims that there are police around. However, he does not say that they are policing the area.

The company claims that particularly efficient methods have been employed at loading points, and that loading takes only one minute per truck. That statement bears out my claim of incorrect loading. No truck could be loaded efficiently in such a short time. The soil is loaded in such a way that it spills over the side of the truck as it drives round corners.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I am trying to hear the hon. member for Norman.

Mr. BROMLEY: There may come a time, Mr. Ramsden, when you will have these worries. You may nod in agreement. The hon. member for Greenslopes, too, will have a few of these worries in his electorate. As I said, when trucks go round corners the dirt falls off them.

The company says that a persistent offender who speeds or overloads will not be allowed to have his vehicle loaded. I should like to know how many drivers have been refused. I would say that not one has been. I have taken time, when I should be doing other work, to examine the situation, and I have not seen one driver refused a load.

The hon. member for Brisbane has referred to the overloading of trucks. I do not know whether the men who drive these trucks are owner-drivers or are working for somebody else, but certainly they are under contract.

(Time expired.)

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (3.3 p.m.): At this stage I feel that I should take a little time to reply to some of the matters that have been raised by hon. members on both sides of the Chamber. This evening I intend to take a closer look at the points brought forward by individual speakers, but I think it would be appropriate for me to answer a number of the points and criticisms in a general way now.

As well as the local matters that have been brought to light relative to the Mines Department, three main issues have been raised. Many more points than those have been bandied round the State for political purposes, but as yet no part of that criticism has emerged during this debate.

The three points that have been raised are royalties, capital investment, and the claim that I am working my officers literally to death.

In my opening remarks I said that there were people who found it difficult to equate contributions to Consolidated Revenue by way of royalty payments with contributions to the State in the form of employment, essential services and decentralised prosperity. Nothing has been said to cause me to change that opinion. It is unrealistic to expect the mining industry, on the one hand, to pay substantially increased royalties and, on the other, to contribute to the other benefits which are coming to this State. If royalty payments were substantially increased, the money so raised would have to be used to pay for the other benefits which industry is now giving to Queensland.

As I have outlined before, the Government's policy is based on the belief that the greatest benefit to the State from mining enterprises will flow from railway freight charges. We can effectively improve freight charges by an escalation based on increases in wages, steel prices, and diesel fuel. Since

becoming the Government, we have always claimed that royalties were not the main benefits accruing to the State, because they would be a fixed benefit for a considerable term, whereas freights, through the inclusion of an escalation clause based on rising costs, give greater profitability as costs increase.

The first sector of our economy which would be affected by higher royalties would be the railways, which now rely heavily on the income from the carriage of minerals at rates negotiated between the department and the industry concerned. To place in jeopardy the income of the Railway Department would be to place in jeopardy the jobs of many thousands of Queenslanders, because the Railway Department is the State's largest single employer. However, I do not think the Opposition is prepared to advocate this course of action.

Mr. Houston: Why don't you tell us about the Greenvale agreement?

Mr. CAMM: I will speak about Greenvale later.

One final point before I pass on to the next basis for criticism is the often overlooked fact that, through the Commonwealth Department of Taxation, Australia starts off as a very substantial shareholder in every mining company in the country earning a decent profit.

The next point raised by hon. members during the debate, to which I propose to refer in general terms, concerns capital investment. Many gentlemen opposite are disturbed by the fact that the mining industry has attracted the attention of a large number of capitalists. Apparently it is also important to draw a distinction between capitalists from home and capitalists from overseas.

At this time I do not propose to go over the whole question of capital investment and the vital role it has played in the development of the mining industry. Anyone who does not now have the necessary facts relating to this important question planted firmly in his mind is never going to learn. Suffice it to say that successive Governments of all political leanings, not only in this State, but throughout this nation as a whole, have not been able to come up with an alternative to money for developments, not only in mining but in every section of industry. These same Governments have all realised that expansion at desirable levels is not possible from Government funds. There are many examples in this State where previous Labour Governments launched into mining as a State enterprise, with somewhat disastrous results.

The third point raised by hon. members cannot be treated lightly. The Government has been accused of overworking the officers of the Department of Mines and not paying them sufficient income. We have been told that the outcome of this unfortunate state of affairs has been a breakdown in the functions of the department.

Hon. members opposite highlighted two specific points when referring to this aspect of the department during this debate. We were told that applicants for authorities to prospect or leases were being made to wait up to nine months for an answer. I do not deny that there is a waiting time between the application and the granting of an authority to prospect, but the reasons are not those outlined by members of the Opposition. All applications for authorities to prospect and, for that matter, all applications for any mining tenements at all are thoroughly investigated before a decision is given. This takes time and any short cuts would lead inevitably to chaos.

I do not know whether or not the Opposition is advocating a system whereby authorities to prospect and leases should be handed out by the department without thorough investigation, but I, for one, could not support any action of this kind, which would not be in the interests of either the industry or the people of this State. Anybody who knew the number of applications received every day for authorities to prospect and mining leases would appreciate the tremendous amount of work done by officers of the Department of Mines.

All applications for exploration rights and leases issued anywhere in Australia are subject to the same kind of investigation, and Queensland by comparison with other States comes out in quite a favourable light. At present, waiting time for these titles has been reduced to a very creditable two months from the date an application is received, and in this respect Queensland is very much the envy of most, if not all, of the other States of the Commonwealth. By the end of the year, as a result of the overtime being worked, the waiting time for granting of these applications will be reduced considerably.

I will now touch briefly on the question of the recruitment of additional staff, particularly in the field of professional mining engineers and geologists. As I said in my opening remarks, the recruitment position is not satisfactory, for reasons which are beyond my control. There have been shortages of mining engineers and geologists in Australia for a great many years, and the mining boom has only served to make this position worse.

No doubt we could attract all the engineers and geologists we need if we were prepared to offer the salaries currently being paid by the professionally staffed private industry. The State Mining Engineer and the Chief Government Geologist would be happy to take home a salary commensurate with that received in private industry, which is \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year, and their staff members would welcome proportionate amounts. However, I shudder to think what the reaction of hon. members opposite would be to any move by the Government to increase the salaries of these officers to these levels which are currently applying in the mining industry for senior staff in that category. I shudder,

too, to think of the impact such a scheme would have on the Public Service, Government finances, and the economic situation throughout the State generally.

I agree with the sentiments expressed in relation to professional staff and I agree that we could certainly use more trained people. However, I do not know how this position can be overcome quickly, and nothing has been said during this debate that would seem to provide any satisfactory answer.

The hon. members for Port Curtis and Logan highlighted the shortage in Queensland of highly trained technical staff. One can only conclude that the shortage of trained Queenslanders is attributable to the void that existed here in the significant years just prior to 1957, when so little promise or encouragement was given to students or institutes of learning. One has only to go round the State remembering what the education facilities were in many of the major districts prior to 1957 to realise why there is a shortage of these trained personnel in Queensland. Geologists cannot be trained in one day; their training takes years. Prior to 1957, there were no education facilities in many of the important areas of Queensland where young people could be trained in engineering and geology. At present geologists and engineers are being turned out from our universities.

The hon. member for Port Curtis boasted that an A.L.P. Government had gone to the United Kingdom to recruit dentists. Let me assure the hon. member that we have gone much farther. We have recruited engineers and geologists from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Egypt. We have left no stone unturned in our endeavours to attract engineers and geologists from other parts of the world. In addition, we have absorbed as many men as are offering from our own institutes of learning. We still seek them constantly. However, as I have said before, there is wastage. These professional men are attracted to private industry because of the better conditions and higher salaries offering there.

The hon. member for Port Curtis said that the department should be assisting the universities and institutes of learning. This is being done more than ever before. Grants, cadetships and scholarships are extended. Students on stand-down from classes are given extensive practical training by the Geological Survey Branch in my department. There will be young students working in the department following university examinations. In this way, the department gains trained staff. The Queensland University is turning out excellent graduates for this and other States. Professor Wilson and Professor Whitmore are both doing fantastic jobs in the geological and engineering fields respectively.

The hon. member for Logan expressed himself very volubly on the subject of royalties. It is becoming quite tiresome to hear this flagging argument resurrected from time

to time, without application to other greater benefits. He decries a payment of some \$1.50 for rutile, but let me remind hon. members that prior to 1956 no royalty whatever was ever received by a Labour Government from the mining of minerals other than coal. There was royalty obtained from the mining of coal—and what a royalty it was! If the royalty provisions brought down by the previous A.L.P. Government were now in force, the huge coal-producing companies would now be enjoying a royalty of less than one cent a ton because they have exceeded production of 2,000,000 tons a year. That was the royalty ruling in this State when the Government came to office. I leave the hon. member for Logan to work out what percentage of the selling price that represented then and now.

Opposition members say that we are living in the past, and they are for ever decrying the royalties being charged now. Do they think that as soon as this Government came into power it should have increased the royalty to an even greater extent than it did? The previous Leader of the Opposition claimed all the credit for the bauxite project at Weipa, when the royalty rate was 5 cents a ton. We immediately imposed a royalty of 10 cents a ton for all the bauxite going out of the State.

Mr. Houston: It was years afterwards, and you know it. If you cannot stick to the facts, sit down and let someone else speak.

Mr. CAMM: I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to deny that the royalty on bauxite exported from Weipa is twice as high as the royalty on bauxite processed in Queensland.

Mr. Houston: How much bauxite was exported from Queensland before 1957?

Mr. CAMM: No bauxite was exported. A.L.P. Governments could not attract industry to Queensland. The royalty on bauxite when the A.L.P. was in Government was 6d. a ton.

Mr. Houston: You brought it in, and you know it!

Mr. CAMM: The honourable gentleman continually tries to raise this matter.

Mr. Houston: Royalties will be an important issue at the next election. We will see what the public thinks about the way in which you are giving Queensland away.

Honourable Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order!

Mr. CAMM: I intend to reply in detail later in the debate to some of the comments of other honourable members, but one point to which I shall refer now is the Greenvale project. When it seemed that the project

would not be established and that revenue was slipping away, we heard a great outcry from hon. members opposite about the \$50,000,000 the Government would lose. Coal from the Goonyella project going through to Mackay will return much more than \$50,000,000 to the State in the next 25 years.

Mr. Houston: How much?

Mr. CAMM: The hon. member for Mackay knows.

Mr. Houston: How much?

Mr. CAMM: It depends how much is sent out of the country.

Mr. Houston: You are only guessing.

Mr. CAMM: Contracts have been entered into with Japan, and they indicate that the benefits to this State from Goonyella will far exceed \$50,000,000.

Mr. Houston: What will be the rail freight?

Mr. CAMM: Goodness me! The rail freight is there to be read in the agreement negotiated for the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act. That Act was debated in this Chamber and the rail freight a ton is laid down in the agreement.

Mr. Houston: For a certain tonnage.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, and it remains at that figure from there on.

Mr. Houston: No, it does not.

Mr. CAMM: Of course it does.

Mr. Hanlon: It is at the discretion of the Minister.

Mr. CAMM: Up to 5,000,000 tons a year, as outlined in the agreement. The hon. member should read the agreement.

Mr. Hanlon: What about after 5,000,000 tons? The Minister fixes it.

Mr. CAMM: Of course he fixes it.

Mr. Hanlon: There is no minimum.

Mr. CAMM: There is no maximum, either.

Mr. Hanlon: That is what we are interested in.

Mr. CAMM: Hon. members opposite would have fixed a maximum. The Government has not done that.

I wish to make a few comments about the debate on the Estimates for the Main Roads Department. It was pleasing to hear the response from many hon. members relative to the work of that department, because it is now 50 years since the Main Roads Board was formed in Queensland. What remarkable progress has been achieved by this Government department in those 50 years. From memory, when the board was formed in 1920 the Vote for the first year

was in the vicinity of £60,000—about \$120,000—for work to improve highways and roads in this State.

Mr. Houston: Which Government started it?

Mr. CAMM: Before that, the building of roads and connecting highways between the major cities was the responsibility of rural local authorities. Taking the rural local authorities, in 1920 they collected less than \$1,000,000 in rates, and out of that they had to provide other services to the community.

The Leader of the Opposition asked which Government started it. I am not denying that the Main Roads Board was set up by a former Labour Government. One of the conditions was that the roads should not be in competition with the railways, and that policy was carried out till 1957.

As I said, the total allocation for the Main Roads Board in 1920 was about \$120,000. The Main Roads Department now spends nearly twice that amount each day of the year. I ask the hon. member to compare the total local authority expenditure in 1920 in rural areas of less than \$1,000,000 with the expenditure of the Main Roads Department for this year, which is in excess of \$70,000,000. I think it is obvious from such a comparison that the tributes that have been paid to the Main Roads Department have been very well earned.

Many hon. members have brought to my attention the need for accelerated progress on a number of roads in various electorates. That is only as it should be because, as members of Parliament, they desire their own electorates to be well served with roads. However, I am sure that the hon. members concerned will appreciate that this is directly tied to the availability of funds and the works priorities arrived at by district and divisional engineers and commissioners. As I mentioned when I was presenting these Estimates, the allocation of available funds to individual projects is made only after a critical analysis of relative priorities of works required on roads within the various categories defined in the present Commonwealth Aid (Roads) Act. This Act specifies the minimum amounts that must be spent each year on each category of road for the State to become eligible for the full Commonwealth allocation. Of course, we have our own Main Roads Trust Fund, which we secure through registrations, and aid to road maintenance charges, which we spend as we desire.

I know that the Main Roads Department has gathered much information and gone to much trouble to make the most objective assessment possible of works priorities so that it can produce programmes that will promote a balanced development of the State's over-all road network. Its road inventories and road needs surveys show

quite clearly what needs to be done. There is no lack of awareness of this among officers of the Main Roads Department. It is simply a question of the progressive improvement of our road network within the limits of the funds available on this priority basis. I should very much like—and I am sure that the Commissioner of Main Roads would very much like—to be able to meet all the requests for road works, because they are all desirable. Nobody is questioning the desirability of building more main roads in this State. However, all the work in all parts of the State cannot be done at the one time; it must be a progressive development, and I can assure all hon. members that every genuine endeavour is made to allocate available funds for road work in the best interests of the State as a whole.

Several hon. members raised the question of opening branch offices of the Main Roads Department in their areas for the transaction of motor vehicle registration business. Hon. members must realise how the Main Roads Department is becoming more decentralised as the years go by. One hon. member mentioned that since this Government came to office, commissioners' offices have been established in Townsville, Rockhampton and Brisbane. We are now establishing district offices in Toowoomba, Mackay and other areas of the State. Allowing these offices to transact motor vehicle registration business is only one aspect of a comprehensive, long-term investigation that we are making to assess the need for further decentralisation and streamlining of the department's motor vehicle registration branch procedures. It is certainly the objective to cause the least ultimate inconvenience to the motoring public consistent with the economics of the whole process.

However, I can assure hon. members that the proposals put forward are not nearly as simple of implementation as they sound. Some very complex problems are involved because of the basically centralised nature of the whole registrations process. I hope that the time will come when the Main Roads Department will be able to evolve a system by which the registration of motor vehicles can be carried out in a decentralised manner. The department acts as agent for many other instrumentalities in collecting fees, and if those activities were decentralised to the extent that the department is at present they would become very involved. However, I know that the officers in the department join with me in hoping that this can be achieved in the near future.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Mulgrave) (3.30 p.m.): I am happy to have the opportunity to participate in the debate on these important Estimates. Both the Main Roads Department and the Mines Department have played a tremendous part, particularly over the last decade, in the development of Queensland.

I compliment the Minister and his officers in the Main Roads Department—the Commissioner, the Deputy Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner, Northern Division, the district engineers, down through the ranks to all members of the staff—on their efforts.

As hon. members are aware, it is difficult for many of us to comprehend the task performed by the Main Roads Department. Each day it constructs more than two miles of sealed road. In a State as large as Queensland, with its comparatively small population, that is a remarkable achievement, and one of which we should be proud rather than critical. It can easily be understood that in this sparsely populated State there is a heavy demand upon the services of the Main Roads Department, but I remind hon. members that merely by driving round the State they can see what the department has achieved. A highway has been constructed from the southern border to Mossman, and if a motorist wishes to travel further north he can do so.

Mr. B. Wood: How much further?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He can go almost to Cape York, as the hon. member knows.

Mr. B. Wood: I don't know about that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The motorist can do it much easier than he could in the days when the hon. member's predecessors were in office.

Mr. Davies: Surely you would construct some main roads in 13 years.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I think that our record over the past 10 years compares more than favourably with that of Labour Governments.

Mr. Davies: We formed the Main Roads Department.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Labour formed many things—and some of them were good—but that is all it did; it did not do much more with them. They had to wait until a forward-looking Government like ours came into power before they could get going. I do not have to remind the hon. member for Maryborough that before this Government came into power there was not even a decent highway to Maryborough.

Mr. Davies: That's a lie.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is not a lie. I have driven over the road many times. However, I have no desire to waste time arguing with the hon. member.

Mr. Davies: You're a liar.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsden): Order! I am not sure whether I heard the hon. member for Maryborough correctly. Did he call the hon. member for Mulgrave a liar?

Mr. Davies: Yes, justifiably.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I remind the hon. member that that is unparliamentary. I ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr. Davies: Yes, if it is unparliamentary.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Thank you very much, Mr. Ramsden. I did not think the hon. member was so uncharitable.

In addition to the highway from the southern border to Mossman, roads have been extended into the really important part of this State, the back country, from the main ports. A colossal job has been done by the Main Roads Department, and I urge it to continue with its good work. I know that at times we feel that a little more could be done. For example, in my own electorate, while I must admit that the department has done an excellent job on the Bruce Highway—not much more has to be done to complete the new alignment—important connecting roads to the Tableland—the Palmerston Highway and part of the Gillies Highway—are sadly in need of attention.

I am aware of the problems relative to the connection between Innisfail and Millaa Millaa. It is a difficult route, and the existing road has done a remarkable job over many years. However, it was not designed to carry the present traffic. It is a narrow strip of bitumen and the task that it is called upon to perform is beyond it. I should like the Minister and his departmental officers to investigate the possibility of improving both these highways in the next few years, after which it may be decided whether there is to be a complete realignment to Millaa Millaa. I understand that this project is presently under investigation.

Developments in Townsville, as well as the new mining project that we are looking forward to getting under way in the near future, mean that these roads will become very important links between the Tableland and Townsville. They now handle much of the produce from the Tableland, such as timber, potatoes, and dairy products, but the vehicles using them are too big for them. In wet periods, it is not unusual for some lorries to slip over the side of the road. Although there have not been many fatal accidents, a lot of worry has been occasioned to those who use them.

I should like the Minister and his departmental officers to investigate the possibility of upgrading both of these highways in the near future. We all concede, of course, that the Bruce Highway must be given No. 1 priority, but I hope it will be possible to find some money to relieve the situation on these two important roads. I ask the Minister to give my submissions his favourable consideration.

The Main Roads Department has a big responsibility in maintaining arterial roads, secondary roads and developmental roads, all of which are indeed important to this developing State. When referring to roads, I think I should pay my respects to the various local authorities who work in close harmony with the department. The closer the co-operation, the better for all concerned,

because distinct advantages are gained when local authorities work in close harmony with the department.

As I said in my opening remarks, the Department of Mines is a particularly important department in this State. In the early days, mining operations were responsible for opening up many remote areas, particularly in North Queensland. Areas that come to mind are the Palmer gold-fields, the Palmerston area, Bartle Frere, Croydon, Mt. Garnett and Herberton. Other industries gradually developed around the mining enterprises.

The Department of Mines is playing a tremendous part in developing Queensland, perhaps a much greater part than it is given credit for. The Minister might have claimed, and rightly so, that his officers are overworked. I know how keen some of them are to see mining development take place. I have had an opportunity to visit some of the fields with Mr. Healy and I know how keen he is to get mineral development under way wherever there is a possibility that it will be successful.

If we suddenly closed down recent mining development in Queensland, our economic position would be very tight. The drought and other circumstances have had an adverse effect on primary industry and industries associated with it. The mining industry has created a great deal of employment and has injected many hundreds of millions of dollars into the economy.

For the life of me I cannot understand the attitude adopted by some responsible members of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition said that we were giving our assets away. I well recollect some of the propaganda disseminated during the last election campaign, when it was said that a ton of coal had the same value as a tomato. The Labour Party tried to sow such thoughts in the minds of the people of Queensland. It is a cheap type of propaganda; that is all I can say for it. Surely Opposition members should be as interested as we are—

Mr. Bird: A certain amount of the criticism could be attributed to a lack of knowledge.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: This could be. Perhaps the hon. member for Burdekin is a little more generous than I am.

It is time that Opposition members took a good look at themselves and altered their attitude. They should jump on the band wagon of the Government, which has gone to no end of trouble since it took charge of the Treasury benches to encourage the development that is now bearing fruit.

Mr. Casey: Wouldn't you say that the Government has changed its attitude—

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The Government changed the attitude of the State, undoubtedly.

Mr. Casey: . . . following Labour's suggestions in relation to Greenvale?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I shall deal with Greenvale in a minute.

I do not know how the Opposition could reach the conclusion that it has. All these opportunities were available in its day. I have heard Opposition members say from time to time that they had long-term development plans, but their plans never seemed to reach fruition. We have heard this said about Weipa. It has been said that it will become nothing but a hole in the ground. I suggest to Opposition members that they visit that part of the State and see how things are operating and how people have settled in that remote area.

Opposition members complain about royalties and claim, as I have said, that a ton of coal has the same value as a tomato. It is time the people were told exactly what the Minister said a while ago, namely, that prior to 1956 not 1c royalty was paid on minerals other than coal. That is the policy that Labour pursued. Labour's coal royalties operated on a sliding scale. For the first 1,000,000 tons the royalty was 6d., or 5c, a ton, which was the highest rate; for the second 1,000,000 tons the rate was 3d; and for the third 1,000,000 tons it was 1d. As the Minister said, mining companies would be happy to operate under that system today. But the Government insisted on a flat rate of 5c a ton.

I share the Minister's view that the rate of royalty is unimportant when viewed in the proper perspective. We are interested in bringing to this State development and employment, and all the things that go with them. Various ports have been opened as the result of mineral development, and new railway lines have been constructed through rich lands that will in due course produce something other than minerals. We have seen townships springing up. This means the construction of buildings, streets, water supplies, the use of locally manufactured materials, and the employment of tradesmen. Is that not the type of development Queensland needs? Or do hon. members opposite want higher royalties and nothing else?

I think the Government should be complimented on the policy it has pursued. I sincerely hope that our friends on the other side of the Chamber will pay the Government some respect in the future, and cease to be "knockers". Over a number of years they have been nothing but "knockers". They have gone out and tried to tell the people that we are giving the State's assets away. If those assets were left as they were till this Government came to power, I doubt if they could be regarded as such. They were certainly of little use under the ground. Development, wealth, employment, and all the things that go with them, are what Queensland wants. I hope the present rate of development continues.

Hon. members opposite have displayed much interest in the Greenvale project. During the last election campaign they all

got out on the stump and castigated the Government for "giving away the assets of the State", "supplying foreigners with our raw materials", and all the rest of it. But when it appeared that the Greenvale project might not get under way, what was the attitude of the Opposition? If my memory serves me correctly, some members of the Opposition's shadow Cabinet pleaded with the Minister for Mines and the Treasurer, by interjection and other means, to "con" the consortium into the project so that they could then do what they liked with it. Opposition members said that it would be wise almost to give the nickel away to encourage the company to begin operations.

When it appeared that this very worthwhile project might not come to fruition, the people of North Queensland were highly incensed. This development will, of course, be welcomed by all sensible people in North Queensland, and, when it appeared that no agreement would be reached and the people of North Queensland made their feelings known to some of those who castigated the Government on its policy of "giving the State's assets away", Opposition members saw fit to change their attitude. They then pleaded with the Treasurer to be a little more gentle in his efforts to get the project going. They adopted that attitude only as a result of the application of a little pressure from North Queensland, not in pursuance of any policy of their own. They would be prepared to "con" people into an agreement and, once they got them in business, extract more royalty from them.

I, with all the other people in North Queensland, am pleased to see that the project is to come to fruition. We hope that it will be only one of many projects of a like nature to be developed in that part of the State. It will mean a lot to the people in the North, particularly those on the Atherton Tableland, to see the town that will spring up, the refinery that will be constructed, and the railway line that will be built to a new port. It all means employment and the benefits that go with it. I know that the project will be welcomed by every North Queenslander.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (3.49 p.m.): There would have been no doubt about the tenor of my speech this afternoon if the Government had not made its recent announcement about the Greenvale nickel project. If it had not made such a statement, I would most assuredly have spoken this afternoon on Metalsex and the Queensland Government. As the previous speaker said, I believe this project to be of great concern to the people of Townsville, and indeed of North Queensland. It was with a great deal of satisfaction that, I, and others, learned of the agreement reached between Metalsex and the Government.

When speaking in the Budget debate, I put forward a suggestion relative to Greenvale. The Treasurer accused me of having a brief from Metalsex and using it in this Chamber.

That, of course, was completely and utterly untrue. I merely put forward on that occasion a logical argument designed to assist the Townsville Harbour Board and industries in Townsville and North Queensland and to obtain more employment for people in the northern part of the State. It was put forward by a North Queenslander on behalf of other North Queenslanders.

Mr. R. Jones interjected.

Mr. TUCKER: As the hon. member for Cairns says, it is tied up with and necessary for northern development.

Although I thought the suggestion I made would break the deadlock, the Treasurer rejected it with scorn and said, "What! Take only that amount when they are in fact making about \$7,500,000 a year?" However, it now appears that he has accepted almost completely the proposal that I put forward. I asked on that occasion that he should not make a big demand on the profits of the company until it had become established; that he should hold off for a little while, take some of the profits, and then take the major portion once the company was on its feet. I suggested that he should ascertain what profits the company could make over 20 years, and I made it clear that I agreed that the Government should take an equitable amount of the profits.

In view of that, I repeat that it is welcome news to the Opposition that the Treasurer has seen fit to allow the company to get on its feet, to delay his demands to a certain degree until the company begins to operate profitably, and then to obtain for Queensland a proper share of the profits. I am glad that the Government is using its head and ensuring that it does not chase the company away.

Make no mistake, Mr. Ramsden, there is a great difference between the Greenvale project and the Goonyella and Blackwater projects and the Thiess Peabody Mitsui project, near Gladstone. In the Greenvale project, not only is a railway to be built but also a refinery to refine the ore, and about 600 men will be employed at that point of the operation. That is what the A.L.P. has always asked—that at least some of the work associated with the treatment of minerals should be done in our own country.

I do not suppose the Opposition could argue against the Government's referring to the alumina plant at Gladstone, where something similar is being done. I am glad that it is, and I have frequently said that I hoped an aluminium refinery, too, could be established at Gladstone. A great number of people are already receiving benefits from that project. But at Goonyella and Blackwater the overburden is to be removed, the coal taken out and sent straight to Hay Point, and that will be the end of it as far as the people of Queensland are concerned. I should like to see this State use its minerals to better advantage, and that is the difference between the Greenvale project and the

Goonyella project. I do not believe that the two can be compared in an attempt to demolish the arguments put forward by the Australian Labour Party.

I also believe that the Government's own arguments relative to the Greenvale nickel project show that other royalties were too low. On this occasion, engaging in window-dressing to impress the people of Queensland, the Government suddenly said, "We want a fair share of the company's profits." I sense, as do many others here and outside, that there has been a change of course by the Government. It is like being in an aircraft that changes course by only about five degrees. The great majority of passengers may not be aware of the fact that the course has been changed, but we who are watching detect a change of course by the Government on this occasion. Of course, it then put forward the boast that, on behalf of the people of Queensland, it asked for a fair share of the profits.

There is no doubt that the Government has changed course because it is worried at the impact that the Australian Labour Party is making in Queensland on the question of royalties. Of course, the Minister now attempts to protest, but he protests too much. We are all aware of his inferiority complex relative to royalties. He and his back-benchers are trying to undo the damage they have already done to their Government in the eyes of the people of Queensland. They are as well aware of it as we are, but we will continue to push the point that on this occasion they have acted only to re-establish themselves with this particular royalty. The people of Queensland will not be fooled by the arguments put forward by the Minister this afternoon. He attempted by raising dust to obscure the main points, but he has not succeeded with us and he will not succeed with the people of Queensland. I welcome the fact that a nickel refinery will be established and that the Greenvale project will get off the ground. It will certainly help us in the North. However, when the Government has had the opportunity to give us full details of the various freight rates—whether it be here or in other places—it has declined to do so. We have asked, "Give us details of freight rates and royalties so that we can check your arguments." We have asked the Minister to bolster his arguments by giving us details, but he has always slipped out of it by saying, "This information may fall into the hands of some other company."

I noticed the other day that information had apparently fallen into the hands of some other companies, because some of these details were mentioned in southern newspapers. They have fallen into the hands of the Australian Labour Party, too, make no mistake. But, generally speaking, when we ask the Minister to bolster his argument by giving us the facts, he declines to do so. He generalises. He says, "This is good for

the people of Queensland," and he expects us to swallow it, hook, line and sinker. But we do not intend to do so. We have grave doubts about the argument advanced by the Minister and the Government in support of the royalties in many of these undertakings.

Briefly in reply to the hon. member for Mulgrave, I point out to him that it was a Labour Government that established the Queensland Coal Board, and under the jurisdiction of this board today the Government is able to export coal. If it had not been so and if the matter had come under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth, Queensland may not have been able to do that. This is a point to remember when talking about Labour reducing royalties to 6d., I think the hon. member for Mulgrave said. In those days we were not exporting coal. There was a shortage of it at that time, and we reduced royalties so that the consumers could reap the benefit through reduced electricity charges and in other ways. As I say, Queensland was not exporting coal at that time, and the Labour Government hoped that the reduced costs could be passed on to the consumers of this State.

I also remind the hon. member for Mulgrave and the Minister that the Tories subsidised South African and Indian coal by as much as £11 a ton in an attempt to kill the production of Callide coal. Do not let us forget these things. Long ago, when Labour was in power, it operated against the many people who were trying to kill it and also to exploit the consumers of this State by importing foreign coal to make up for the deficiency of from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 tons in the production necessary for Queensland at that time. These things should not be forgotten, and I regret that the hon. member for Mulgrave has left the Chamber.

I wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Morton and his staff in the Main Roads Department in Townsville. There is no doubt that they deserve new headquarters. Nothing inhibits efficient work more than poor conditions, under which the Main Roads officers in Townsville have been forced to work for a long time. Those hon. members who have been in Parliament for 11 years or so realise that poor conditions inhibit the efficient performance of their duties, and certainly we are forced to tolerate poor conditions in Parliament House.

The Main Roads Department has done a magnificent job in and around Townsville. I pay tribute to its officers in the North, but, at the same time, suggest that perhaps they should take a look at the Townsville-Ayr road. In places it seems to have become wavy, and to a certain extent some of the foundations have given way. I travel over the road continually, and I feel that the department could consider the reconstruction of portions of it.

I turn now to decentralisation, particularly as it relates to Townsville. Some years ago the Main Roads Department made arrangements for the registration of motor vehicles in Townsville. That move was a very good one, but I point out that motor-car dealers in Townsville, and in other cities and towns in the North, when applying to register vehicles are forced to use what is known as Form M.201. They are required to go to the police station and have all the information that appears on the form checked by a police officer. They fill in details of the make, manufacturer's model, engine number, chassis number, body number, wheels and axles of vehicles, and, of course, there are delays.

I know that each day in Townsville only seven or eight new vehicles are registered, but the figure is climbing all the time. Motor-car dealers in the North are irritated at having to obtain certificates from the owner, the police and the clerk of the court. Of course, additional duties have to be performed by already overworked police officers. On many occasions we have been told that police officers already have enough work to do, yet this added burden is placed on them.

In Brisbane, motor-car dealers may use what is termed Form M.208, which requires only the certificate of the owner and the approved dealer for acceptance by the Main Roads Department. In other words, it appears that Brisbane motor-car dealers are accepted as trustworthy, responsible and able people, whereas those in the North are not. They are forced to have the details that they supply checked by police officers.

This has happened at a time when the Minister in charge of police is trying to relieve the police work-load. Northern people are being treated like second-class citizens. When representations were made on this matter, it was said that a decision had been made not to extend the Brisbane scheme beyond the metropolitan area. That emphasises our argument that this is a Queen Street Government. If it is good enough for dealers in Brisbane to operate in this way to the satisfaction of the Main Roads Department, it should also be good enough for northern dealers. I see no reason why their request should be rejected. The Minister should further investigate the practice. I repeat that if the people of Brisbane are regarded as trustworthy enough to be able to declare that their information is correct, those in the northern part of the State should also be so regarded. If we were given equal treatment, much of the irritation we experience would be removed.

Another small but unjust matter that I ask the Minister to investigate concerns transport on Magnetic Island where, because of the small mileage covered, a concessional registration rate is granted. The transport proprietress, Mrs. Mears, has quite a number

of buses. Many members who have visited Magnetic Island know the buses. They are unique, and they give quite a good service. Recently Mrs. Mears had a new bus specially built in Brisbane. It was driven to Townsville and then taken immediately to Magnetic Island, but she had to register it fully so that it could be driven from Brisbane to Townsville. When she got it to the island she applied for a pro rata concession, but her request was refused. Only a few weeks elapsed before she got it to the island and applied for the pro rata concession, but she was told she would not be granted any concession this year. She lost the full concession because she had to bring the bus to the North and was told to reapply when registration again fell due.

It is unjust that Mrs. Mears should lose a year's concession because of a few days' drive from Brisbane. Since 1963 she has received pro rata concessions for her buses on Magnetic Island. The Main Roads Department in Brisbane has adopted a pinch-penny attitude. The Townsville branch knows nothing about it. These people work hard on the island to get a very small return. They make a real contribution to tourism, and I ask the Minister to consider this request sympathetically. Precedents exist, and if the department would only look for them I am sure something could be done for Mrs. Mears.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (4.9 p.m.): In speaking of the Greenvale project, the hon. member for Townsville North emphasised the important role mining has played in Queensland. I was indeed pleased to read in this morning's "Courier-Mail" that the Government has at last announced that there will be no mining in Cooloola. However, I am a little concerned about one facet. I should like the Minister, when replying later this evening, to enlarge on a statement that appeared in "The Australian" of today's date. The first paragraph states—

"State Cabinet today recommended that all applications for special mineral leases at Cooloola on the near north coast be rejected."

Some people are worried that a lease has been issued, perhaps outside the area to be declared a national park.

Another paragraph reads—

"The Premier's statement does not completely rule out the possibility of mining the area in the future."

I should like the Minister to enlarge on what the Premier said yesterday and by clarifying the situation remove any fears that the people have about mining at Cooloola.

It is pleasing to learn that the sand-mining companies on North Stradbroke Island are seeking the help of the C.S.I.R.O. in restoration work there. Those companies should be commended on the action they are taking,

because it was lack of restoration on this island that infuriated the people of Queensland. There would not be the same opposition to sand-mining if our beaches, particularly the high dune areas, could be restored to a much higher standard. I realise that very little is known about restoring high sand dunes, and perhaps the Government should have exercised more control in this regard. However, it is pleasing that the C.S.I.R.O. will experiment on North Stradbroke Island to see if these dunes can be stabilised. I wish the organisation and the companies every success in this project. Undoubtedly, the companies are endeavouring to get back into the good graces of the people and I can see no problems with sand-mining if the areas can be restored satisfactorily.

I congratulate the Minister for Mines and the Treasurer on the successful agreement reached with Metals Exploration N.L. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in the Budget debate and today, spoke about the Greenvale nickel project, and I was surprised at his suggestion that the Government should have considered a smaller rate of royalty than that demanded. This was very strange after the attacks made by Opposition members over the years on the rate of royalty on Moura and Goonyella coal. However, I can understand his attitude; he wants to see North Queensland workers in full employment. I point out that this is the attitude the Government adopted in Central Queensland.

In Queensland, the rate of royalty on coal is 5c a ton. The Opposition suggested that the rate should be the same as that in New South Wales, namely, 10c to 15c a ton. It is interesting to note that, in New South Wales, if a company has a lease ranging from one to 20 years, it pays 10c a ton; if it has a lease ranging from 21 to 40 years, it pays 12.5c a ton; and if it has a lease of over 40 years, it pays 15c a ton.

The Japanese companies are not interested in the price of coal at Queensland or New South Wales ports; they are interested in the price of coal delivered in Japan. What is the situation in New South Wales? Railway lines over which coal is carted vary in length from eight to 80 miles. In Queensland, Moura is 112 miles from Gladstone; Blackwater is 202 miles from Gladstone; and from Goonyella to Hay Point is 138 miles. The Opposition ridiculously claims that mining companies in Queensland could pay the same royalty rates as are paid by companies in New South Wales and, after paying the heavier cost of transporting coal from Queensland coalfields to ports, still deliver coal to Japan cheaper than Newcastle coal can be delivered. Newcastle coal and Queensland coal have exactly the same quality, and Newcastle coal is quite acceptable to the Japanese.

Mr. Houston: No, it is not.

Mr. MILLER: Yes, it is.

It is very pleasing indeed to know that the Greenvale nickel project will bring to Queensland \$45,000,000 over the next 20 years. Mining has certainly offset a financial depression in Queensland. We owe a lot to the mining companies. Without mining, the Queensland Railways would be operating at a loss.

Mr. Houston: That would be bad management, wouldn't it?

Mr. MILLER: If the Leader of the Opposition considers that operating railways at a loss would be bad management, perhaps he would say the same about the Brisbane City Council Transport Department.

Mr. Houston: No, not at all. They are not running a railway.

Mr. MILLER: Offsetting losses on the carriage of drought-relief fodder and other goods, the profit obtained from the cartage of coal and other minerals on the central and north-western lines heavily subsidises the south-western lines and the Brisbane suburban passenger rail system.

Mr. Houston: Do you think that is the position?

Mr. MILLER: I do. I should like the Leader of the Opposition to prove the contrary. Without mining, Queensland would be in the position of New South Wales and Victoria, in which States the drain on State finances to cover railway losses prevents the spending of money on other important requirements.

Mining has also been responsible for the reticulation of electricity throughout large remote areas of the State at a nominal price. The heavy requirements of mining companies have justified the erection of new powerhouses. Without the loads required by mining operations, the provision of electricity in many country areas would have been very costly indeed, and tariffs would have been assessed accordingly. With more mines coming into operation, and the erection of treatment plants, the cost of electricity for the ordinary person, and for other industry, will progressively decrease. I think hon. members opposite would agree with that. Take mining from such areas, and see what the price of electricity would be.

Dams are being constructed by mining companies in many places throughout Queensland. The vast amount of water that falls in the wet season will be held in those dams and, in addition to being of use to the mining companies, it will benefit surrounding graziers and farmers.

Mr. Houston: What dams have been built by the mining companies?

Mr. MILLER: There have been quite a few. If the Leader of the Opposition will be patient, I shall let him have that information.

In addition, if mining ceased in such areas, the dams, and the water that they hold, would still be there. Generally, the benefits of mining flow to all sectors of the community, including factories in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, and other places, that supply goods and plant to the companies. Mining creates employment for tradesmen repairing machines and plant and for farmers supplying food. In all, as outlined by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, it is playing a very important role in the economy of Queensland.

Very little has been said about main roads, but I believe that through the Main Roads Department we may have an opportunity of reducing the road toll. The report of the Commissioner of Main Roads at page 34 shows that there has been an increase of 38,326 in the number of registered motor vehicles. These additional vehicles will cause further accidents and fatalities unless we are prepared to take action. The Government has introduced breathalysers in an attempt to reduce drink-driving and has also introduced a points system for traffic offenders. Through the Main Roads Department and the registration of motor vehicles, it has the opportunity to take off the roads people who are not prepared to play their part in reducing the road toll.

At present, the Main Roads Department is collecting third party insurance premiums on all motor vehicles. I should like to see the third party insurance premium increased according to the number of accidents that each driver has. I should like also to see the Main Roads Department made responsible for collecting a compulsory comprehensive car insurance premium.

Mr. Tucker: The premium would be increased even though it may not be your fault?

Mr. MILLER: The person found guilty of causing the accident could be held responsible. Through the use of a compulsory comprehensive insurance scheme, I believe it would be possible to remove from the road people who are not prepared to reduce the road toll by driving safely.

Mr. Houston: Why don't you reduce the premiums?

Mr. MILLER: I want to increase premiums for bad drivers and reduce premiums for good drivers.

Mr. Houston: That is what you tried to do last time.

Mr. MILLER: The Government has not tried this. If the hon. member will be patient and let me put forward my suggestion, he will see that this has not been tried before.

I should like to see a compulsory comprehensive insurance scheme in operation in Queensland. If the premium for that insurance cover increased as a result of each accident for which the driver was responsible,

the stage would eventually be reached when he would find it impossible to insure his vehicle. I believe it would then be desirable to introduce a compulsory third party comprehensive insurance scheme under which such a driver could be insured. Then the person who drives with a lack of understanding or who exhibits a "don't care" attitude would reach the stage when no insurance policy would be available to him.

Mr. Houston: Don't you think that some of the manufacturers could play their part by making cars less expensive to repair?

Mr. MILLER: That has very little to do with main roads. It relates more to road safety. I am speaking about the Main Roads Department and what it can do to reduce the road toll.

Mr. Houston: It does not handle insurance.

Mr. MILLER: The Main Roads Department handles money for third party insurance.

Mr. Houston: Only as a collecting agent.

Mr. MILLER: That is correct, as a collecting agent. It cost \$1,579,257 to collect third party insurance premiums. Why cannot the department collect similar premiums for comprehensive insurance on vehicles?

Mr. Houston: Don't you think that would add to the cost of motoring for the person who is just battling along now?

Mr. MILLER: The cost to the person who is battling, provided he is a steady driver, would not increase at all; it would only increase for the irresponsible driver. The cost would increase in proportion to the number of accidents a driver had, and this must reduce the cost to the person who is careful on the road.

Mr. Houston: That is the scheme you tried the last time premiums went up.

Mr. MILLER: We have never tried this scheme. We have never tried a scheme whereby the premium goes up with the number of accidents. I trust that the Minister for Main Roads will give some consideration to this suggestion. I am concerned about the increasing premiums that have to be paid by people who are taking a very responsible attitude on our roads. It is a pity that the Opposition does not take the same responsible attitude in this debate, because I believe that we could overcome many of the problems by removing from the roads many irresponsible drivers who will not play their part.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (4.26 p.m.): The greatest build-up that mining in Queensland has had in recent weeks, the greatest anticipation we can hold and the main ray of hope that we can see for mining in Queensland lie in the fact that we have in this Parliament the hon. member for Port Curtis as shadow Minister for Mines. That casts some happy light on what has been a cloudy situation in the mining world. We

read in statements by accredited company leaders—those who have close contact with oil exploration and the mining field—the startling allegation that—

"There are strong signs that there has been an intrusion into the market of an organised criminal influence."

No doubt, these people do not make such allegations unless they are correct. I do not know whether these mining leaders and company directors are speaking about the intrusion of the Queensland Cabinet Ministers, but that is what they said. Mr. Eric Avery, Chairman of Associated Oil Group said—

"I agree with your remarks about the intrusion of dubious people in the mining industry."

It is rather a serious allegation for these leaders of the commercial world to make. I think it is the reason why the integrity of mining developers in Queensland at present is so suspect and why decent people are beginning to wonder whether or not they should have invested their money in certain interests involved in mineral exploration. Because of this situation and the sinister conduct of the Cabinet Ministers in the Queensland Government, they cannot get any real feeling of confidence.

In the mining world particularly Cabinet Ministers have been regarded as ditherers, individually and collectively. We had the startling admission of the Treasurer, on his own behalf and that of the Minister for Mines, on 19 August of this year that the Government decision in relation to Greenvale, North Queensland, was about to be made—it was approaching; it was getting near—after a three-year period of deliberation. That is the handicap from which Queensland is suffering at the present time—the dithering dilettantes in the Cabinet who take over three years to make up their minds on any matter, and that includes the Cooloola issue.

Mr. Armstrong: That is giving it proper consideration.

Mr. BENNETT: As the hon. member for Mulgrave says—in his opinion, of course; I do not think many would share it—it is giving it proper consideration. It may be the opposite; certain members of the Government might be waiting for certain consideration similar to that obtained from Comalco.

The Minister referred to royalties, and said that they are not the main benefit to the State. The main reason why royalties are not the main benefit is that in the Government there are inept negotiators who are concerned more with their own personal welfare than with the interests of taxpayers. That is why the royalties that the Government should demand, and the taxpayers hope that it will demand, have not been obtained. The Minister has been forced into making the frank admission that royalties are not the main source of income.

Mr. Camm: We have always said that.

Mr. BENNETT: I know the Government has always said that. At least it is consistent in its lethargy, its delay and in its attitude to royalties. It cannot be galvanised into action by any convincing criticism. The only way in which Queensland will benefit is by certain members of the Government getting rid of their leaders, as they endeavoured to do recently. The leaders in Cabinet simply will not listen to criticism or answer valid arguments. Instead they content themselves with the smug satisfaction of complacency, and say, "We have been saying that for the last 13 years."

Mr. Davies: They had somebody sitting on the side-line offering his services.

Mr. BENNETT: Exactly, but I do not know whether he would do any better. He was sitting on the fence, "keeping his ear to the ground," watching events closely and having "two bob" each way.

The Minister has claimed that rail freights and charges are the main source of income to be derived from the mineral wealth of this State. But as our shadow Minister and Deputy Leader have pointed out, we cannot get any information about freight and rail charges. The Minister for Mines and certain other Ministers resolutely refuse to take the House into their confidence and explain to hon. members, including a number of their Cabinet colleagues who revolted recently, what is meant by "freight rates and charges," in the contracts that bind this State for many generations to come.

Mr. Houston: What freight rates did they get from bauxite? The railways get nothing at all.

Mr. BENNETT: The Railway Department does not receive any freight rates at all from bauxite. Perhaps the Minister can explain what he meant by saying that freight and rail charges are the main source of income. There is no reason why the Minister, when negotiating a clean and honest deal, should not tell other companies about it. It is a futile defence to suggest that if the terms are advertised other companies will have knowledge of the negotiations.

Mr. Thackeray: The Government says it believes in free and healthy competition.

Mr. BENNETT: That is true, yet it is not prepared to allow investing interests, both inside and outside this State, to gain knowledge of the negotiations entered into for the development of this State's most valuable natural resources.

In the United States of America the appropriate Senate committee reveals all details of private enterprise negotiations made through Government agreements. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why certain American investors and companies choose to operate in Australia. They have not to enter into open competition. They have

only to gain the confidence of the Treasurer, the Minister for Mines and, perhaps, the Premier, to sew Queensland up mineral-wise.

We say that the Government alone cannot provide all the capital investment necessary for the development of our mineral wealth. But we certainly believe that the State, or its citizens, should retain ownership of our valuable mineral resources, even though we are prepared to accept, and enjoy, a certain amount of overseas investment. Furthermore, in the mining of our natural wealth, we should insist on virgin resources being processed here instead of overseas. We are giving workers in other countries valuable working hours and good incomes that our workers should enjoy.

Mr. Hinze: You and your mate Hawke would price us off the world markets.

Mr. BENNETT: I would be much happier to call Mr. Hawke a mate than I would be to call the hon. member for South Coast a mate. He has 10 times as much brains as the hon. member and considerably more sincerity. He does not spend most of his time lazing around on the sands of the Gold Coast.

Mr. Hinze: Now you are showing your jealousy.

Mr. BENNETT: And certainly he is not a lounge lizard who does a lot of pub crawling in those idle resorts.

There have been many delays in dealing with applications for leases and authorities to prospect. I suppose the one that was put through with the greatest expedition, without being processed satisfactorily, closely or carefully, was the one that the Premier received himself, and from which he made a fortune. Other authorities to prospect are pigeon-holed for a considerable time. The unfortunate applicants either have to wait unduly or their applications are refused because they have not the necessary influence or contacts.

Certain conditions should be imposed in authorities to prospect in order to safeguard the scientific welfare of the mineral and mining industry. When a substantial applicant applies for an authority to prospect, a signed undertaking or bond should be given that a contribution will be made for research and the promotion of modern, scientific techniques of mining, to ensure that in our skills we compare favourably with the rest of the world. But what happens?

There is a brain drain in this industry, just as there is in the field of education in this State with teachers going overseas. The Government has sucked the wool industry dry, and left it in a chaotic state. The sugar industry has been ruined, and we now have the sorry spectacle of the Government introducing dairy industry legislation to put dairy farmers off the land. What will we do with valuable mineral resources that were

not proved by any skill of the Government and that are in the soil not through the efforts or work of the Government, but thanks to divine providence? Are we to allow this wealth to be exploited by overseas interests? Should we not ensure that the youth of this country are suitably trained in expertise and research so that the best use may be made of our natural resources? Why have we delayed for so long and dithered about insisting on these companies contributing to a fund to train our scientists, geologists, engineers, etc.? I feel sure that any bona-fide company would welcome the opportunity to train these skilled men and to make a contribution to their overseas study, if necessary.

Mr. Lickiss: Of course, Mount Isa Mines Ltd. did this.

Mr. BENNETT: It is one of the exceptions. It is a protege of a Labour Government. A Labour Government insisted on the high standards set by that company, and that cannot be denied. Incidentally, I do not know of any Labour Minister who insisted on getting a bonus issue of shares from Mount Isa Mines Ltd. when it was given its franchise.

The facilities provided for scientists and geologists by the Department of Mines would do justice to prehistoric pioneers. They are working in a horse stable that was an adjunct to a warehouse. The geologists have not a suitable library for their rocks.

Mr. Melloy: You would find better facilities in primary schools.

Mr. BENNETT: That is so.

These young men who do long years of study at the university and invariably do a good deal of practical work are taken advantage of by the department in a very unfair fashion by being paid salaries unrelated to their skills and by being given working conditions not suited to the application of their expertise. I hear on the grapevine that there was great joy and jollification a couple of months ago when one officer was given suitable shelf space for his rocks. The other geologists have to leave their rocks on the floor in a pile like an old mullock heap.

The conditions under which they work in the field also leave a lot to be desired. To be a scientist or an expert in this department, a person needs the physical resources and understanding of our early ancestors in order to survive in the open and cook his meals, which he is required to do not so many miles from Brisbane.

A Government Member: He is living as the railway fellows did under Labour.

Mr. BENNETT: It is rather strange that the hon. member should make that interjection because the only bona-fide railwaymen in Parliament were elected by railwaymen as A.L.P. parliamentarians who voiced the

opinions and advocated the desires of railwaymen. That happened during the time of Labour Governments and since the A.L.P. has been in Opposition. I am sure that railwaymen do not share the views of the interjector.

Mr. Ahern: What about the hon. member for Windsor?

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member for Windsor has never advocated the interests of railwaymen in this Chamber. He has set himself up as a rural expert. I understand that he is the Government's shadow Minister for Lands and that he was hoping there would be a fragmentation of the Cabinet recently. He was lined up at the barrier ready to step on to the front bench.

Mr. Tucker: The Liberals correctly describe him as a political accident.

Mr. BENNETT: I think that they will remove the accident in the next endorsement.

A matter has been drawn to my attention by the energetic representative for Rockhampton North, who keeps a close eye on everything that affects his area and the development of the State. It has also been referred to in the Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin." He drew my attention to what are regarded as some of the great economic dangers that the State is facing in the mineral field. The comment to which I am about to refer comes from no less an authority than the Senior Lecturer in Economics at the University of Queensland, namely, Mr. A. L. Loughheed. He said in effect that the course that this Government is following could develop into a dual economic situation where the foreign factor received the major exploitation benefits and the domestic sector few benefits. He went on to say that the Australian Management Institute also agreed with that contention.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LOW (Coorooora) (4.46 p.m.): In taking part in the debate on the Estimates of the Department of Mines and Main Roads, I should like at the outset to extend my sincere congratulations to the Minister and the chief officers of his two departments, namely, Mr. Harry Lowe, Commissioner of Main Roads, and Mr. E. K. Healy, Under Secretary for Mines.

I say right at the beginning that under Labour administration Mines was a very junior portfolio; indeed, it was known as the breaking-in portfolio for newly appointed Ministers of the Crown and was almost non-existent till the coalition Government took over in 1957. We therefore have a very proud record in Queensland today.

There has been extensive development throughout Queensland since 1957. When the late Ernie Evans was appointed Minister for Mines, he laid the foundations for the development of the rich underground resources in all parts of the State. Ernie

Evans was one of my best friends, and on one occasion he said to me that when he retired or passed away he would like Ronnie Camm to be appointed Minister for Mines to carry on the good work he had started. I was very pleased when the Premier of the day saw fit to do just that. Ronnie Camm has built up the Mines Department and the Main Roads Department to such an extent that all must be very proud of his record of service to this State.

Mr. Tucker: Did you vote for him?

Mr. LOW: It is not a matter of voting for him. I have a high regard for the Minister, and his star is about to rise. That means he has a great potential as a Minister. Whilst the Premier desires to hold that office, he will have it as far as I am concerned; but, if we have to select a successor to the Premier, I am sure we could do no better than choose the present Minister for Mines and Main Roads. That is a pretty plain statement.

Mr. Bennett: Is there a hatchet over there?

Mr. LOW: There is no hatcheting about me; I am straight from the shoulder, and always have been.

I want to speak this afternoon about main roads in particular. First of all, I should like to deal with a few matters that concern my electorate. I draw the attention of the Minister and the Commissioner of Main Roads to the fact that No. 4 Division of the Widgee Shire is in the Coorooora electorate. Imbil is the capital of Widgee Shire, and it is situated in the centre of No. 4 Division. It is a fairly substantial township, backed by rural industries, including timber-getting. It has a high school, and a primary school with a very large attendance. But I am sorry to say that it is the only township in the Widgee Shire that has not a fully bitumen-surfaced road leading to it. I ask the Minister and the Commissioner to give early consideration to the release of a scheme for the construction of the missing link between Imbil and Tuckekoi, which will put Imbil on the map and provide improved access to Gympie, Nambour and Brisbane. The road is now used extensively by school bus services, milk and cream carriers, timber-getters, and others.

I appeal to the Minister also for the erection of a new bridge across Yabbavale Creek. The present bridge was constructed about 15 years ago by the local residents when a flood washed away the structure built by the Widgee Shire Council. It has outlived its usefulness and has deteriorated considerably in recent years. A new bridge is needed urgently. Five district farmers met the Widgee Shire Council recently and put a case for its construction, and the council has formed a deputation to meet the Commissioner of Main Roads at an early date. I add my support to their request.

Other roads in the Widgee Shire also require attention. I mention particularly the

Imbil-Brooloo Road and the Borumba Dam Road. Ever since the Borumba Dam was completed many tourists and other people have come to the Imbil district to have a look at this marvellous body of water, on which all sorts of sports are conducted. This has brought a tremendous volume of what could be regarded as "foreign" traffic to the area, but it is welcomed by people residing in the area.

I should mention also some work in the Noosa Shire that I believe is essential. Realignment of the road between Noosaville and Noosa Heads is needed, as also is a new bridge over the mouth of Weyba Creek and a new alignment of the approach roads at both ends. The existing bridge is a hump-backed structure built by T. M. Bourke Pty. Ltd. about 40 years ago, and a new bridge has become a matter of urgency because of the extensive development that has taken place at Noosa Heads and Sunshine Beach and the increased volume of traffic using the scenic coastal highway to reach Tewantin, Noosaville and Noosa Heads.

I also ask the Minister to release a scheme for the Cooroy-Belli road. Quite a lot of work has been done on it, but a short section still remains to be constructed and sealed.

The realignment, widening and sealing of the road from Six-mile Bridge at Cooran to the Pinbarren turnoff also is necessary. The road is sealed all the way from Greenridge to Traveston and into Cooran and then to the Pinbarren turnoff, but it is not wide enough to carry the heavy volume of traffic from Gympie to North Coast beach resorts in addition to the vehicles of farmers who live in this closely settled area.

Realignment of the range section of the Cooroy-Tewantin road also is needed. This was the first job that was released after I was elected member for Coorooora some years ago, but it was built to an alignment that caused dangerous curves. The traffic is now so intense that these curves must be eliminated to prevent the accidents that occur on this range from time to time.

I should like also to ask the Minister for Main Roads and the Minister for Transport to install boom gates at the Cooran railway level crossing on the Greenridge-Pinbarren main road. Boom gates were installed at Pomona during the last financial year and they have certainly proved a boon to the town. They have saved considerable delays and have been beneficial in many other ways. Cooran, which is only three miles north, has a similar problem to that experienced in Pomona until recently, and I should like the Minister to include that job in next year's programme.

Further construction is required on the Pomona-Cootharaba-Boreen road, which serves a lakeside resort at Cootharaba. This is fast becoming a popular resort, and there are many new settlers in the district.

I should like to draw the Minister's attention to something in the Maroochy Shire about which I spoke at the official opening by the Minister at Montville of the Nambour-Mapleton-Montville-Maleny highway over the Blackall Range. This road opened up one of the most beautiful mountain drives in Australia. It will also eliminate delays caused by flooding in Eudlo Creek, Sippy Creek and the Caloundra turn-off area of the Mooloolah River, as people coming from the North can now side-track from Nambour up to Mapleton, along to Montville, through Maleny, down into Landsborough and thus to Brisbane, thereby avoiding many of the hold-ups that have occurred. At that function I drew the Minister's attention to the urgency for the realigning, widening and bitumen surfacing of the very dangerous and winding range sections of the Mapleton-Obi Obi secondary road. This road serves a number of farmers in the Obi Obi valley, as well as being a popular tourist attraction.

I should also like to ask the Minister to look into the construction of the roads leading to the farming areas in my electorate. Quite an amount of good work has been carried out on the missing link on the Eumundi-Noosa road, and a new bridge, known as Neylan's bridge, is at present under construction. Further bitumen surfacing of the Yandina-Bli Bli road, the Yandina Creek road, the Cooloolabin road and the Sunrise road is required for the benefit of both farmers and tourists.

You might think, Mr. Hooper, that this is quite a tall order, but when you realise that my electorate is the most closely settled rural area in Queensland it gives you some idea of the density of traffic and the demands made on these roads in an age when motor vehicles are being registered in greater numbers each day.

I now want to say something about the Bruce Highway and to support the construction of a four-lane highway between Bald Hills and the Maroochydhore turn-off. With the work that is progressing, the Bruce Highway between Brisbane and Gympie is certainly something that the department, the Minister and other members of this Parliament can be proud of. This road is used extensively by traffic to and from North Queensland and it is imperative that the Bald Hills-Maroochydhore turn-off section be made a four-lane highway as soon as possible.

Mr. Davies: The seven or eight-mile section north of Gympie is more important.

Mr. LOW: On traffic density statistics, that is not so.

The four-lane road from Brisbane through Aspley to Bald Hills is under construction, and the section near Nambour has been completed. A scheme is about to be undertaken to construct the section between Petrie Creek and the Bli Bli turn-off as a four-lane road. It is essential to complete that section before Nambour's next annual show, when

many thousands of motor vehicles will use the road, as they also do when large numbers of people attend sporting fixtures at the Nambour showgrounds.

I support the Central Sunshine Coast Chamber of Commerce in its representations to have the Bruce Highway through Brisbane clearly marked with directional signs indicating the route to the Sunshine Coast and other parts of the North Coast. Suitable signs could be used in the same way as those that indicate the road to the Gold Coast.

Mr. Davies: Ninety-five per cent. of the people go to Hervey Bay.

Mr. LOW: I am about to deal with Hervey Bay. Early next year the local authorities from Noosa to Maryborough will call a conference to consider the construction of a coastal highway between Noosa, Tin Can Bay and Hervey Bay. I fully support this project, and I hope the Minister will see his way clear to make funds available under section 19 of the Main Roads Act and the Crown Land Development Act for its construction. In the early days I was instrumental in having a road constructed from Caloundra to Noosa. The late Mr. Alf Muller, then Minister for Lands, and I worked very hard to bring that project to fruition, and the road now carries between 3,000 and 5,000 vehicles daily. If a road is to be built from Noosa to Hervey Bay, the hon. members for Maryborough, Isis and Gympie and I should be invited to attend the conference that I have referred to. I am sure we could be of some help in its deliberations.

At a recent meeting of the Yandina branch of the Australian Country Party a motion was carried that I be requested to make representations to the Minister to have the new bridge over the South Maroochy River named the James Low Bridge. The Minister has said that he will support and offer no objection to the adoption of that name, and for that, I thank him. The late James Low was my grandfather, and he and his wife Christina were the earliest white settlers in the Maroochy district. They settled there in the early 1860's, when the place was called "Maroochie".

In "Queensland's Heritage", a book published by Mr. Heath, the Assistant State Librarian, the history of the Low family is set out in detail. James Low conducted a boarding-house, general store, hotel, butcher shop and post office on a site adjacent to the new bridge. As well, he established a changing station for the Cobb & Co. coaches that ran between Brisbane and Gympie.

I was honoured and pleased to make those representations to the Minister to create a historical landmark in memory of my grandfather. The bridge cost \$114,000, and the approaches \$57,000. The bridge is on the Bruce Highway, in the township of Yandina. As far back as 1862 my grandfather, who had lived in Wharf Street, Brisbane, shifted to the North Coast and became its first white settler.

At that time Aborigines abounded in that area. He and his wife looked after them, helped them and fed them, and tried to keep them on the strait and narrow path. The proposed change is justified, and I sincerely thank the Minister and the Commissioner for agreeing to it.

I could dwell at length in explaining what I know about the Low family. I am the third generation of the family, which has lived in the Maroochy area all these years. Its members were keenly interested in the development of the timber industry. In the early days, when there was no road transport, much of the timber came to Brisbane by raft. We have come a long way in 100 years. Passing the spot that I have mentioned is an excellent bitumen-surfaced road crossing a high-level bridge that all Queenslanders can be truly proud of. This bridge will be officially opened by the Minister for Lands on Saturday week, 21 November.

(Time expired.)

Mr. THACKERAY (Rockhampton North) (5.6 p.m.): I have two matters that I wish to bring to the Minister's attention. The first concerns stolen vehicles. Recently one of my constituents approached me about a stolen vehicle that he was unfortunate enough to have purchased. I should like to put the facts on record so that the Minister may be able to advise me and other members so that we, in turn, can tell our constituents what they should do.

The motor-car that this man purchased was advertised in "The Morning Bulletin", and he inquired about it. It carried New South Wales number-plates and he said to his wife, "This car seems rather cheap." I will not mention the names of the people involved or the make of the car, but after making certain inquiries at the police station the man purchased the vehicle and later returned the New South Wales number-plates to the Main Roads Department. In due course, after waiting a month or six weeks, he obtained Queensland number-plates and a certificate of registration. After going through this process he naturally thought that in no way could it be a "hot" car. In the meantime, he had spent about \$200 in carrying out repairs on the differential and other parts of the vehicle.

A Government Member: He bought it privately?

Mr. THACKERAY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member realises that, so far as motor vehicles are concerned, I can only allow him to talk about registration and the roads that vehicles run on. If that is what he intends to do, it will be all right.

Mr. THACKERAY: That is what I intend to do. This concerns the registration of the vehicle.

The registration plates were returned and the vehicle was registered by the Main Roads Department. However, not only did this man lose the car, but he also lost the \$200 he had spent on it. Two months elapsed before the police discovered that the vehicle had been stolen in New South Wales. Many Queensland used-car dealers buy vehicles relatively cheaply in New South Wales, bring them to Queensland, cancel the New South Wales registration and sell them with Queensland plates. Many people in Queensland buy cars at used-car yards or privately, as this gentleman did. Surely the Main Roads Department checked this vehicle in some way, in co-ordination with the Police Department, to see if it was stolen. I realise that the checking of all registrations is a gigantic task, as a vehicle could be stolen in Western Australia and have the registration plates changed in every State before being brought to Queensland.

I know the case of a Rockhampton businessman from whose truck the plates were stolen during show week. The plates subsequently turned up in Cairns, and hon. members could never guess what happened. The owner got a "bluey" or "blister", or a fine, I should say, from the Cairns City Council because the time on a parking meter had expired. It was not his truck at all. It was a "bomb" picked up out of a dump somewhere, with his plates affixed to it. But he got the ticket. Of course, he hotfooted it over to me, and it was all fixed up in very quick time.

It is quite an easy matter for a person in Queensland to have his number-plates stolen. He could have a suspicious wife who might want to know what he was doing in Cairns when his vehicle was supposed not to have left Rockhampton.

Mr. Camm: He would get into trouble.

Mr. THACKERAY: He would get into trouble, all right. These are questions that should be answered. There should be closer co-ordination between the Main Roads Department and the Police Department. They should use computers so that offices or departments in other States could provide any desired information within seven days. If this happened a person could be told, "Come back in seven days and we will be able to guarantee that this vehicle was not stolen interstate." This matter should be looked into. My colleague, the shadow Minister for Mines and Main Roads, tells me it is an italics machine. That would be right, because he has more knowledge of these things than I have.

I do not know why we have to follow American trends, particularly the type of thing depicted in the film "Hell's Angels", which was advertised on television and in the Press throughout Queensland. The Minister should have some say in the registration of the type of motor-cycles ridden by these "hoons" with long hair. This relates

to registration, Mr. Hooper. This motor-bike craze is catching on more and more in Queensland. The motor-bikes have either very high handle-bars or handle-bars like cow-horns turned downwards, and the rider cannot see what is in front of him. The Minister controls registration. I realise that this matter also comes under road safety, which is controlled by the Minister for Transport.

I have ridden many motor-bikes in my time, although I am not as experienced as Mr. Speaker, who was an expert in this field. However, I know that motor-bikes are dangerous. In my day, a person riding an old Harley Davidson with the straight handle-bars and adopting a straight posture could see everything ahead of him, but it is up to us to look at the motor-bikes ridden by these young "hoons" today and to lay down a strict code for their registration.

A couple of months ago I asked a question in the House about having traffic lights installed in Musgrave Street, North Rockhampton. The Minister said they were not warranted. I fail to see why. The only traffic lights in Rockhampton, with a population of 55,000, are at the corner of Denham and East Streets, although I believe that a set is to be installed in the near future at the corner of Bolsover and Fitzroy Streets. North Rockhampton is the main outlet to the North, and the road is a six-lane highway. At the intersections of Elphinstone Street with Burnett Street and Armstrong Street (where the Main Roads Department office is situated) it is almost impossible to cross the road; it takes from 10 to 15 minutes. Women with children have no chance of getting across in safety. There are no lights there. There is not even a set of push-button lights so that traffic can be stopped to allow people to walk across in safety. The T.A.B. agency is only a couple of doors from the intersection of Lucas and Musgrave Streets, and on Saturday mornings it is impossible for women particularly to cross there. The same problem is found up where the north-side Plaza is situated.

I point out to the Minister that in Mackay, with a population of about 26,000, there are five sets of traffic lights. If they are warranted in Mackay, surely they are warranted even more in Rockhampton, particularly in the places to which I have referred.

I should now like to make brief reference to the roads entering Rockhampton via Port Curtis Junction, which come under the Minister's control. I notice that last year only about \$18,000 was spent on the widening of the Benaraby-Rockhampton section of the Bruce Highway. I believe that is the section going out towards Balmoral, where I understand it is intended to eliminate two level-crossings and provide a direct road coupling-up at Midgee. I should like the Minister to tell me in his reply whether any

money has been allocated this year for the widening of the Bruce Highway, apart from the Port Curtis Junction-Midgee section.

Whilst dealing with roads, I know that the hon. member for Callide will not disagree with what I am about to say. I know that he has made strong representations on it to the Minister, but unfortunately he does not seem to have made them to the correct ear. I refer to the bitumen-surfacing of the Keppel Sands Road. Admittedly, I have a particular interest in this road. Very shortly there will be a town water supply at Keppel Sands, and the bitumen-surfacing of the 4½-mile section of that road is long overdue. I appreciate that 1½ miles was surfaced last year, and I hope that this year the other 4½ miles will be paved. It is indeed long overdue.

I close my contribution by referring to the need for a new bridge in Rockhampton. With the city's increased population, the present Fitzroy Bridge is dangerous. There have been numerous fatal accidents on it. I realise that engineers are the ones to decide where a new bridge should be placed, but I suggest that it should be upstream from the barrage. The mayor of Rockhampton has said that Rockhampton will have a riverside drive, through Victoria Park right up above the barrage to the Six Mile, which will be the equal of Brisbane's Coronation Drive. The Minister knows that part of Rockhampton.

Mr. Ahern: Pilbeam Drive.

Mr. THACKERAY: No. He has a drive named after him on my side of the city.

I believe that planning for a new bridge in Rockhampton should begin now. I realise, of course, that that will take a few years. I do not think that a new bridge should be built downstream from the present bridge; because of flooding, it should be on higher ground. I ask the Minister to consider my request, and to have some planning carried out on it.

Mr. INCH (Burke) (5.19 p.m.): In speaking on these Estimates, I do so with some pride and a great deal of satisfaction in the knowledge that I represent an electorate which, because of mineral production alone, contributes greatly to the economy of the State. This contribution continues to increase in leaps and bounds, as is indicated by the reported value of mineral production in 1969, when minerals to the value of \$183,414,007 were mined on Mt. Isa gold and mineral fields. That is an increase in value of \$56,061,777 over the reported figure of \$127,352,230 in 1968.

While it may be said that Mount Isa Mines Limited has been responsible for virtually the whole of the values produced, great credit must also be given to the small mines operating throughout the Mt. Isa-Cloncurry district. They were responsible for producing copper to the value of \$2,500,000. The efforts of many of these

small operators are all the more meritorious when it is realised that their financial resources are very limited—in some cases, almost non-existent—and that they live and work to produce mineral wealth under conditions that the majority of their fellow-men would reject out of hand. So when the praises are being sung of those contributing to the economy of the State, let us not forget the small producers, who are doing a worthwhile job. I cannot speak too highly of their fortitude and the part they play in the search for mineral wealth in Queensland.

Speaking further of the value of mineral production in the Mt. Isa area, I point out to the Committee that if anyone had heard the opinion expressed 15 years ago that the value of mineral production there would reach about \$183,500,000 in 1969 and increase by \$56,000,000 in one year, he could have been excused for being sceptical. However, with modern methods of mining, the know-how of miners and operators, the efficiency of extraction, and the expenditure of large amounts of money on mining plant and equipment, this has become a reality. In the years to come, with the additional production from the Hilton mine and at Gunpowder, it is not too difficult to envisage the value of mineral production running into several hundred millions of dollars, and possibly more if Mary Kathleen and other uranium deposits are brought into production.

Another untapped source of mineral wealth within my area is the huge phosphate deposits at Duchess and Lady Annie, and I was pleased to note in the Minister's introductory remarks that 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.

The deposits at Duchess could contain thousands of millions of tons, which would provide a reserve far greater than those of Christmas Island and Nauru, which are Australia's chief phosphate suppliers. Australia imports almost 3,000,000 tons of rock phosphate a year; but if this deposit is as large as it seems, the position would be reversed and Australia would be able to export to the South-east Asian market, which is starved of phosphates and other fertilisers.

I understand from the Minister's remarks that capital costs for the development and exploitation of the deposits are expected to exceed \$100,000,000, so it could well be that this requirement might be beyond the financial ability of those who discovered them. If that is so, what will happen? Will Australia, through the agency of the recently formed Australian Industries Development Corporation, whose job it is to assist in such situations, be given the opportunity to assist in large measure to develop the deposits, or will they eventually become grist to the mills of foreign investment? I hope not.

Our natural resources are the envy of the world. For far too long Queenslanders and Australians have sat back and allowed others to reap the rewards. Having had the good fortune to find them, we should try to make the most of them for ourselves, while not totally ignoring the possible interest and assistance of outsiders.

I was also interested to note from the Minister's remarks the amount of money that had been expended in the area of Sunset, Mt. Isa, on street construction, channelling, kerbing, and other services. Admittedly, Mt. Isa suffers an acute shortage of housing, and the city council cannot itself handle everything alone. The Mines Department came to the rescue by making \$200,000 available for this work. It could be said that the Minister is trying to create the impression that this \$200,000 was a straight-out grant to the city council for this purpose, but, as I understand it, the position is that when the blocks are developed—when the channelling, kerbing and other services have been completed—they are auctioned. There is an upset price, and from the moneys received, the Mines Department is eventually repaid. In effect, while the Mines Department is assisting in this respect, it is not making a straight-out grant of the money to the city council.

I wish to raise another matter with the Minister. Of great concern to home-builders in Mt. Isa is the delay in the delivery of the instrument of lease for miner's homestead perpetual leases. From time to time I have taken the matter up with the Minister by correspondence, making representations on behalf of my constituents for matters to be expedited, and I will admit that efforts have been made to do this. Some people constructing their homes on these M.H.P.L.'s have to try to raise finance, and the first thing they are asked when they approach a bank or some other financial institution is to produce the instrument of lease. Of course, this they cannot do, and the result is that until they can the home-building is held up.

I realise that possibly some of the delay occurs in the court-house at Mt. Isa, although it is no fault of the staff. There is no doubt that the staff at the court-houses at both Mt. Isa and Cloncurry are doing an excellent job under very difficult conditions. There is a shortage of staff, and it is impossible to process immediately all the applications for miner's homestead perpetual leases, mining leases and authorities to prospect that are received. All of these must be handled by the small staff. They cannot be dealt with quickly enough and a certain amount of delay occurs in the processing that has to be done. The applications then have to be sent to Brisbane, and there is some delay down here as well.

I think the problem could be overcome to some extent if the staff at Mt. Isa was increased. I know that efforts have been made to clean up some of the lag in the work

by transferring officers from other court-houses to Mt. Isa for short periods, but this is only a stop-gap measure.

Until the Minister puts in the Mt. Isa Court House a staff that is large enough to cope with the work that has to be done, these delays will continue. In addition, there are probably occasions when men who are asked to take up a position at Mt. Isa would be hesitant to do so because there is insufficient housing for them and living conditions there are not equal to those enjoyed in the South and on the coast. It is only reasonable to assume that these people would not want to go to Mt. Isa or other western areas until adequate housing is provided for them and living conditions are made more pleasant. As I said before, the court-house staff there is doing a magnificent job under difficult conditions.

I refer now to the processing of mining leases and A.T.P.'s. Unfortunately, the maps in the mining wardens' offices are not always up to date—I realise that that is the result of the flood of applications that have been made in recent years in Mt. Isa and Cloncurry for A.T.P.'s and leases—and on some occasions people who apply for leases subsequently learn that they have pegged over the top of other leases. That creates a difficult problem.

Mr. Davies: Is it a shortage of staff?

Mr. INCH: Yes, it is caused partly by a shortage of staff.

I ask the Minister to look at these matters because they are exercising the minds of his staff at Mt. Isa. He could assist them a great deal by providing them with good homes and reasonable working conditions.

I want to raise the need to establish a Main Roads Department branch at Mt. Isa. Other hon. members have referred to the necessity of establishing such branches in their electorate, but I point out that the ratio of motor vehicles to people in Mt. Isa is probably higher than it is anywhere else in the State. A tremendous number of motor vehicle registrations pass through the Mt. Isa Court House each year, yet the registration forms have to be sent to Brisbane for processing. When a new car is registered, a delay is involved in getting its number-plates, so it is possible for a new car without number-plates to be stolen without any possibility of its being traced by means of a registration number.

The establishment of a Main Roads branch at Mt. Isa would relieve police officers of a good deal of the extra work that they are called upon to do. In view of the revenue that the Government obtains from motor vehicle registration fees, royalties on the mine's production, tax, and rail freights it should provide by way of return a branch of the Main Roads Department and other public utilities in that city.

I ask the Minister to look at the matters that I have raised. I hope he will accede to my requests.

Mr. LLOYD (Kedron) (5.33 p.m.): It is amazing to listen to the defences that have been raised by Government members, including the Minister, on the matter of Queensland's mineral development. They have endeavoured to defend the very generous terms offered to overseas companies to come to Queensland and exploit our mineral resources at tremendous profit to themselves. One would be inclined to believe from those members' remarks that we owe these companies a tremendous debt, either in gratitude for developing something that should be developed to meet the world demand or as a reward for the enterprise that they have shown in making such huge profits.

Perhaps the gratitude of the companies is indicated by the very small offering that they have made to Queensland Cabinet Ministers and the nation's political leaders, and I refer, of course, to the share issue made by Comalco. It was very small indeed having regard to the tremendous profits that that company has accrued from a Government licence granted to it in 1957. The terms of that licence have never been carried out by Comalco. The whole system of licensing by way of mineral leases has revealed the lack of planning of this Government and its irresponsibility. The Government is so anxious to get companies to come to Queensland and mine bauxite, coal or nickel, that it is prepared to offer them the most generous terms and conditions. At the same time, Cabinet Ministers accept shareholdings in the company with which they are negotiating.

On a previous occasion I asked for a Royal Commission into mineral development in North Queensland. I repeat that request not so much because I think there is crookedness on the part of Ministers, but because I want to get planned land usage and mineral development that will benefit the State and give the people of Queensland a greater permanent return than they are getting at present.

The Minister has spoken of the times when Queensland Labour Governments reduced royalties on coal and other minerals. After 1946, in the immediate post-war years, when I was private secretary to the late Premier of Queensland, Ned Hanlon, I recall the scientific research carried out into the mineral resources of Queensland. The Powell Duffryn report of the late 1940's was the result of a survey of the coal resources of Central and Northern Queensland. It referred to tremendous coal resources throughout the basin. At that time the Government almost begged overseas companies, and countries such as Japan and France, to come to Queensland to develop our resources. But the demand for those resources was not great and those countries did not come here to develop them and export them to other countries. Today, the position is entirely different.

We could compare what has happened in Queensland with what has happened in oil development in Middle East countries. In the first place, the companies received the

lion's share of the profits from oil and mineral discoveries in those countries. Today, the same countries are demanding a 51 per cent. shareholding in companies making profits from oil found there. In the early days royalties payments were very low, but there was a gradual realisation that world demand was increasing. When it became very great, the sheik or the Government demanded that the people should share in the wealth flowing from the development of mineral resources. But in Queensland we are 20, 30 or 40 years behind. We have not kept an eye on world demand. We are still operating under the old system, with a low royalty return to the Government and with the Government building railway lines or attempting to finance them with precious money, taken from funds required for other badly needed works to enable mineral development to go ahead. Surely to goodness there are few people in the community today who believe that mineral development would not have taken place if generous concessions had not been granted to the companies.

A scandalous agreement was entered into with Comalco. I might almost say that corruption was involved, because the Government has been so generous. Certain conditions were imposed upon the company by the then Minister for Mines, but within a few short years they were completely removed from the agreement and the company has not carried out one of the costly conditions laid down in 1957 and 1958. It has become wealthy. In the aluminium world, it has grown from a very small entity to a giant amongst the many international giants, not by industrial expansion of the industry in Queensland, but by the expansion of a fabricating industry in other States, the establishment of an aluminium industry in New Zealand and an alumina refinery in Sardinia, with the effect of the European Common Market.

It has allowed other companies to come here and to carry out the conditions and provisions of the agreement that it was committed to in 1957, an emasculated agreement based on an authority to prospect granted in 1955 and 1956 to a company with the very small paid-up capital of £2,000,000. It was able to demand generous concessions from the Government, and has developed into an entity with world-wide ramifications. All we have received, as other Opposition members have pointed out, is 5c a ton on bauxite used in Queensland and 10c a ton on bauxite exported. Of course, we have paid for the development of the township and harbour at Weipa and that money may come back to us by way of harbour dues.

The excuse given by the Minister today—and it has been given previously by the Treasurer—is that the Government is building up its railway revenue and its Consolidated Revenue. Certainly it is building up its railway revenue through increased haulage of coal, to the extent of almost \$6,000,000

in 1968-69 and \$6,000,000 in 1969-70. However, what the Minister and the Treasurer have not told us is the cost involved in the construction of these lines in this regard. I shall quote some figures from the Auditor-General's Report for the benefit of the people who believe that the Minister and the Treasurer are sincere in stating that the revenue derived from the increased carriage of coal is sufficient excuse for building railway lines with money in the Loan Account, at the expense of other very important works.

On page 129 of the Auditor-General's Report we find this summary of capital indebtedness at 30 June, 1970, and servicing costs during 1969-70, of three railway projects which are a charge upon the working expenses of the railways—

Railway Project	Indebtedness 30 June, 1970	Servicing Costs, 1969-70	
		Interest	Repayments
	\$	\$	\$
Mount Isa ..	43,358,979	2,464,065	1,914,269
Moura ..	22,967,483	1,202,175	2,241,765
Blackwater to Gladstone ..	10,619,413	407,206	1,049,900

In other words, the total cost of servicing those three projects was \$9,279,380 in 1969-70. But we are told that the building up of Consolidated Revenue by the greater carriage of coal on those railway lines is justification for spending Loan Account money on overseas companies that are no doubt quite wealthy enough and should be prepared to build the lines themselves on a turnkey basis, handing over control of the railway to the Government.

The \$9,279,380 does not include the Goonyella railway line, which will represent several more millions of dollars within a few years because, even though this money is not coming from the Loan Account, the company is lending the State the necessary \$36,000,000 to pay for the line, and the revenue from the line will be a charge against the working expenses of another \$4,000,000. Therefore, the excuse that the revenue from railways represents a sufficient return to justify the expenditure of all this money by the State Government on overseas companies falls flat. Those costs have to be considered along with amortisation of the debt into which the people have been thrown by an irresponsible Government.

I believe it to be essential that an inquiry into mineral development be undertaken by the Government. A royal commission, if necessary, could be set up, or a top-level tribunal, to investigate, on a basis of land use, the present issuing of authorities to prospect. Such a tribunal could also make recommendations on the granting of mineral leases of all types, the conditions to be contained in such leases, the charges to be

imposed on mining companies, the profitability of mineral development, and what Governments should receive as their share for the work in which they will necessarily be involved. As development proceeds, the Government will be faced with more than the cost of railway lines. It will have to meet the cost of harbours, harbour facilities, roads to service mines, schools, hospitals, and all the normal social services required by an increasing population. All these costs are charges against the community.

In fact, when one considers the return to be obtained by Queensland from mining, one finds that the greater part of the return goes to the Commonwealth Government. Charges on the State Government for the provision of social services are in reality charges against not only the people and the State Government but against local authorities, which have to provide numerous services. The charges to be met by all authorities are quite substantial. No Government should be permitted to enter into any agreement that does not take into consideration the economic involvement of not only State and Federal Governments but local authorities and the people generally.

We cannot carry on with the present unplanned, one-brain type of development. I use the term "one-brain" deliberately. I do not say that officers of the Mines Department are incapable. In fact, I know that they are highly capable. I know quite a few of them personally, and I know the excellent work that they have done on behalf of the State over many years. But they are concerned only with mining and the development of the mineral resources of Queensland. In the development of mineral resources, it is necessary to take into consideration all the other uses to which the land could be put. All economic factors involved in the development must be considered; one cannot confine oneself to saying, "There is a deposit of coal. It must be developed. Therefore we will provide a mining lease for those who want to develop it."

It was this attitude that got the Government into such a horrible tangle over the Cooloolooloo issue. There should have been an investigation of the Cooloolooloo area to determine what part should become a national park, what part should be conserved in its entirety, and what part should be developed. Such an approach on the basis of land usage could have done much to overcome the problem. But no; the Government has a one-brain attachment to mineral development. The application had to go before the Mining Warden, whose recommendation would, naturally enough, be that mining should proceed in certain areas. No regard was paid to the fact that there were other aspects of land usage that should have been considered. No doubt there are some areas in which rehabilitation of the country is badly needed. I am sure that there is swamp country that needs rehabilitation. But never is any investigation

of an area carried out from a land-usage point of view, and that is necessary if there is to be a departure from the one-brain attitude to mineral development.

Let us understand the economic factors involved. If land is required for coal mining, let us understand that taking a dragline 50 or 60 miles to the site will cause disturbance to numerous primary producers. It will unsettle other industries. It will turn the soil into a desert and, in the final analysis, create a lake in ground that might have produced a perpetually recurring dividend if it had been used differently.

Because there is a mineral in one area of Queensland, one cannot say immediately a company comes along, "We will grant a mining lease to this company." A great deal of suffering has arisen from the easy granting of authorities to prospect. People wishing to tie up a piece of land for a brief period, irrespective of its ownership, have applied for and received an authority to prospect and thus prevented the real owner from developing the land at least for a period. The farcical situation has arisen that the real owner of land in a mining area has been forced to take out an authority to prospect to protect his own land against that form of invasion. The land may not be needed for mining purposes by the person taking out the authority to prospect. He may take it out for illegitimate purposes, and that may not be discovered until the authority has been in operation for several years.

The whole of Queensland's mining laws are outdated. They were enacted when there was not the heavy world demand for Australian minerals that there is today. I think it is a tragedy that so much Queensland coal and bauxite and Western Australian iron ore is leaving this country and being used for the expansion of industries in other countries. On one occasion before the Second World War when Labour controlled the Federal Parliament, the Government granted a mineral lease to an overseas company but insisted that the secondary development of the mineral should take place in Australia. It was successful, and the company concerned was still prepared to accept the mining lease and comply with the conditions in it. If the Queensland Government had investigated the whole matter, and if in 1961, when it gave permission to Comalco to export bauxite to Japan in contravention of the terms of its own agreement, it had in fact repealed the agreement with the company and called tenders on the world market, this State would be much better off than it is at present in bauxite and aluminium development. Instead, the Government granted the company further generous concessions.

The development of Queensland's mineral resources can be carried out from overseas if the know-how and finance is not available here; but I believe that it is. The finance at least is available, because most of the

companies are using the Australian banking system for their own purposes. If it is not, why not use the turnkey basis that is adopted in other countries?

(Time expired.)

Mr. B. WOOD (Cook) (5.54 p.m.): Mr. Hooper—

Mr. Davies: No Government speakers again?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Maryborough has been repeatedly interrupting his own colleagues. That is very rude, and I ask him to discontinue the practice.

Mr. B. WOOD: Earlier the Minister spoke of hon. members who had dealt with the road needs of their own electorates. He indicated that such a course was quite justifiable, so I shall follow it for a short time and take hon. member on a Cook's tour through the Cook electorate.

The Peninsular section of the Cook electorate contains the largest area in Queensland that remains unserved by a network of roads. I appreciate the size of the area—I am well aware of it because I have to try to travel through it—and I know the difficulties involved in constructing roads and the time it will take to do the work, but it is an important task that lies ahead of the Government.

Agriculturally, the country is not the best in Australia, although in many areas it is quite good, especially on the Gulf side. But it does have one very important attribute: it has a very good, regular and reliable rainfall. I think experience in the last 10 years or so has shown people, especially primary producers, that a reliable rainfall is perhaps the most important thing they can have. We can always add fertilisers to the ground, but we cannot yet induce rain to fall from the heavens. For this reason, the potential of the Peninsula is rather greater than many people realise.

On the Gulf side, from Normanton north for several hundred miles, lies a large area of land. It is very fertile, it has a water supply and its potential is great, but as yet there is no adequate provision for roads. Last year in this chamber, at about this time, I spoke on the need for a seven-year plan to provide the Peninsula with roads. I know that a large amount of money is being spent in the Peninsula, certainly as far as Laura and also, although not to the same extent, through to Coen. But I believe that more money should be spent. Some people have claimed that it is hard to justify the expenditure of large sums of money as there is yet little development in the Peninsula. This may be true, but it is quite easy to justify the expenditure of this money by what it will do for the Peninsula.

As yet, there is not a tremendous volume of traffic through this area, but, if roads are built, traffic and development will follow. I have in mind a gazetted road from Cairns to the tip of Cape York. At the present time a developmental road is gazetted only as far as Weipa. I believe that this road to Weipa should be improved, as should also the roads to Portland Roads and Cooktown. I believe that there should be a coastal connection from Cooktown to the South. This is a basic requirement for development in the Peninsula, and these roads, within a seven-year or perhaps even a six-year period now, should be trafficable all the year round, except perhaps during major floods.

As I have said, this would be very important in the development of the area and also of great strategic importance. I have said that large sums of money are being spent in the area. I am very grateful for this, though perhaps not so much to the State Government as to the Federal Government, which has been providing almost all of the money through the beef roads scheme. I should like to see much more of Queensland's money spent in the area.

As I have indicated, I hope that the State Government can induce the Commonwealth Government—or that the State Government itself will take an interest in doing so—to extend the Peninsula developmental road to the tip of the Peninsula. At the present time there is no more than a track along the telegraph line to the Cape, but each year an increasingly large number of vehicles is traversing this track. I believe that last year approximately 30 vehicles arrived at the Aboriginal reserve at Bamaga, and next year, after the wet season, probably a still larger number will arrive. These vehicles are almost all of a suitable type for the area—four-wheel-drive vehicles—although there is the occasional motorist in a conventional car.

Mr. Bird: It is a good road from Bamaga to Somerset.

Mr. B. WOOD: I know that the hon. member has been on that road, but I would not call it a good road. However, at least it is a start. There is a sign at Bamaga indicating the road to Melbourne, but, as I have said, few people have travelled it.

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

Mr. B. WOOD: Probably the most scenic part of Queensland is that stretch of coastline from Cairns to Mossman and further north. The Cook Highway runs along the coastline, and I am pleased to say that at present extensive works are being carried out to improve it. I know that those works will continue until the highway is in a first-class condition.

I wish to mention some of the problems that have arisen in that area as the road-works have proceeded. Possibly similar problems arise in other places. A certain

person operated a caravan park and store at the roadside, but now his business is approximately 100 yards from the road. Of course, he derives most of his business from people who use the road. It is now no longer easy to proceed from the road to his store because that section of the highway is a limited-access road, and his site can be entered only from a turn-off approximately 500 yards away. Of course, by the time motorists see his shop and decide to call in they have passed the entrance to it. As a result, he has suffered considerable loss.

Mr. R. Jones: Is this at Clifton Beach?

Mr. B. WOOD: At the Clifton Beach turn-off. I have no complaint with the roadworks that have been carried out, but the Main Roads Department should give consideration to that person, as well as to others who suffer inconvenience or hardship as a result of roadworks.

I presented a proposal to the Main Roads Department to help this man. I propose that in the area between the new highway and the old road, that is, the area between the shop and the new road, a small national park be formed. The area contains several acres, and it could be used as a rest area. I suggested that a wide variety of flora be planted to make it more than a mere rest area. I was pleased that the department indicated that certain landscaping would be carried out in the area, although it was not as much as I had hoped. A few trees were planted—I do not care to say how many—and the department did a small amount of work. Unfortunately, the trees have died from lack of water. This seems to be a most unfortunate situation. A water main is situated close by, but neither the council concerned nor the Main Roads Department seems to be worried sufficiently to provide water to convert the area into a pleasant rest area, if nothing more. I know the Main Roads Department in Cairns has not forgotten the area. With the wet season about to begin, perhaps it will turn its attention once again to that site.

The report of the Main Roads Department says that approximately 130 rest areas are located at various points throughout the State, and of that number 49 are situated between Cairns and Coolangatta. So far, the one to which I have referred is the only one north of Cairns. I believe that the rest areas play a very important part in our road system. A number of road-safety authorities have told us that it is important after a couple of hours' driving for a motorist to get out of his car and move round. By doing so he uses different muscles and engages in activities other than simply sitting behind a steering wheel. A rest area is one of the few places where that can be done in safety. I hope that this very important aspect will receive more attention from the Main Roads Department year by year. I hope that more serious consideration will be given to my suggestion that, instead of merely a fireplace,

watering point and a few shady trees being provided, much greater variety of flora be incorporated. This could assist the gentleman I mentioned, as it would induce people to pull in at the side of the road. As far as is possible, the department should shoulder some responsibility for compensating business people who suffer because of the relocation of roads.

Mr. McKechnie: Is this north or south of the Daintree?

Mr. B. WOOD: It is rather well south of the Daintree. I hope that the hon. member has been north of Daintree.

The Rex Range Road in my electorate does not receive the attention that it should. It is one of the considerable number of roads throughout Queensland that connect the Bruce Highway with interior roads. It proceeds across the Great Dividing Range. There are three other such roads in the Far North, namely, the Palmerston, Kennedy and Gillies Highways, which are all gazetted main roads and receive due attention from the department.

For some reason the Rex Range Road has never been gazetted. I know that it does not carry quite as much traffic as the other roads, but it carries increasing traffic each year and money will have to be spent on it. The Main Roads Department should accept its responsibility and take over the development and maintenance of the road from the two shire councils, who presently carry out the work. It is a very scenic drive, but it is also very dangerous in wet weather, when the road becomes quite slippery. The many people who traverse the road must exercise great care. At my request the Minister had a traffic count taken on the road. However, I suspect that it was taken on a Tuesday, which is the day when the fewest cars would be on the road. If the count had been taken during a week-end, with people moving from the Tableland to the coast and more tourists on the road, it would have been much higher than the 93 per hour recorded.

I saw in the report a statement concerning the visual environment planning that is undertaken. That is an important aspect of the work of the Main Roads Department. I frequently drive up the Kuranda Range, through the lovely country there, and I always enjoy it. I sometimes get tired of travelling, but never in this area. I was pleased to see that the road works recently carried out in the area did not affect this beautiful drive. Those responsible for carrying out the work left as much timber as they could, and the scenic drive remains as beautiful as ever. A person who proceeds from the Tableland back to the coast passes through a wonderful natural arch on entering the rain-forest country. I hope that when any future road works are carried out, the trees will not be cut back and the arch destroyed. The department is fortunate in

having competent officers in the Far North. I assure the Minister that they do a good job.

Mr. Row: They have them everywhere.

Mr. B. WOOD: That is so. Frankly, that is one of the great strengths of any Government.

The other day I was impressed by the fact that the Treasurer, I think, in winding up the Budget debate—I may be wrong about that, but the incident occurred very recently in this Chamber—said that he would not now negotiate the Weipa agreement in the way that it was negotiated some years ago. He said that conditions and attitudes have changed, and that this would not now happen. It would seem that he has taken note of what we have been saying all along.

There is likely to be bauxite development at Aurukun, which is south of Weipa. When this happens—if it happens—I hope the Treasurer will be able to say, "We have done a better job for Queensland and the Aborigines here than we did at Weipa." The Aborigines at Aurukun have expressed concern to me. They want to be treated fairly in this matter. Collectively, they, as well as Queensland as a whole, should benefit. I am concerned that a company will be established to mine the bauxite and that another company might be established to process it; and that the mining company will sell to the processing company at such a low rate that the mining company will make virtually no profit, or even show a loss, so that these people will not gain from the mining venture. This is done by many overseas companies in Australia, and I am not now referring to mining companies. They make no profit in Australia. I hope that this situation can be avoided with the mining of bauxite at Aurukun.

At present, the Aborigines are working on the surveys being carried out there. I believe that their employers have a high regard for their capabilities, enthusiasm, and ability to acquire the skills associated with this work. It is important not only that they should benefit from the wages they are paid but also that the community as a whole should benefit from the resources of the area. The A.L.P. has made the point repeatedly that these resources are the resources of the State of Queensland. This area is an Aboriginal reserve, so the Aborigines should benefit. They have benefited far too late by the issue of shares by Comalco—just as certain other people in this State benefited.

The people who conduct these negotiations need to take a firm stand with the company involved to ensure that the Aborigines are dealt with properly and fairly. Far too often this has not been the case. I hope, in a year's time or in two years' time, that I will not have to complain about the conditions of the agreement.

(Time expired.)

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (7.28 p.m.): There are a number of matters I should like to deal with tonight. The first relates to natural gas. I record my appreciation of the assistance given to me by the Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner (Mr. M. L. Noume) and his staff in many cases that I referred to them following the conversion to natural gas in my electorate. Natural gas has since been supplied to householders in many other metropolitan electorates. I appreciate the good job done by Mr. Noume and his staff in the few isolated cases I still have to refer to them.

Unless the staff of the Gas Engineer is increased, as I have suggested before on behalf of the Opposition, we could be faced with a very serious problem in the metropolitan area. I refer to the explosions that have occurred here. Irrespective of the side of the Chamber on which they sit, all members representing metropolitan electorates should be concerned about this matter, and it is to be hoped that the Minister, and the Government, give very serious consideration to it. I do not know—and I think it is most important that somebody should know—what has happened to the gas mains of this city over the last 100 years. Ordinary working people who lay mains of various types, and I have in mind employees of the Postmaster-General's Department and the Brisbane City Council, state that they are amazed at the number of gas mains in the metropolitan area that have been closed off where new mains have been installed. To me, this presents a very serious situation, and it is to be hoped that the committee set up by the Government will quickly do something about the problem.

In the conversion to natural gas and the other types of gas now in use throughout the State, the Government Gas Engineer and his officers have carried out a very difficult job. I hope that the staff of this section will be increased, and that the suggestion will not produce the paltry attitude that some other department might be affected. Members of the Opposition have faced up to the problem, and we have made certain statements. I have made charges, and I do not withdraw them. I still say that the blow-outs that occurred in the metropolitan area constitute a problem that needs urgent consideration by the Government.

It is quite evident that there are under city streets today mains that are disused, bypassed, and cut off, and, from information that I have received and inspections that I have made, so corroded are they that they could burst at any time. I say to the Government that very serious consideration should be given immediately to the state of gas mains in the metropolitan area of Brisbane.

In my opinion, that can be done only by ensuring that the staff of the Government Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner is restored to its previous level. It is not

the first time that I have made such a suggestion in this Chamber. If there is to be a conversion to natural gas or any other type of gas in this State, the Government must ensure that it has available to it the services of men who are well qualified to know what effect such a conversion will have on the existing gas mains not only in Brisbane but in provincial cities over the length and breadth of Queensland.

Unfortunately, I cannot spend very much time discussing natural gas because I have a matter of major importance in my own electorate that I wish to bring before the Committee.

Mr. Dean: What is happening at Roma?

Mr. NEWTON: I am pleased to accept the interjection of the hon. member for Sandgate as to what is occurring at Roma. The Government has an obligation to tell hon. members what the present position is in the Roma area. Without going into the matter too deeply—and I wish to be fair to the Minister and the Government—reports that members of the Opposition have received make it quite clear that it would be cheaper for the people of Roma if the Roma Town Council reverted to the use of electricity instead of endeavouring to carry out its obligations following the discovery of natural gas in the area.

I could speak at some length on this problem, having been interested in the discovery of natural gas and the effect that conversion to its use has had in my own electorate and in other electorates in the metropolitan area. But let me make it quite clear that I am pleased with the job that has been done by the Government Gas Engineer and Chief Gas Examiner and the other officers of that sub-department under the Minister's control.

Mr. Miller: Are you saying that the residents of Roma should enjoy cheaper gas because it has been found there?

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member for Ithaca, as he usually does when I am on my feet, interjects and tries to upset me. He will not upset me on this question.

Mr. Miller: I am asking a serious question.

Mr. Chinchin: He would not know what the question was.

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member for Mt. Gravatt should be careful what he buys into.

Mr. Chinchin: What did you say about Noume and his departmental officers when they went into your electorate? You said they hounded the people who put in petitions. Now you come here and say what a wonderful job they did.

Mr. NEWTON: What a lot of rubbish! I did not say they hounded anybody. I took up the cudgels on behalf of the people, and I was successful. The departmental officers said, "Whatever you have asked for as the

member for Belmont has been noted. We assure you that we want to see natural gas used successfully in the metropolitan area. Everything you have said as the member for Belmont will be investigated." It was only because of the fight that I put up that most of the problems were solved. I am not one of those who rise in this Chamber and condemn the Government or a Minister or officers of his department—

Mr. Chinchin: You did at that time.

Mr. NEWTON: The hon. member would not even buy into it; it did not suit him to do so. The Mt. Gravatt traders were not behind it, so he was not interested. This affected people.

Before I leave this question I should like to say it is a pity that we do not have as much time as we would like to discuss these matters. However, I inform the Minister that we on this side of the Chamber are very concerned about what is happening at Roma at present. I should expect that Roma, the centre of the district in which natural gas has been discovered, should obtain some benefit from it. At the present time the people of Roma are not getting it. This is not a reflection on my good friend and colleague the hon. member for Roma because I think that if he were over here and could stand up and say what he should be saying, he would probably support me.

The other matter I wish to raise concerns the Main Roads Department. I agree with other hon. members that the report is quite a good one, but I am concerned about the fact that for a long period my electorate has been seriously affected by the action of this Government in closing down the railway line from Manly to Cleveland. This was done in 1961 before the present Minister took over the portfolio, but, at that time, the hon. member for Wynnum, the late Bill Gunn, the former member for Logan, Mr. Dick Wood, the member who preceded him, the late Mr. Harrison and I were all assured that because of the closure of the railway line from Manly to Cleveland this Government would give the same priority to a main road from Redland Shire to the metropolitan area as was given to roads in other areas where railway lines were closed.

Again, I do not intend to rubbish any officer of the department because, frankly, I appreciate the problems confronting them in dealing with the Belmont tram terminus which, incidentally, should have been known as Carina. The department tackled the problem on what was then a main road. Today it is a sub-arterial road but, so far as I am concerned, it is the lifeline from the Redlands district through my electorate. The late Minister dealt with a serious problem there. The report indicates what is happening in the Redland Shire, where the department is working back the other way towards

Capalaba, but my main concern is the sub-arterial road, which used to be a main road and in my view is still a main road, from Capalaba to Creek Road.

I have written many letters to the department in the decade I have represented this area in an endeavour to get a dragseal done as quickly as possible and so save this lifeline through my electorate to the Redland Shire. Unfortunately, up to the present, very little has been done about it. Recently it was necessary for me to make representations to the Minister and point out the very serious defects of this road. In my letters and in a question in the House I asked about the life expectancy of the wooden bridge over Bulimba Creek. In fairness to the officers of the department I point out that in the past 18 months the bridge was torn up, planks were replaced and the road surface was resealed. However, as a result of the dry spell that Brisbane has experienced, the condition of the bridge has deteriorated.

This matter is of great concern to me, and it must be a worry to the residents of the Redland Shire. Some years ago when the sewerage line was being put over a culvert in that area the culvert collapsed, with the result that motorists were forced to detour a distance of 2 or 3 miles to drive to the Redland Shire. At that time strong protests were made to me and the other representatives of the area. I hope that the Government will earnestly consider the requests that have been made and will honour its assurances to the hon. member for Logan, the hon. member for Wynnum and me that, as a result of the closure of the railway line from Lota to Cleveland, a main road will be provided to carry the greatly increased volume of road traffic.

I make this plea especially on behalf of the small-crop farmers in the Redland Shire, who previously sent their produce by rail to Clapham Junction for transportation to southern markets. Today the road through my electorate, which is the lifeline of the shire, is required to carry an increased volume of traffic as a result of the closure of that line. Perhaps in the Minister's reply he will remind us that when the markets were transferred to Rocklea the Government constructed a road from Mt. Cotton to Mt. Gravatt. In anticipation, I would point out to the Minister and his officers that the construction of that road has made no difference at all to the volume of traffic that the road through my electorate carries. The farmers in the Redland Shire do not use the road from Mt. Cotton but continue to use the one to which I have referred.

(Time expired.)

Mr. P. WOOD (Toowoomba East) (7.49 p.m.): I was interested in the comments of the hon. member for Belmont about the supply of natural gas. On many occasions this matter has been debated in the Chamber, especially when the conversion to natural gas took place in Brisbane and at other points along the route of the pipeline. However,

some unsatisfactory details remain to be considered. I do not wish to deal with natural gas distribution and pricing in Brisbane, except to make a comparison between the situations in Brisbane and Toowoomba. I cannot accept, and neither can the public, that there are not inequalities in the distribution and pricing of natural gas.

I want to make a comparison between the cost of natural gas to consumers in Toowoomba and to those in Brisbane. I know that there has been some disquiet about the price of natural gas to consumers should it be reticulated in Roma, which is very near the source of supply. The price of natural gas to Roma consumers so far seems to be beyond the capacity of consumers.

A Toowoomba consumer is charged \$1.11 for one thermal unit of gas, whereas a Brisbane consumer is charged 58c. For five units of gas a Toowoomba consumer pays \$1.9 more than a Brisbane consumer. That is a tremendous difference in price, and it is scarcely necessary for me to remind the Committee that Toowoomba is 80-odd miles closer to the source of supply than is Brisbane. To my knowledge, there are no gas consumers in Toowoomba who can be convinced that this situation is either logical or reasonable.

The gas company now operating in the Toowoomba area took over the existing facilities and premises of the former Toowoomba Gas Company. Where necessary, it converted the facilities to the use of natural gas. I cannot see that the cost of conversion would be particularly great, and I am not in a position to comment on it other than to say that it would not be extraordinarily high. The cost of the pipeline from Roma to Brisbane was extremely high. Toowoomba consumers could not possibly have borne the cost had it stopped there. That would have been a hopeless proposition. But that was not the proposition at all. The large Brisbane market was the principal motivation for the construction of the pipeline. Although Toowoomba could never justify the provision of a pipeline on its own account, it was then, and is now, obviously a useful and worth-while market for the gas, and it is a market that will expand.

Over many years there was very little expansion, if any, in the reticulation of gas supplies in the Toowoomba area. However, I am led to believe that there are now plans for increased reticulation of gas throughout the city. I am wondering how successful they will be when Toowoomba consumers are faced with the situation of having to pay approximately twice as much as their Brisbane counterparts for a thermal unit of gas.

All provincial areas face the problem of coping with costs that exceed those of the metropolitan area. Toowoomba is relatively close to Brisbane compared with other provincial and rural areas, and I would not expect that the cost of living in Toowoomba would be considerably greater than in Brisbane. However, I believe that in some respects

it is. If we want provincial and rural areas to progress we should do all we can to see that costs, where they can be controlled, are kept as low as possible for them.

If it is possible for the Minister to give an explanation, I should be interested to know why it is that Toowoomba consumers must pay so much more for their gas than Brisbane consumers. I cannot see that there is a great deal of difference between the two situations. Brisbane gas suppliers had to be converted in the same way as Toowoomba gas suppliers. I accept that, even though Toowoomba is rather closer to the source of supply than Brisbane, this may not have a great impact on the cost. I do not think that, once the pipeline was constructed, it would cost a great deal more to pipe the gas the additional 80 miles to Brisbane. But I think it is reasonable to suggest that the price to Toowoomba consumers should not be any more than it is to Brisbane consumers, and I would be interested to hear what arguments exist contrary to the view I have expressed.

I shall now move onto one aspect of the Main Roads Department's activities. I have passed these remarks before, but I think they are worthy of repetition. I have commented, as I believe other hon. members have, on the disfigurement of our countryside by roadside advertising hoardings. They are placed not on Main Roads Department property, but on private land adjacent to main roads. They are sometimes placed on land under the control of the Railway Department.

I have not yet heard anybody claim that the numerous advertising signs which litter our highways are in any way an attraction to the countryside, that they add anything to the appearance of the countryside, or that they do anything at all to improve the standards of road safety. I have claimed previously that in many instances I have found roadside hoardings, especially the luminous variety, to be a positive hazard to road safety. They can create confusion and uncertainty in the mind of a motorist as to the direction of a highway in front of him.

We are constructing highways that are conducive to high speeds, but we are adding to the difficulties of driving by placing along the sides of our roads hoardings that make it difficult for motorists travelling at high speeds to determine which direction they ought to take, especially at night. It is well documented that this type of sign can be a traffic hazard. I do not think it needs any documentation or argument at all that roadside hoardings are no better than the other types of litter we see alongside our highways. There is much complaint about discarded bottles, cans, and other kinds of litter thrown from motor vehicles alongside our highways. Unfortunately, some people persist in the practice of littering our highways, although everybody seems to complain

about this. However, there is not the same amount of protest about the authorised litter of roadside hoardings.

I said that these hoardings are not placed on Main Roads Department property, but on land adjacent to it. However, it is not beyond the ability of any Government to ensure that they are not placed in situations where they can cause traffic hazards or disfigure the countryside. I know that in this debate I cannot discuss the need for legislative action, so I shall leave it at that and say briefly that it is within the capability of any Government, should it have the desire, to ensure that our highways are not disfigured in this way.

Mr. F. P. MOORE (Mourilyan) (8 p.m.): When I entered Parliament I was concerned with the section of the Bruce Highway between Moresby and Mourilyan, two townships south of Innisfail. This part of the Bruce Highway was declared by me in this Chamber to be constructed on an inferior foundation. The Government did not admit that this was so, and I did not at any time make any charge against the Minister. My charges were proved to be correct, and, after I had made them and had asked questions on the matter, the road was ripped up and relaid on the type of metal foundation advised by me and the Johnstone Shire Council.

Mr. Lee: Good on you!

Mr. F. P. MOORE: The metal used in the original foundation was inferior, and, like the hon. member for Yeronga, was a little "schist".

The important point is that beyond doubt this road was of inferior construction. It broke up within a month. After I raised the matter, no admissions were made by the Minister. Like a good manager, quite possibly he covered up for those who were really responsible for it. Possibly the Minister had nothing to do with the construction of the road. He made no admissions following my charges. If he had, possibly this road would not have cost the Government as much as it did. Much the same comments apply to the road from the Goondi railway crossing to the Palmerston Highway junction with the Bruce Highway. At the moment this road is far worse than it was in its original condition before the new bitumen was laid. All that I am trying to point out is that if a Government, irrespective of its political colour, makes a mistake, it should admit it. As I said before, charges are not being made against the Government, but for heaven's sake let the Government see that it controls its departments.

I must also bring up a complaint about the section of the Bruce Highway between Little Moresby Creek and Little Boobah Creek. After my representations to the Minister, I must say that the matter was attended to as quickly as possible, and that farmers in this area, one in particular, are quite satisfied with what has been done, with

the exception of drainage. The drainage problem between Little Moresby Creek and Little Boobah Creek is acute. A box-drain culvert has been constructed across the Bruce Highway. Again I am not condemning the Minister, because I feel that he has done what I have requested. However, in the driest part of the year I have seen at this box-drain culvert water still backed up in the western parts because a mistake of 11 inches in the base of the culvert has been made by the engineers. That is true.

Mr. R. E. Moore: You were not the consulting engineer on that job?

Mr. F. P. Moore: The hon. member would not even know what a culvert is. He has one running between his ears.

The important point is that a mistake of 11 inches has been made in the level of the culvert. We all make mistakes, and the Committee has an example of that in the mistake made by the hon. member for Windsor in trying to buy into the argument.

West of this area towards the range there is a seepage of water in paddocks even during the present dry spell. If the level of the culvert was lowered, that water would drain towards the coast. In my opinion, the difficulties would be alleviated if the middle culvert, or box drain, was lowered. I have investigated the situation in company with a draftsman from the shire council, and also an engineer. The engineer claims that the level is at least seven inches out and could possibly be 11 inches out. I have mentioned 11 inches because I am reliably informed that it is the correct figure. As hon. members know, it is mathematically and scientifically possible to make water run uphill if necessary, but in most areas it drains to the lowest point.

Panicum grass, as it is locally named, is prevalent in this area, and it grows in the culvert to which I am referring. The Main Roads Department has removed the grass to some extent but has piled it against the culvert, and that has again caused drainage problems. Brisbane has received quite heavy rain in the past few weeks, but it does not compare with the rain that falls in North Queensland.

Mr. Murray: You mean para grass, don't you?

Mr. F. P. Moore: Panicum. If the hon. member wishes me to show it to him, I shall. He once was a grazier in the Far North but has since moved to grazing properties in New South Wales. I suggest that he stay in New South Wales.

Mr. Murray: If you are talking about a swamp, it is para grass, not panicum.

Mr. F. P. Moore: I say it is called panicum by the locals.

Mr. Murray: Panicum does not grow in water.

Mr. F. P. Moore: The hon. member for Clayfield, who "scabbed" on the Country Party and now sits in this Chamber as a representative of the Liberal Party, is supposedly a man of high repute who knows the areas in the Far North because he represented them in Federal Parliament. I challenge him to come and have a look at the grass to which I am referring. If he does not, next Tuesday I shall bring to this Chamber some panicum grass from the area.

Returning to my point, this area poses problems for people residing in close proximity to it. I am not condemning the Minister, but I ask for a further investigation of the area. I am sure that if the culvert to which I have been referring were lowered the whole situation would be rectified.

I now wish to deal with main roads constructed in the Innisfail, Tully and Babinda areas, the wettest areas in North Queensland, receiving an average rainfall of 150 to 170 inches per annum. The cost of building roads in these areas is, I am reliably informed, 1.75 times greater than that in any other area of the State, and in any allotment of funds this factor should be taken into consideration. I mentioned this matter in the Budget debate, and if I am not able to get my point across to the Government I might at least be able to get it across to the Main Roads Department. In allotting funds, I suggest that the allotment extended to our area be 1.75 times as much as is allotted to any other area because, I repeat, it is a proven fact that road-building costs in this area are 1.75 times as great as they are anywhere else. Figures are available to support this contention, and because of rain the Moresby-Mourilyan road cost the Government double the estimated amount.

Mr. Lee: You have enlightened the Commissioner.

Mr. F. P. Moore: If he requires to be enlightened I shall do so, but I doubt if he does. The hon. member for Yeronga also needs to be enlightened. Apparently most of the construction he has done has deteriorated badly since he last engaged in it.

Mr. Lee: I will take you out and show you some good construction.

Mr. F. P. Moore: The only good construction the hon. member has been connected with was done by his parents. They constructed on him a very thick head.

I turn now to the use of main roads in my area by heavy transport. The people concerned, particularly the Cali Company, are using our main roads extensively. These roads have been renovated and built up to quite a good standard, but because of the seasonal transfer of sugar-hoppers from the Tully and South Johnstone mills, the roads have deteriorated rapidly.

I should like to ask the Minister whether the fees levied on transport are returned to the area in which they are collected. Sugar

is hauled by road to the terminal at Mourilyan, and I know that a road-haulage tax is charged on the transport of that product. The haulage of sugar is vital to the area, but unfortunately the volume of traffic on the roads causes a good deal of damage to them. In many instances the roads are reduced to rubble. If the hauliers pay a tax, is the money returned to the area? In the wet season the roads deteriorate rapidly, and the situation is aggravated by the use of heavy dual hoppers. As well as endangering lives they sway from side to side while moving along the road, with the result that the road shoulders are continually worn away.

Mr. R. Jones: A considerable amount of timber-hauling is carried out in your electorate, too.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: That is so. I have previously referred to the officers of the Main Roads Department who hide in the long grass waiting to catch road hauliers, particularly timber hauliers. I am yet to be convinced how the Main Roads officers are able to decide whether or not a vehicle is overloaded on each axle. On a level road the weights on the respective axles alter, and officers of the department have confirmed my belief in discussions with them. Last year the department was very severe on the timber hauliers in North Queensland, although I understand that it is less severe at present. I should still like to know how the inspectors decide that a vehicle is overloaded.

Mr. R. E. Moore: They divide the number of super feet by the number of logs.

Mr. F. P. MOORE: Perhaps the hon. member would like to tell us how the officers determine the weight on a truck or on a particular axle.

Mr. Casey: Wouldn't you agree that the only load that can be judged accurately is one of packaged commodities?

Mr. F. P. MOORE: There is no doubt about that. If the hon. member for Windsor thinks he can judge the weight of a log by the number of super feet in it, he has another think coming. Maple and oak logs vary greatly in weight. It sounds as if hon. members on my left are all maple, because they are heavier than the usual oak log.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (8.20 p.m.): There is little doubt that in the main members who have spoken in this debate have concentrated on parochial matters. They have every right to do that—and good luck to them—because they have problems within their own electorates. I am quite happy to deal with one or two matters that I believe are of great concern to the citizens of Brisbane, particularly residents of the electorate I represent.

Mr. Hanson: When are you going to get stuck into Clem Jones?

Mr. HUGHES: I was with him a little earlier this evening at a function when we were discussing one or two matters that might appropriately be raised here. I appreciate some of the council's financial problems. I only hope that Opposition members, likewise, appreciate the financial problems the Government faces which made it impossible for it to provide a "black top" on every inch of roadway in every electorate. The problems are the same, but ours are magnified.

Members have concentrated on parochial matters associated with main roads and on problems associated with the explosion in mining development in Queensland. This posed many problems for the Government and I believe it would be worth while to analyse some of them. In so doing I take issue with the member for Townsville North who, with other members of his party, was quite prepared to adopt the attitude of "sell out Queensland". He expressed an opinion diametrically opposed to that used by Labour in the electorate at large to convey to the public that it is concerned with the protection of the rights of the people of this State and nation, the protection of our inheritance and the protection of that which we hold for ourselves and future generations of Australians, to ensure that our natural wealth will be developed by Australians for Australians, regardless of the time it may take. Whether it be 10 years, 100 years or 1,000 years, the pace at which our development would be contemplated by Opposition members is not a matter of concern. Their policy is merely hold what we have and let no-one else near it.

That is the view that we have heard expressed on so many occasions by Opposition members, but it is hard to reconcile it with the statements and attitude of the hon. member for Townsville North on nickel mining at Greenvale, on which negotiations have recently led to a satisfactory conclusion. On the one hand, Opposition members say to the electorate at large, "Let us hold what we have. Let us not allow an infusion of overseas capital and know-how into this State. Let us not make any deals; let us not sell out the State." On the other hand, they decry the Government's decision to adopt a hard-line approach to any deal about Greenvale development.

We have every reason to congratulate the Minister for Mines and the Treasurer on the manner in which they negotiated to a satisfactory conclusion the many complex items associated with the Greenvale project. But for their businesslike approach and realistic attitude, and the positive stand they took in the negotiations by adopting a hard line, we would not have the present deal, for which I believe Queenslanders for many years to come will have every justification for thanking the Minister and his advisers.

The Government effected the Weipa scheme with tenacity and initiative. It blew the dust from the files and then brought to fruition

the tremendous development that the hon. member for Port Curtis is now able to refer to with pride.

Mr. Hanson: Nonsense!

Mr. HUGHES: Nonsense? I challenge the hon. member in this regard. The Labour Government would not do anything about Weipa. There would not be the present mining development had it not been for the realistic attitude adopted by this Government when it took the files from their hiding place and did something with them. The hon. member for Port Curtis gets some reflected glory from the \$255,000,000 worth of development in Gladstone. It is there in bricks, mortar, steel, production, employment and the boost to the economy of this State.

Mr. Hanson: What would the Yanks say about that?

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member wants to know what the Yanks would say about it. The policy of the hon. member's party is to keep from Australian shores anybody who has know-how and investment capital. If this is to be the continued attitude of these A.L.P. "knockers" there will be no further development in this State. Thank goodness that members of the public know that this is the attitude of the A.L.P. It is because of this that the A.L.P. will not be voted into office. The people know that the A.L.P. cannot be trusted to hold the administrative reins of this State. I realise that this hurts Opposition members. They have a policy to live with. They are subject to the dictates of outside bodies. Privately, many Opposition members would like to do what this Government does. They applaud the negotiating ability of the members of our Cabinet who have brought about this wonderful development, but they have not the right to do so publicly. However, they realise that the people will give credit to our negotiators for bringing about such a great arrangement for the benefit of this State. We have a great need for schools, hospitals, main roads, and development generally, and we must get the money to do it.

Mr. Wharton, you come from an area which has been afflicted by drought. We know that the drought has had a tremendous effect on our economy. In days gone by this State was known as a rural State and if it was still only a rural State today we would be in dire straits or bankrupt as a result of the present drought. However, because the mineral wealth of this State has been tapped and is being exploited in an objective and orderly manner, through the infusion of overseas investment capital, technical skills and know-how, coupled with Australian know-how, we are able today to place millions of dollars into our economy and so keep the State from bankruptcy.

We need look only at the Estimates of the Department of Railways to realise the part that mineral development is playing in

this State. Opposition members continue to "knock" the arrangements made to construct railway lines. These members weep like this without fully realising the significance of the construction of a railway line, not as a free gift or a deal advantageous to the developers of our mineral fields, but, in a business sense, as a means of pursuing an undertaking to profitability. According to the Treasurer's figures, the Railway Department will make \$500,000 profit this year, not from passenger traffic, which runs at a loss in every area in the State, but from the carriage of minerals, which will return \$35,000,000.

Mr. Ahern: One-third of its total receipts.

Mr. HUGHES: One-third of its total receipts.

This is one of the hidden benefits; it is not so obvious to those who merely look at the surface of the State's development and do not know the tremendous part being played by the exploitation of mineral resources.

Mr. Hanson: Why did you "knock" the grain-growers back in Dalby? The Treasurer told them to get lost when they asked for freight reductions. Yet you are supposed to be a Government that assists primary producers.

Mr. HUGHES: The hon. member knows the extent of rebates that have been granted. I do not have to digress from the Estimates now before the Committee to remind him that the Government has produced publications that explain to grain-growers, other primary producers, and even members of Parliament who do not already know it, the extent to which freight concessions are granted to allow primary producers to carry on in drought-stricken areas. I should like to see Opposition members adopt a more objective approach to attempts to assist those in drought-stricken areas. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition seemed to disclaim any real effect of the drought on the finances of the State. What he said is there for all to read in "Hansard", and he has been proven a false prophet to those to whom he speaks. Clearly he has no understanding of the situation, or he is a sophist in the political life of this State.

I remind the hon. member for Port Curtis that he should be ashamed to interject on matters associated with the Railway Department as his party when in Government increased freight rates nine times in nine years. And his is supposedly a party that supports the man on the land! These matters should be looked at in their proper light, and credit should be given where it is due.

The Minister, and others associated with the Mines Department, particularly Mr. Healy, Mr. Wood and Mr. Norrie, deserve a great deal of credit for the way in which they have brought to this State overseas capital and know-how. I believe that the Minister and others in his department should

make regular visits overseas to sell Queensland. I do not say that they should sell it out; they should sell it for development. A fusion of Australian and overseas wealth, manpower and know-how will do much for the development of this State, as well as provide greater benefits for those who require pensions, education, hospitalisation, and the many other humanitarian obligations of the Government.

There is little doubt that, because of world requirements, there is a tremendous upsurge in the demand for this State's mineral wealth. Years ago there was a problem in the disposal of tin for tin plate; today there is a need for it. Years ago there was not the need for minerals that are today being exported and providing export income. Whilst this demand exists, everything possible should be done to negotiate agreements necessary for the development of such resources. Representatives should go overseas to sell Queensland, and to bring to this State more investment capital than we presently have.

I believe that sand-mining and conservation can, and should, live together. We can, and should, have the best of both worlds. In future sand-mining applications, the Government should see that we do not have any more Cooloolas. We should be able to grasp this nettle. Whether the areas sought be on Moreton Island, Fraser Island, or other islands along the coast, we should be able to tap those resources and still practise conservation. In exploiting the natural wealth of these areas for the benefit of the people, the Government should have proper regard for rehabilitation. In my opinion, it is possible for that to be done, and it should be done immediately so that there is no repetition of what has happened relative to Cooloola.

Sand-mining companies holding authorities to prospect and wishing to apply for leases should be protected; equally, the general public should be protected. Areas should be reserved for the use of this generation and future generations, and I wholeheartedly agree with any action that is taken in that direction. However, a complete survey should be made by the Department of Mines of all authorities to prospect and mineral leases, particularly those held by sand-mining companies, because I believe that, in the interests of development and the economy of this State, the Government should endeavour to get the best of both worlds. It should ensure that areas containing minerals are used to the best advantage and, if necessary, properly rehabilitated, and that other areas are declared national parks and conserved.

The Opposition has levelled a great deal of criticism at the Government relative to coal mining in Queensland. If the Government had not entered into agreements for the use of coal, who is to say that in 50, 60 or 100 years the coal deposits would not still be in the ground. Hon. members opposite have criticised the great pulsing

surge of development at Moura, Goonyella and Blackwater. I remind them that that development is of benefit to industries in other areas of the State. The housing industry, the food-manufacturing industry and the clothing industry are all receiving increased revenue as a result of it. Had the Government not had the initiative to negotiate those agreements, the coal would have remained in the ground, as it would have if a Labour Government had been in office. That is the professed attitude of hon. members opposite, but I believe that the people of Queensland should again be made aware of it.

There are one or two other matters that I think I should deal with in the few minutes left to me. First, I compliment the Commissioner of Main Roads and officers of his department for the realistic and analytical way in which they are attempting to gain an understanding of the needs of motorists today and in the future. Australia is a motor-car-conscious country. In fact, in that respect it is second only to the United States of America and has a vehicle to every 3.4 or 3.7 persons. That has been made possible by the development of the State's mineral resources, our standard of living, and a number of other factors. Adequate carriageways upon which people can drive their vehicles are needed, and the department has to ensure that the traffic arteries are not clogged by metal microbes and that delays and increasing costs of transportation do not greatly increase the cost of living.

The Main Roads Department has embarked upon a programme for the construction of freeways and carriageways that I believe puts Queensland first in Australia in this field. If it had not done so, the people of Queensland would have had very much to castigate the Government for. In my opinion, the method of construction being used and the width of the highways will provide for vehicular traffic not only for today but also for tomorrow. I congratulate the Commissioner, his engineers and the department generally of what they are doing, but much more remains to be done.

(Time expired.)

Mr. R. JONES (Cairns) (8.40 p.m.): The hon. member for Kurilpa has just rehashed the dreary line with which he has wearied hon. members over and over again during the six years that I have been in Parliament. Dealing with bauxite, the Labour Government originally entered into an agreement for the building of a refinery at Weipa. Of course, after the Country-Liberal Government took office in 1957, six years elapsed before it was able to enter into a further agreement allowing the company to process the bauxite into alumina at Gladstone. In effect, because of the inactivity on that side of the Chamber, bauxite production and processing in Queensland lay dormant for six years and the bauxite fields of Queensland were in the doldrums. I challenge hon. members opposite to deny that.

Despite what the hon. member for Kurilpa has said, my sole purpose in rising in this debate is to discuss a local issue. I want to put the hon. member right on that score. My purpose is to draw attention to main roads allocations which, over the years, have been made and have later been reviewed and the works deferred. This evening I intend to seek the co-operation of the Minister and, if possible, to obtain his assurance that the four-lane highway works in Cairns will be accelerated.

I understand that the roads in Cairns enjoy a high priority, probably because of the volume of tourist traffic we are now receiving. I believe we should endeavour to expedite traffic travelling into and out of Cairns and to facilitate its passage through the city itself.

To draw attention to the fact that over the years main roads allocations have been made and later reviewed and the works deferred, just after I entered this Parliament in 1965 I asked a question which is recorded in "Hansard", vol. 241, at p. 967. My question was—

"When will the four-lane highway at Cairns, extending from McCoombe Street to Sheridan Street and Florence Street to North Cairns, be commenced and in what stages will it be completed?"

On that occasion the Minister answered as follows:—

"The works mentioned are planned to be carried out in the following stages—Stage 1. Bruce Highway. Draper Street to Aumuller Street. Planned to commence later in this financial year."

I ask hon. members to note that that was in 1965.

The answer continued—

"Stage 2. Cook Highway. Florence Street to Grove Street. Planned to be built in 1966-1967. Stage 3. Bruce Highway. Aumuller Street to McCoombe Street. Planned for 1967-1968. Stage 4. Cook Highway. Grove Street to North Cairns. Planned for 1968-1969."

Of course, I had to follow that up with a question on 1 September, 1966, recorded in "Hansard", vol. 243, at p. 373, when I asked the Minister—

"Further to his Answer to my Question on October 20, 1965, that stage 1, Bruce Highway, Aumuller Street to Draper Street, construction of the four-lane highway at Cairns was planned to commence later in that financial year, and stage 2, Cook Highway, Florence Street to Grove Street, in 1966-1967, what was the reason for the delay, and on what dates is the work now planned to commence?"

His answer was—

"Delay has been caused by technical problems. Bruce Highway, Aumuller Street to Draper Street, is planned to commence later this financial year.

"Cook Highway, Florence to Grove Street is planned to be built in 1967-68."

It was necessary to arrange a deputation to wait upon officers of the Main Roads Department on 2 March, 1967. The deputation was made up of the former mayor of Cairns, Alderman S. D. E. Chataway, the chairman of the Works Committee, Alderman K. Foley, the then town clerk, Mr. C. DeGraaf Williams, and myself. We placed a case before the department for urgent consideration. I think the Minister received us on that occasion, but I cannot recollect for certain at this stage.

That work was completed at a cost of approximately \$150,000, which was in excess of the estimate, but, owing to the deferment of the works, I had to pursue my course of questioning. On 3 September I asked when work would be commenced on stage 2 of the four-lane highway between Florence Street and Grove Street and when was it planned that stages 3 and 4 would be undertaken. The Minister's answer was that the work on the Florence Street to Grove Street section was planned for February, 1969, and that it was not known what I meant by stages 3 and 4. On that occasion the Minister's answer was a contradiction of the one given to me in October, 1965.

In a further question I asked if it was correct that stages 3 and 4 consisted of certain work to be done. The Minister's reply was a very long one, in which he said that the question that was answered on 1 October, 1965, was based on the main roads planning programme at that date. On several occasions he has said that planning programmes are subject to variations to meet changing circumstances.

At the present time stage 2 is being carried out. I urge the Minister to ensure that stages 3 and 4 will not be deferred any further. Stage 2 of the Cook Highway has been deferred since it was first altered, and Stage 2A, Florence Street on the Bruce Highway, from Draper Street to Sheridan Street, was planned for 1970-71. That stage has not been listed previously, and it has not been caught up with this year. I urge the Minister to ensure that the work is carried out concurrently from now on.

I wish to "put in" for an additional stage, from the Cook Highway to the new bridge across the Barron River. I see that the hon. member for Cook is smiling. I know I am encroaching a little on his electorate, but the Barron River is the border between our electorates, and I am sure he will agree with me that the work that I am asking to be done will be of benefit to both electorates. I ask the Minister to have the work done concurrently on the four-lane highway.

I also wish to draw the Minister's attention to the condition of the Main Roads Department building in Cairns. It was constructed during the war and is of uncertain origin. Whether it was constructed by the Allied

Works Council, the Army or the U.S. Forces is immaterial, except as to its age. It is a barrack-type building and houses a work-force of at least 65 personnel.

Early consideration should be given to preparing plans for the construction of a new building in Cairns. I am sure the Minister agrees that it should be a modern building, in keeping with the requirements of time and motion studies, designed to give employees comfortable conditions and conducive to the best standards acceptable in the tropics today. I stress the need for adequate floor space and ventilation and, indeed, air-conditioning in this part of the tropics. The district engineer and his employees have worked consistently over the years in cramped quarters. Now that summer is upon us, I believe the time is ripe for an announcement about the construction of a new building in Cairns.

I should like the Minister to inform me when the regional transport study for the Cairns district will be undertaken and when a survey of Cairns roads, particularly roads going through McCoombe Street, Brinsmead Road or James Street will be carried out. These streets are becoming predominantly through-traffic roads and should come under the jurisdiction of the Main Roads Department rather than the city council. They are handling quite a volume of through traffic, bypassing the city. Urgent attention should be given to declaring some of them as main roads. The Minister may care to comment on the allocation of Commonwealth aid road grants to the Cairns City Council and indicate whether any progress has been made in this matter.

In the absence of the hon. member for Tablelands, I will transgress on his area, with, I am sure, his acquiescence in this "field". I make a plea on behalf of the Cairns Mineral and Lapidary Club for the declaration of a gemstone reserve at O'Brien's Creek and Lancewood Creek, via Mt. Surprise, adjacent to Cabana Homestead. I requested by correspondence in June, 1970, that the area be set aside as a gemstone reserve for topaz mining. I again suggest that this area be set aside to allow gemstone collectors to engage in prospecting. The Minister was very co-operative in a similar excision in the Agate Creek area. I am sure that I have the support of all gemstone collectors in Queensland and, indeed, Australia. I know that the member for Tablelands has pursued this matter for some time. In fact, records show that he asked questions about it on 11 and 17 March, 1970. I thus support Eddie Wallis-Smith in his endeavours.

I bring to the Minister's attention the fact that I asked a question recently about the availability of the Mining Act. Although I am not an expert on the Mining Act, I have received some complaints from Cairns residents who go into the back country and who tell me that the Mining Act is very difficult to obtain. They find it very hard indeed to get a ruling in relation to authorities

to prospect, and where they operate from. They say that more areas should be set aside for tin gougers and week-end miners.

On 21 November, 1969, and 10 March, 1970, I asked questions about the Santa Barbara oil spill inquiry. I asked whether the Minister was in receipt of the official document issued by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States Senate which, in effect, is the depositions of the hearings before the Subcommittee on Minerals, Materials, and Fuels. It is document No. S.1219. It was a Bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior in the United States Senate to take certain actions, and make an investigation and study, with respect to drilling and oil production under leases issued pursuant to the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. It is dated 19 and 20 May, 1969.

It is quite an interesting document. If the Minister does not have a copy, I shall be pleased to make my copy available to him. I am sure it would be of great value and interest to the Department of Mines. If the Minister or the department has a copy, I should like the Minister's opinion on it.

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (8.58 p.m.): I hope, in the time available to me, to reply in detail to many of the matters raised by hon. members. Firstly, the hon. member for Port Curtis claimed that road conditions contributed more than either speed or alcohol to road accidents. Statistics do not bear this out. If he claims that, how can he explain the fact that the most sophisticated and best constructed highways in the world are more accident prone than some of our unconstructed country roads?

In the bulletin submitted by the Bureau of Census and Statistics titled, "Road Traffic Accident Statistics, Queensland, Year Ended 30th June, 1969", it is stated that both excess speed, having regard to conditions, and intoxication contributed more than anything else to road accidents in Queensland, accounting for 2,850 accidents, of which 1,102 involved serious casualties. There were 202 deaths, and 1,659 persons seriously injured. In accidents attributed to road conditions, serious casualties were 463 and deaths 18. Speed and intoxication caused only 1.64 times as many accidents as road conditions, but 11.2 times the number of deaths. The most serious factors associated with road accidents in Queensland are still speed and intoxication.

The hon. member for Roma asked if consideration could be given to increasing the maximum permissible speed on the open road above 60 miles an hour. This has been submitted on other occasions by many speakers. It has to be appreciated that speed limits must be obeyed by drivers of all types of vehicles. Whilst it may be quite safe for someone driving a large modern sedan to travel at 65

to 70 miles an hour on some of our highways, it would be unsafe for some smaller and second-hand cars to be driven at such speeds.

The maximum speed permitted must be determined having in mind the average type of vehicle using the roads. That has been assessed in various areas, and 60 miles an hour appears to be the safest maximum speed. However, this is a matter for consideration by the Minister for Transport under the Traffic Act. I point out to hon. members who consider that the speed limit should be increased that any increase would apply to vehicles of all types and makes.

The hon. member for Wynnum decried sand-mining on Stradbroke Island. I am informed by a responsible person on the island that a recent meeting called in the hope of discrediting mining failed miserably. There was an overwhelming vote in favour of mining and its benefits. That island was developed by mining, which brought roads, power and reticulated water to the community. As to restoration, let us see what the next few years bring. The companies presently operating have commenced a large-scale restoration programme.

The hon. member also spoke about the removal of coral by the Queensland Cement and Lime Co. He should know that this has nothing whatever to do with the Mines Department; it is carried out under a licence granted by the Department of Harbours and Marine.

The hon. member for Mackay advocated that mining development should be carried out by the Government in co-operation with private enterprise. I doubt if he would gain support from anyone who remembered the tragic results of Labour Government ventures such as State coal mines and similar fiascos.

Mr. Casey: You didn't do too badly with the Mackay abattoir.

Mr. CAMM: The hon. member was one who advocated that it should be run as a semi-governmental concern. I have noticed now that many people in Mackay, and many graziers, have applauded the fact that private enterprise has stepped in. They consider that they will get a very good deal from private enterprise.

Like the hon. member for Barcoo, the hon. member for Mackay stressed that we should be carrying our development further to gain greater benefits. I assure them both that the Government is well aware of these benefits. We have tried to get the best arrangement. Coking coal is an example. In the first franchise, the best deal offering was taken. It must be remembered that that was the first franchise negotiated in this State for the export of coking coal. After much negotiating and encouraging of mining companies, the best deal offering was taken. The Government had to initiate this completely new export market. Only one other such franchise agreement has been negotiated, that

being the one in connection with the Gonyella development. Anyone who reads the two agreements will see that the later agreement provides for a distinct improvement in the benefits accruing to the State. As time passes and we negotiate other franchise agreements, we will consider imposing conditions more favourable to the State.

Mr. Hanlon: Thiess were still able to get 20c a ton.

Mr. CAMM: It seems to rankle with the hon. member that Thiess gained 20c a ton. That was based on the profitability of the venture, and I have told him on a number of occasions why they were entitled to that. They did not receive anything for several years. In mineral production, the Government's efforts have been directed towards protecting the needs of the State.

The manufacture of copper products is proceeding at the copper refinery at Townsville. A fantastically large alumina plant is operating at Gladstone, and a further similar plant or plants will probably be established in the Cape York Peninsula area. In respect of the Greenvale nickel deposit, a plant and operation of magnitude seem assured, and the Government will strive to maintain a climate favourable for development. It is very difficult in a country such as this, with a small population that does not warrant the establishment of industries based solely on coal, to promote the manufacture of by-products. But if hon. members consider the other minerals that are being mined in Queensland at present, they will see that the Government has endeavoured to have some secondary work carried out on the beneficiation of the minerals before they are exported.

The hon. member for Logan mentioned that mineral wage-earners suffered extortionate taxes by way of miners' licences levied by the Government. That seems strange, because if they are earning wages in the mines, surely the title fees are met by the mine-owners. I point out also that the fee for a miner's right is the same today as it was before the turn of the century. The position is exactly similar with rents on gold-mining leases and mineral leases. If he claims that this is extortion, I must register surprise. Obviously the hon. member was ignorant of the subject on which he was speaking.

The hon. member's recommendation that prices of mineral-sands export minerals be forced up by keeping them in the ground also is off the beam. I wonder whether he realises that the main export mineral, rutile, retains its full significance because its price level is maintained. If the price of rutile became too high, the industrial chemist could bring beneficiated ilmenite into competition with rutile to make titanium oxide. I assure hon. members that Queensland does not enjoy the favoured position with ilmenite that it does with rutile, because tremendous deposits of ilmenite are available close to overseas markets.

The hon. member for Logan referred also to mining education near the point of manufacture, but I think I have dealt with that subject already.

The hon. member for Landsborough spoke of the access roads to the Sunshine Coast. Works have been programmed on the principal outlets from Brisbane, namely, the Gympie arterial road, the Bruce Highway, and the Clontarf-Sandgate road, aimed at clearing traffic from Brisbane as quickly as possible. Work also is programmed on the Bald Hills-Burpengary diversion, namely, the construction of the section between Roghan Road and Strathpine Road, Bald Hills.

The road between Noosa and Caloundra is not a declared road, but during the last 12 months special funds have been made available to the local authorities concerned to assist with its maintenance. Details relating to maintenance are still awaited from these local authorities so that further consideration can be given to assisting them this financial year.

The hon. member for Warrego referred to the Charleville-Cunnamulla road. I should say that, following the survey, the final alignment has been determined and it is hoped to release the first scheme for construction on this alignment in 1971. The tentative programme provides for works over the next five or six years which will complete the road in Murweh Shire and substantially improve sections in Paroo Shire. Already over \$2,000,000 has been programmed for this road in our five-year programme. Works tentatively programmed are maximum having regard to the priorities of other roads and, of course, the limitation on the funds available. These programmes have been fully discussed with the local authorities involved in this road.

The hon. member for Carnarvon mentioned the denuding of land by scraping away shallow areas of loam for road-building. I might add that he drew this to my attention recently when we drove into his electorate. Where the loam is taken away from around a cypress pine tree, the tree invariably dies within 12 months. Of course, the Forestry Department insists that these trees be left standing. The hon. member suggested that a forestry agreement should be sought to clear away all trees and then replant. I think his suggestion is a very constructive one and we shall certainly investigate it with the Forestry Department.

The hon. member requires section 19 funds to be used on tourist roads such as the access road to Girraween National Park, but roads serving primarily sight-seeing traffic are not the type for which section 19 main roads funds were designed to be used. These funds are used for roads which serve a dual purpose for two adjoining shires. Sometimes they are used for developmental work in areas which we consider should not be the sole responsibility of the local authority.

The hon. member for Sandgate spoke about the Redcliffe Peninsula area. I should like to say that work is proceeding on Clontarf Road as quickly as funds allow. The four-lane facility is in progress between Zillmere and Roghan Roads, a scheme for channelisation signals at Board and Braun Streets, Deagon, has been released, and I have already informed the hon. member for Redcliffe that a scheme for a four-lane highway between Deagon Racecourse and further on will be released early next financial year. When completed, a four-lane pavement will extend from Nundah through to Deagon, and design of the Deagon deviation is being prepared.

The hon. member for Barcoo referred to the widening of the Rockhampton-Emerald road, and, of course, the Drummond Range, which is always mentioned when one considers the Capricorn Highway. I should say that over \$3,000,000 has tentatively been programmed for works between Rockhampton and west of Emerald for the next five years. This provides for 43 miles of reconstruction and widening of the 12-ft. pavement between Rockhampton and Emerald. Recently I had the opportunity of visiting this area and met a deputation from the Miners' Union asking that something be done about widening this road and that extra maintenance provision be made.

We have several schemes that will be released during the next five-year programme. Sixteen and a half miles of new construction is planned west of Emerald, including the replacement of seven narrow bridges, and a start will be made on the three-mile Drummond Range section towards the end of the tentative five-year programme. I remind hon. members that these programmes are purely tentative. They are for planning purposes only. We try to keep to them as closely as we possibly can, but now and again extra demands are met which necessitate the transfer of funds to or from other jobs.

The hon. member for Baroona mentioned traffic signals at a road intersection. He was quite fair in his criticism, but I remind him that this is the first time that this matter has come under the responsibility of the Main Roads Department. Whilst, for a short time, the Main Roads Department did have the responsibility of administering the Traffic Acts in Brisbane, this road was declared under the Main Roads Act only this year. Of course, it now becomes the responsibility of the Main Roads Department.

Mr. Hanlon: It had a high priority in 1963, so surely it should have been started by now.

Mr. CAMM: Following the allocation of priority by the Traffic Commission and the taking-over of the Commission for a short period by the Main Roads Department, an allocation of \$40,000 was made to the Brisbane City Council, which was responsible for the road, from the Traffic

Engineering Trust Fund for the channelisation of the intersection and the installation of traffic lights. That was at the time when I first became Minister in charge of traffic. The money was reallocated for four successive years, but only some preliminary work was carried out. Following a review of the declared road system in Brisbane, the section of road in which this intersection is located came under the control of the Main Roads Department.

Whilst I recognise the priority of this work and feel that it should be carried out, I do not think anyone would suggest that we should displace other works that are already programmed and the subject of promises made by the department in favour of this newly gazetted intersection. To re-programme our works and allocate money to this intersection we would have to say in respect of other intersections, "You cannot have your traffic facility built now because we have taken over this road this year and think it has a higher priority."

Mr. Hanlon: That is fair enough, but that is what you have been saying to us for seven years—not you, but the various authorities concerned.

Mr. CAMM: They might have said that. I assure the hon. member that as soon as we can find a way of allocating money to that intersection we will have the work done.

Mr. Hanlon: Has planning been completed by the council for this stage?

Mr. CAMM: I cannot say what stage the planning has reached. Many intersections in the Brisbane area have come under the responsibility of the department, and it has promised to install traffic facilities on the roads concerned. As soon as funds become available we will carry out the work at that intersection.

The hon. member referred to the timetable for the Wilbur Smith proposals on the north side of the city. The design for the works on the north side is well advanced, but it has not reached the stage where property requirements are fully known. As soon as the design is finalised it is proposed to issue brochures, in the same way as we issued them for the Juliette Street work and further extensions on the south side, with the object of giving the affected property-owners as much notice as possible. It is expected that the first of these brochures will be issued in the latter part of next year. That will give property-owners adequate notice to make arrangements for the disposal of their properties or their resumption by the Main Roads Department.

The hon. member for South Coast indicated his appreciation of the expansion of mining activities in Queensland, and referred to some of the needs in his own electorate.

The hon. member for Mirani spoke of the completion of the Peak Downs Highway during the next 12 to 18 months. Owing to

the expected development of the coalfields at Goonyella and Peak Downs, that highway will be of great importance. He referred also to the completion of the widening of the Sarina-Marlborough road. We have undertaken a very extensive programme of widening that road, and this week an Order in Council will go through for a further eight miles, which will leave only 12 miles of narrow bitumen to be widened. Anyone who has driven over that road recently will appreciate what the department's officers are doing in that area.

The hon. member referred also to the bridging of creeks on the Bruce Highway between Marlborough and St. Lawrence. That work is being programmed in progressive stages. The rate can be speeded up once the widening of the Marlborough-Sarina section of the highway has been completed.

The hon. member referred to the Eungella road, on which we are carrying out a fair amount of work, and he expressed appreciation of the huge increase of traffic in his electorate. Of course, the same situation obtains in many parts of the State. I point out that the registration of motor vehicles has reached the 700,000-mark.

The hon. member for Brisbane spoke at some length about the Cloncurry-Winton road. It speaks volumes for the work of the Main Roads Department in this area that the member for Brisbane had to go so far away from his own electorate to get something to complain about. If he had to do that, we must be doing a very good job in his own area. Otherwise, he is completely disregarding the needs of the people in his own electorate.

A section of the road between Longreach and Cloncurry needs constructing, but there must always be one section that has to be left till last when a new road is being constructed. The hon. member should bear in mind that people who are complaining to him drive from Brisbane to Longreach on a bitumen road, and that not many years ago once they got west of Dalby they were getting into trouble. We are building this road progressively as funds become available.

We are also building a road from Mt. Isa down through Dajarra and Boulia that is bitumen all the way. Sections between Boulia and Winton are being developed progressively. Eventually there will be a choice of alternative roads from Winton to Boulia, Dajarra and Mt. Isa, or through Kynuna to Cloncurry. However, it will take some time because this is a difficult area in which to construct roads. At times, when the country turns into bulldust, it can be very dry and dusty, and at other times it becomes very wet and we have to contend with the various channels and streams.

I know that the hon. member has to listen to some of his mates who are transport operators. I sympathise with them. I know they are doing a good job in transporting

materials and the bus proprietors provide a service for tourists. However, the hon. member should bear in mind that the bus proprietors tendered for the services. They were not forced to go out there. Surely they knew what the road was like before they tendered.

I find that it is the practice of many transport operators and bus companies to go a little further than the end of the constructed highway. They should not complain about that. If they are prepared to venture onto roads that are not constructed highways, they should not complain to any great degree.

We will develop these roads progressively for the benefit of the mates of the hon. member for Brisbane. His comments lead me to the conclusion that he has no claims whatever to make about any roads leading into and out of his electorate of Brisbane, which speaks volumes for the good work done by the Main Roads Department in this area.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Mr. CAMM: There was good representation by the previous member.

The hon. member complained about the practice of fining drivers instead of owners for overloading breaches. The driver is the person who actually commits the breach by driving the overloaded vehicle on the road. I do not think that can be denied. The experience of Main Roads Department engineers, amply backed by research findings, shows that our road structures are seriously damaged by overloading. The damage evidences itself first in the immediate formation of potholes and ruts and, in the long term, by the serious shortening of pavement life. The community simply cannot tolerate this serious depreciation of its assets caused by a small minority of road-users. The Government therefore has no alternative but to proceed against offenders. I must say that prosecutions are never launched unless offenders have been warned previously—and many of them are warned frequently.

In his annual report the Commissioner drew attention to the fact that overloading is increasing. He also indicated that more vigorous action will have to be taken to prevent grossly overloaded vehicles from completing their journeys. I know it has often been said that it is the owners of the trucks who should be prosecuted. However, that poses many difficulties, as the offence is actually committed by the driver who travels on the road with an overloaded vehicle.

Mr. Davis: You are not going to change it?

Mr. CAMM: I have not said that we are not going to change it. There is nothing that the Government cannot change if it has the desire to do so and if it sees the necessity for doing so.

The hon. member for Burdekin said a good deal about the roads in his area. He expressed pleasure that the Greenvale nickel project has reached fruition. Like many

other hon. members, I share that pleasure with him. Negotiations have been successful up to date, and the project appears to be assured. It is correct to say, as one Opposition speaker claimed, that protracted negotiations have been going on for years. The company concerned has held an authority to prospect for many years, but it had to spend a considerable amount on exploration, to prove the reserves in the area and to conduct a feasibility study to ensure that the project would be an economic proposition, before coming to the Government with firm proposals to negotiate a franchise deal.

I congratulate the Treasurer on the work he did in bringing the negotiations to the present stage. Much of the preliminary negotiation, of necessity, was conducted by me because it was a mining project. But when it came to financing the railway line and the ancillary buildings and equipment which have to be provided by the company, the negotiations were conducted by the Treasurer, the company, and me.

It is pleasing to know that we in Queensland will enjoy some measure of profitability from this project. I repeat that I am amazed that some Opposition members can hail this as a worth-while achievement and be caustic in their criticism of our holding out for a little more for the State and, at the same time, denigrate the proposal or franchise agreement negotiated for our coal resources, because the profitability of Goonyella over the next 25 years will far exceed \$50,000,000.

The hon. member for Norman complained about the inconvenience suffered by persons living near the South-east Freeway construction. He said that his request for an investigation of their complaints appeared to have been ignored. This amazes me. I know the Main Roads Department officers involved, and I can assure the hon. member that any complaints will be investigated fully. He admitted that some inconvenience is inevitable in the construction of a project of this magnitude in a densely populated area. Main Roads Department engineers have assured me that the contractors have been most co-operative in attempting to lessen this inconvenience. The speed with which the earthworks are being completed shows a genuine attempt to reduce this inconvenience to a minimum by ensuring completion in the shortest possible time.

Heavy rains in the past few days falling on partially completed earthworks have understandably caused some problems in the area between O'Keefe Street and Juliette Street. These complaints are being investigated fully by Main Roads Department engineers, and remedial action will be taken without delay.

I inform the hon. member that the heavy cartage operation, which forms the main basis of his complaint, will be completed in the near future. Arrangements have been made to subsidise the cost of repairs to city council

streets damaged by this cartage. The necessary inspections will be made jointly by Brisbane City Council and Main Roads Department engineers to finalise this matter.

The hon. member for Mulgrave spoke about roads in his area. He indicated an appreciation of the difficulty of building roads in wet areas.

The hon. member for Townsville North indicated that he desires more processing of our minerals in this State. I am sure he recognises that this takes place as much as possible. Some of our minerals are processed at Gladstone, and some minerals from Mt. Isa are refined in Queensland. As I mentioned earlier when speaking about the Greenvale project, its profitability is lauded even by Opposition members. If the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement is studied properly, it will be found that in the next 25 years rent and royalty will bring in more than \$9,000,000. The details of the freight rates are outlined in "Hansard". I looked for them there, and found them.

The royalties are set out in the agreement, and so are the freight rates.

Some franchise agreements have been entered into, including the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement and the agreement with Comalco. A further agreement will be in connection with the Greenvale project. If anyone examines the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement he will find the freight rates outlined, and also the fact that they are governed by an escalation clause. I have been asked what the present freight rate is. I cannot say, as it has increased twice since the negotiation of the agreement because of increases in wages and the price of steel and diesel. The return has been calculated by economists, and some have gone as far as to say that there is in this venture a profitability to the Queensland Government of \$1 a ton.

Mr. Hanlon: That includes capitalisation.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, but in 10½ years that has gone.

Mr. Hanlon: The truck-driver who borrows money to buy his truck and pays it off by using the truck gets the truck for nothing.

Mr. CAMM: Only a small portion of the return goes to repaying the capitalisation of the railways, because in 25 years almost 150,000,000 tons of coal will be exported. The cost of the railway line and all the rolling-stock involved totals \$40,000,000. That will therefore be repaid, and an allowance has been made in the freight rate to repay this money. If the hon. member works out the profitability on 150,000,000 tons in 25 years, he will find that it far exceeds \$50,000,000.

Mr. Hanlon: If you follow that argument through, Thiess Peabody are getting the whole thing for nothing because it is paid for by the Japanese.

Mr. CAMM: If the hon. member likes to look at it that way and say that steel mills in Japan are financing construction of the railway line in Queensland and giving a profit to the Queensland people in excess of \$100,000,000, I am quite prepared to accept that. But he should not come into this Chamber and say that we are not getting any profit out of this undertaking. It is recognised by all who have studied the matter that there is a high profitability rate in the Goonyella agreement. The company operating there was quite prepared to accept the terms that apply to the extraction of iron-ore in Western Australia. They said in effect, "Let us build and run our own railway line, and we will pay you a very high royalty." We said, "No. This is the way we want it." There is an escalation clause in the agreement. A fixed royalty loses its value as money depreciates.

Mr. Hanlon: But who would cart the coal for them? They must have someone to cart it.

Mr. CAMM: Of course they must, but when \$1.80 a ton is received for carting this material and operating costs are 80c, is that not a profit of \$1 a ton? Can't the hon. member get that into his head? With large trains of three engines hauling 5,000 tons, the ton-mile cost of transporting material of this type becomes ridiculously low. That has been proved all over the world. Once transport operations become of a major nature, the profit for the State lies in the negotiated freight rates.

The hon. member for Townsville North, when referring to royalties imposed by a previous Government, said that they did not apply to export coal. That is a lot of rot. The royalties of 6d., 3d. and 1d. were determined by the previous Government in an endeavour to sell Blair Athol coal to overseas companies. Not a ton of that coal was to be used in this State.

The only profit from that operation was the miserable penny a ton royalty received by the Government. The company had the right to build its own railway line and to take all the profits associated with the transport of coal. In fact, there was a clause in the agreement providing that it could build a conveyor belt over the range leading down to the coast.

Mr. Hanlon: There is a similar provision in your Thiess Peabody Mitsui agreement, too, if you look at it.

Mr. CAMM: That is correct, and we altered it. I ask the Committee to bear in mind that when I began negotiations on the franchise agreement, the companies referred back to the old agreement under a Labour Government. They said, "Here is what a socialist Government was offering private enterprise. You, a private-enterprise Government, are making things more and more difficult for us." They would have been

happy to negotiate an agreement based on the Act covering the Blair Athol coal deposits. I repeat that the only benefit to the State was a royalty of one penny a ton. The Government received no rail freight because the railway line was to be owned and operated by the company exporting the coal.

Mr. Hanlon: I suggest that you relate the penny a ton to to-day's monetary values.

Mr. CAMM: I will relate the penny a ton to today's monetary values, but I will relate it also to the profit that the Government is receiving in railway freights. The hon. member for Barooka can multiply that penny a ton by 100, if he wishes to do so, but he will soon see that the Government is receiving 100 times more than it would have received if the agreements had been based on what was offered by a former Labour Government to overseas companies to exploit the coal deposits at Blair Athol.

Mr. Hanlon: Under that agreement, we would have taken over the railway at its depreciated value.

Mr. CAMM: After 80 years. The Government now gets the railway lines for nothing as soon as they are built and begin to operate. It receives profits from rail freights as soon as coal is hauled over the line. The hon. member may examine the agreements as carefully as he wishes and use them for political purposes. But if he studies them objectively he will realise that the franchise agreements that the Government is now negotiating are profitable undertakings because of the benefit that the State derives from rail freights.

Mr. Hanlon: There should be more profit in them—that is the Opposition's argument.

Mr. CAMM: The hon. member says there should be more profit in them. When the Government stood out for more profit for itself, it was criticised by hon. members opposite for endeavouring to make a harsh deal. They cannot have it both ways.

The hon. member for Townsville North mentioned the distinction between motor vehicle registration procedures in Brisbane and those in Townsville. He said that Brisbane car-dealers give the necessary certificates on a particular form, whereas in Townsville a different form is used. The approved-dealer scheme is not based on either trust or absence of trust in motor-dealers. It came into being by force of circumstances because the volume of new-vehicle sales of major motor-dealers in Brisbane reached such proportions that it became impracticable to persist with the normal requirement of police inspection or inspection by the Main Roads Department before registration. A considerable number of motor-dealers selling vehicles in Brisbane are not and will not be included in the approved-dealer scheme until their volume of business makes normal police or Main Roads Department inspection impracticable. New vehicle registrations in Townsville average

fewer than 10 a day, so it is quite possible for the department to continue the old system of registering vehicles there.

Mr. Tucker: Is it just that you are resisting change?

Mr. CAMM: No. If the hon. member studies the history of the Main Roads Department since we have been in Government, he will see that many changes have been instituted for the benefit of the motoring public. No doubt improvements were also effected under former Labour Governments. They come into being as the need arises and as suggestions are adopted.

Mr. Tucker: If it works in Brisbane, why can't it work in Townsville?

Mr. CAMM: As I explained, the volume of registrations in Brisbane was so great that it was necessary to introduce it.

Mr. Davies: It takes three weeks to get the registration sticker back for your vehicle.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, I know. When registration figures reach similar proportions in Townsville, the Government will consider altering the system. As I said, it has already made a number of other alterations for the benefit of the motoring public.

Mr. Tucker: If that is your only reason it sounds like a dog-in-the-manger one.

Mr. CAMM: No. The hon. member for Ithaca queried special mining leases and indicated that Press statements today refer to such leases. Special mining leases are only mining leases of large areas, to which special conditions apply. Many of the areas on lease in Queensland are held under special mining lease tenure. We put special conditions on these leases. An ordinary mineral lease carries conditions that are outlined in the Mining Act—so many acres and so many men to be employed—but many of the mining leases are mineral leases with special conditions. I can assure the hon. member that no mining lease has been granted recently in the Cooloola area. I also remind him that there are in existence on the beach front leading up to Cooloola mining leases that were granted right back in 1956. These leases are still in operation and, of course, we recognise them. They were granted prior to this Government attaining office but we honour all our obligations.

I do not wish to dwell at length on Cooloola other than to say that the Cabinet has decided that lease applications be refused, and the Minister for Lands is drawing a map delineating the forestry area and the proposed national park area. It is true that there is an authority to prospect still in existence and we will have to wait for the expiration of this authority to declare a national park over the smaller area covered by part of this authority to prospect. Most of it is in the forestry area.

It is quite true to say that in a forestry area the way is open to anyone to apply for a lease. This applies all over the State. If the area is on a forestry reserve under the control of the Forestry Department, we consult with the Forestry Department before any lease application is even considered.

The hon. member for Salisbury must be indisposed; I notice he is not here. I was going to say something but in his absence I will not do so. The Leader of the Opposition, in today's Press, claimed credit for the refusal to grant these leases; he gave most of it to the hon. member for Salisbury. If he is going to claim the credit, I hope that he will accept responsibility if the workers in the Tin Can Bay area lose their jobs in the immediate future because the mineral resources of that area have been exhausted.

Mr. Tucker: Do you mean that you are going to take your bat home, sort of thing?

Mr. CAMM: I have no hesitation in saying where I stand in this regard. Hon. members have heard me on many occasions and there is no need for me to repeat what I said. There is no need for hon. members opposite to deny how they stood.

Mr. Tucker: That is right.

Mr. CAMM: And we all know how their bosses in the Trades and Labour Council stood. Let them not come in here in a few years' time and tell us what we should do if these men become unemployed. Of course, we will make every endeavour to see that they do not.

Mr. Davies: What does Mr. Sparkes say?

Mr. CAMM: I do not care what anyone else says.

Mr. Tucker: You sound as though you want them unemployed.

Mr. CAMM: Oh, no; that is the hon. member's woolly thinking.

The hon. member for South Brisbane spoke about the intrusion of undesirable elements into the mining industry. In the same breath, he mentioned that the hon. member for Port Curtis is now the shadow Minister for Mines. I wonder if this concern by the southern mining interests has anything to do with the appointment of the hon. member for Port Curtis to this position and whether the hon. member for South Brisbane meant that when he questioned the intrusion of these undesirable elements into the mining industry. I noticed that he was looking at the hon. member. As a barrister he should be pleased about this because he will be able to make a vast amount of money by endeavouring to defend his wealthy patrons when they get into trouble.

He spoke about the Government's not obtaining rail freights from Weipa bauxite. Of course, the Government is aware of that. When I referred earlier to rail freights I had in mind the coal franchises that had

been granted and the new one that was negotiated recently for the development of the Greenvale nickel project.

The hon. member referred also to the desirability of processing many of our minerals in Queensland. I have already referred to Townsville and Gladstone.

Then the hon. member went on to talk about the Geological Survey in the premises occupied by the Mines Department. I wonder how long ago it was that the hon. member last visited Mineral House. I venture to suggest that he has never set foot in the building. Recently the whole building was modernised and painted in the best of taste. At present it is a very functional building. He referred, too, to the library in the Geological Survey. Over the past three years that library has been considerably enlarged by purchases of modern textbooks, subscriptions to additional scientific periodicals and the growth of the exchange list. The library ranks as a major one of geological literature, and it is used a good deal by officers of the Geological Survey and other sections of the department as well as by representatives of the mining companies that are conducting exploration work in Queensland.

The library's intensity of use may be gauged by reference to the list of books that are taken out and read and the figures of internal loans, inter-library loans and the number of daily visitors for the past three months. Admittedly the accommodation in the library is rather crowded, but this is the result of its growth and the large number of people who use its facilities. This overcrowding will be alleviated to a great extent when the reallocation of space in the building, which is at present under way, is effected.

To give hon. members an idea of the popularity of the library, I point out that in August it had 705 internal loans, eight inter-library loans and a daily average of 28 visitors. In October it had 1,048 internal loans, 29 inter-library loans and a daily average of 34 visitors. And this is in a library that is condemned by the hon. member for South Brisbane!

The hon. member for Rockhampton North mentioned stolen vehicles, which is entirely a matter for the police, and the size and shape of handle-bars on motor-cycles. That is a matter for the manufacturers.

Mr. Thackeray: It has nothing to do with the police, but with your department. You register them.

Mr. CAMM: We register them, but we cannot be expected to trace the origin of every vehicle. It is sufficient if the vehicles comply with the provisions relative to engine numbers and so on.

He referred also to the realignment of the road south from Rockhampton to prevent flooding. That has been investigated, and it will be done.

The hon. member for Burke referred to the registration of vehicles in his area. I am sure he realises that the small number of vehicles registered in Mt. Isa makes it very hard to establish an office there. He also referred to the delay in the issue of instruments of lease and suggested that the staff at Mt. Isa should be increased. The delay is caused entirely by a shortage of qualified draftsmen. Unfortunately we train our men so well that other people take them from us. The demand for qualified men is increasing, as will be realised, because of the boom in the mining industry. If the hon. member knows where to get experienced staff without deruding some other department I should be pleased if he would let me know because I will be only too pleased to employ them.

Although I could not hear the hon member clearly, I thought I heard him advocating the export of our phosphate rock to South East Asia. It was very difficult to hear him, but it was more difficult to understand his attitude to the export of our minerals in the light of arguments advanced by other hon. members opposite.

The contribution by the hon. member for Mourilyan developed into an argument between the member for Clayfield and himself about the names of particular grasses. For his information, I live in a wet area. Panicum grass, as he calls it, grows in his area, but panicum maximum is the scientific name for guinea grass. The grass he referred to as panicum grass is really para grass, the creeping grass that grows in the swamps. The scientific name for it is brachiaria mutica. He got into an argument about para grass. That has nothing to do with main roads matters but I thought I should clear up a little confusion.

Mr. Tucker: There is green panic.

Mr. CAMM: Yes, there is green panic; there are several species of panic, but the one that grows in North Queensland is the guinea grass species for which the proper scientific name is panicum maximum.

The hon. member for Cook spoke about the development of roads in the Peninsula area. We are proceeding apace with them and quite a lot of money is being spent in the area. As he will appreciate, a lot of it is Commonwealth aid money, but it is not true to say that all the money spent in the area comes from the Commonwealth. I have recently released a scheme covering all the work north of Laura, and the work between Laura and Cooktown, at a cost of \$258,000. This is being done entirely from State Main Roads Department funds and not from Commonwealth funds.

The road from Mareeba to Laura is being constructed under the beef roads scheme, supplemented by State funds. We are providing \$7,000,000 and \$39,500,000 will be provided under the beef roads scheme, so it is difficult to say how much

comes from State funds and how much comes from the beef roads scheme. Therefore it is not correct to say that we are not spending Main Roads Department funds in the area.

He suggested that Aborigines' rights should be protected in any new bauxite-mining ventures. At present, there are companies that are interested in the further development of our bauxite resources, and we are conferring with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to see what concessions or benefits should accrue to these people in any future mining venture. It must be realised that every Aborigine at Weipa who is capable of working or who desires to work is fully employed at present.

The hon. member for Belmont dealt with the reticulation of natural gas. We are all concerned with safety precautions to be observed in gas reticulation. Quite recently I convened a meeting, under the chairmanship of the Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, of the various authorities responsible for the reticulation of all services in Brisbane through pipes and trenches, to see if we could arrive at the formation of a body that would be responsible for roads which have to be opened for these inspections. I believe that this responsibility will be accepted by the Brisbane City Council, which has control of most of these services. The Chief Gas Examiner is concerned with the safety of gas pipelines, and that matter is being looked at very closely by him and his officers.

The hon. member for Belmont also spoke about the construction of a section of the Capalaba Road between Belmont and Creek Road. He wants it to be a four-lane highway. This financial year over \$11,000,000 is being spent on freeways and arterial roads in Brisbane, and under the circumstances it is not possible to include in the works programme the section mentioned by the hon. member. It is recognised that it carries very heavy traffic.

The hon. member also questioned the safety, and the remaining life, of a timber bridge over Tingalpa Creek at Capalaba. This bridge was recently widened, redecked, and otherwise repaired. It is perfectly safe for the traffic that uses it, and it is considered to have many years of life left in it.

The hon. member for Toowoomba East mentioned the price of natural gas. This is negotiated between the producer and the distributor. We have no say in it.

At 9.55 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! 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 the Department of Mines and Main Roads.

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

Department of Mines and Main Roads—

	\$	
Chief Office		907,828
Balance of Department, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account		99,158,475

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.57 p.m.