

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 1971

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

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL

JUDGE FOR 1972

Mr. **SPEAKER** announced the receipt of a letter from the Honourable the Chief Justice intimating that the Honourable Mr. Justice W. B. Campbell would be the judge to preside at the sittings of the Elections Tribunal for 1972.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

River Improvement Trust Act 1940–1971.

The Harbours Acts, 1955 to 1968.

City of Brisbane Act 1924–1969.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

USE OF CANNABIS (MARIJUANA);
STATEMENT BY DR. N. RIBUSH

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (11.4 a.m.): Within the last few days there has been a great deal of discussion concerning a letter published in the Medical Journal of Australia on Saturday, 4 December, signed by Dr. Nicholas Ribush, who is attached to the Tuberculosis Clinic of the State Health Department.

In this letter, Dr. Ribush makes a number of claims concerning the use of cannabis (marijuana), many of which challenge the policy of the Queensland Health Department and, indeed all other Health Departments in Australia. As Dr. Ribush is a probationary employee of my department, I have been pressed by many agencies for a statement upon his allegations.

The most important of Dr. Ribush's comments would be the assertion that "anyone with access to informed literature (and there is plenty despite repeated pleas for more research) will readily find that the use of cannabis is safe in the short and long term". He also makes a second claim that—

"Each in-depth study of this drug—the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission (1893-1894), the New York La Guardia Report (1944), the British Wootton Report (1969) and recent Canadian and Australian investigations—has reaffirmed the safety of cannabis."

I think it is important that these two statements should be immediately challenged. I therefore quote first from the Wootton Report—

"We conclude therefore that in the interests of public health it is necessary to maintain restrictions on the availability and use of this drug. For the purpose of enforcing these restrictions there is no alternative to the Criminal law and its penalties."

I also quote two extracts from the more recent Le Dain Report in Canada. The first reads—

"Existing scientific knowledge and opinion concerning the effects of cannabis on cognitive functions and psychomotor abilities is not of such an order as can be relied on at this time for purposes of public policy decision-making."

The second reads—

"There is hardly any reliable information applicable to North American conditions concerning the long-term effect of cannabis."

Investigations into the long-term effect of cannabis are, however, proceeding in various parts of the world, and, by a remarkable coincidence, the results of one of them were published in London in "The Lancet" on the same day as the views of Dr. Ribush were published in "The Australian Medical Journal".

At my request, the Director-General of Health and Medical Services contacted the editor of "The Lancet" last night by radio-telephone and was advised that the "Lancet" report was provided by Dr. A. M. G. Campbell, a neurologist, and by others of the Bristol Teaching Hospital. In summary, the investigations involved 10 patients averaging 22 years of age with histories of consistent cannabis smoking for periods of from three to 11 years, and in all of them evidence of cerebral atrophy was demonstrated by air encephalography.

Finally, the Sixteenth Report of the World Health Organisation Expert Committee on Drug Dependence, published in 1969, said—

"The Committee strongly reaffirms the opinion expressed in previous reports that cannabis is a drug of dependence producing public health and social problems and that its control must be continued."

In a speech to this Assembly on 18 March last, I stated—

"Marijuana, along with other dangerous drugs, has been the subject of study by many national and international bodies. Queensland legislation must be viewed against the background of the recommendations of those various bodies. Australia, and thus Queensland, is a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961. Under this international agreement, the parties are obliged to place heroin and marijuana under strict control, which in effect makes these drugs prohibited substances."

This was, is, and will remain, Government policy.

The Director-General of Health and Medical Services yesterday had a series of discussions with Dr. Ribush, from which it would appear that the doctor has not conducted any worthwhile original research into the problems of drug dependency, or of the short-term and/or long-term effects of using cannabis. His statements in "The Medical Journal of Australia" appear to have been based almost entirely upon a reading of literature on the subject—information that has been available to all Australian Governments when considering legislation regarding the availability of drugs, and that received full and detailed consideration before uniform legislation was adopted throughout the Commonwealth.

As a final comment, I again quote from my speech to this Assembly in March last—

"Those who advocate that marijuana should be no longer controlled claim that its effects are no worse than those of alcohol and tobacco, and that as these substances are available to the community, so should marijuana be available. The hazards associated with alcohol and tobacco are recognised, but to claim that marijuana is no worse than these is surely no argument why our community should introduce yet a third product which may leave similar, if not worse, ill-effects."

PETITION

MINERAL LEASES, FRASER AND
MORETON ISLANDS

Mr. **SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) presented a petition signed by 441 electors and others in the State of Queensland, praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take immediate steps to prevent the granting of any further mineral leases on Fraser and Moreton Islands until an independent, comprehensive land-use survey of these areas has been carried out.

Petition read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

COMPARATIVE AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL
CONDITIONS

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

In relation to the schedule tabled in Answer to a Question by the Honourable Member for Merthyr on November 12, will he table the latest International Labour Organisation Bulletin on Social Services for the purpose of indicating Australia's place in the schedule of countries listed?

Answer:—

"Enquiries made at the Department of Labour and National Service in Brisbane and at the Department of Social Services in Canberra can elicit no knowledge of an I.L.O. Bulletin on Social Services. Neither is it known to officers of my Department. The information contained in my Answer on November 12 was extracted from the latest I.L.O. publications held in my Department at that time. Yesterday, December 6, I received the Bulletin of Labour Statistics for the third quarter 1971 and the data contained in that bulletin is shown on the schedule which I now table, and hope, Mr. Speaker, you will agree to its being included in *Hansard*. It will be seen that an increase in the Consumer Price Index occurred in the majority of countries listed and that the Australian increase was proportionately less than in most. The unemployment rate is that applicable to February 1971 and I would draw attention to the October 1971 rate as published by the Department of Labour and National Service of 1.11 per cent. However, even at the February rate, Australia's position is still favourable. I am still unable to compare the position in Australia with that of Latvia, Lithuania and the U.S.S.R. since no data in respect of those countries is furnished."

Whereupon Mr. Herbert laid the following schedule on the table:—

	Unemployment Rate	Consumer Price Index (1963 Base)
Australia	1.7	129.9
Singapore	n/a	108.8
Israel	3.4	139.9
Italy	2.9	128.4
Britain	3.1	151.2
West Germany	1.0	119.6
France	n/a	136.0
Norway	0.6	154.5
Sweden	2.3	149.1
Hong Kong	n/a	153.0
Egypt	n/a	n/a

RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS, LOCAL
OPTION POLLS AND PETITIONS

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

(1) Under the Liquor Act, what is the position of residents in a new housing area to which a liquor licence has been transferred in relation to (a) signing a petition and/or (b) voting in a local option poll, if such houses were not built or resided in as at December 31 prior to the year in which such poll will be held?

(2) Is any regard paid to the fact that after three months' residence in the area such a householder becomes enrolled for that electorate?

(3) Is it necessary for the licensee or nominee in the new area to be an enrolled elector of that district?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) Any elector registered up to December 31 in the year preceding that in which the petition is presented may sign the petition provided that he is resident at the address registered on that roll. (b) Any elector qualified to vote at a Parliamentary election for the return of a member to the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district is required to vote at a local option poll. I might mention here that section 151B (3) of the *Liquor Act* 1912-1970 prescribes the method of signing of petitions by electors and section 170 prescribes the form of petitions, etc., and the requirements with regard to the witnessing of signatures to petitions, etc."

(2) "Due regard is taken in accordance with the relative sections of the *Liquor Act*, namely section 151B (4) and 151E, as to whether a householder is eligible to sign a petition or vote at a local option poll."

(3) "No."

VOTING, QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY SENATE
ELECTION

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a report in *The Courier-Mail* of November 30 that only about 4,000 students and others, out of a total of 15,000 eligible to do so, recently voted to fill positions on the Queensland University Senate?

(2) Will he have enquiries made to ascertain if this reluctance to vote was the result of the poor quality and administrative record of the majority of the nominees and the restricted circumstances under which nominations could be lodged and inform the House whether any alteration is to be made to improve the position?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The election to which reference is made is by members of Convocation for ten members of the Senate. The Vice-Chancellor regrets that more members of the University Convocation did not vote in the recent University Senate elections but this cannot in any way be regarded as a reflection on the quality of the candidates. The election was advertised in *The Courier-Mail* on September 18, 1971 as well as within the university in the columns of the publication *University News* which is widely distributed among staff and students on the campus. The holding of the election was also reported in the news columns of the Press. Nominations were called for in an advertisement in *The Courier-Mail* on September 18, 1971 and in the *Government Gazette* of the same date. There was also a Press release to all newspapers, radio and television stations on September 17. Nominations closed on October 11, which seems to have allowed adequate time seeing that there were 29 candidates compared with only 17 for the previous Senate election. It may be that many members of Convocation, especially those of long standing, get out of touch with the university for a variety of reasons such as travel and jobs outside Queensland. This is a problem felt by universities everywhere and is not peculiar to Queensland."

STATEMENT BY DR. GOODMAN ON
UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in *The Courier-Mail* of December 2 wherein Dr. R. D. Goodman, Senior Lecturer at the Queensland University External Studies Department, was reported as saying that the university holds some who are academic barbarians, educated anarchists, uncultured, uncouth, undignified and, according to many observers, unwashed?

(2) Will he inform the House of any manner by which the Government, which pours millions of dollars annually into the university, can effectively deal with this unsavoury position and will he assure the House that appropriate steps will be taken in accordance therewith?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The university contains a very large body of students who, like students all over this country, are working hard to obtain their degrees. There are some who by reason of appearance or activities attract publicity. If they are guilty of breaches of university discipline they are dealt with appropriately. It is true that the Government, like other governments in Australia provides large sums of money for a very large university. That university each year graduates a large number in a very wide range of professions and disciplines. The University of Queensland is also unique among large Australian universities in providing the means of graduation through external studies. No university in Australia provides a wider range of opportunity of qualification for its student body."

BREATHALYSER TESTS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a statement, attributed to him, in *The Courier-Mail* of December 2 that he believed police could make greater use of breathalyser tests as a means of curbing Queensland's road toll?

(2) Has he any knowledge of dissension within the Police Force and a consequent reluctance by some officers to use the breathalyser test as a result of information percolating through the Force that judges and certain top public servants are not to be submitted to the test even when, in the opinion of the officer, the test should and would have been applied to an ordinary citizen?

(3) If so, will he assure the House that police officers will not be charged or punished for submitting anyone to the breathalyser test if, in the honest opinion of the officer, the test should be applied in accordance with the law?

Answers:—

(1) "I am aware of the Press statement."

(2) "I have no knowledge of information of the kind referred to by the Honourable Member percolating through the Police Force and resulting in reluctance on the part of police to use the breathalyser. No person irrespective of position is immune to a request by a police officer to take a breathalyser test."

(3) "Charges cannot be preferred against police for lawfully carrying out their duties."

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS UNDER RADFORD
EDUCATION SCHEME

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

In view of his Answer to my Question on December 3 and the public statement by a member of the Board of Secondary School Studies as reported in *The Sunday Mail* of November 28 that there is no such thing as a pass or fail as far as the certificate given by the Board is concerned, why do some certificates which are issued by this Board designate a rating of P or F and what do these letters stand for?

Answer:—

"Some Junior Certificates will have a result for the subjects of Music and Speech and Drama reported as one of the following categories: Honours, credit, pass, fail. This information is given on the back of the certificate. Achievement on the subjects of Music and Speech and Drama was not assessed within schools in the same manner as all other subjects. Results for these subjects were obtained from the external examinations conducted by the Australian Music Examinations Board. The Board of Secondary School Studies decided to use the method of reporting adopted by the A.M.E.B. for two reasons: 1. The method of assessing Music and Speech and Drama was quite different from that used for all other subjects. 2. The number of students taking these subjects was relatively small, too small for the effective use of the numerical rating system. The board is reporting these results on its certificates in 1971 and 1972 to honour obligations to those students who began studies in those subjects before the external Junior Examination was abolished."

TENDERS FOR NEW BLOCK, ROYAL
BRISBANE HOSPITAL

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

(1) Where was the call for tenders for the foundations of the block 7 contract, Royal Brisbane Hospital, advertised?

(2) How many tenders were received?

(3) What were the names of the tenderers and what was the amount of each tender?

(4) Was any concession made or margin allowed to Queensland tenderers?

(5) In view of the professed Government policy of preference to Queensland industry, what was the deciding factor in favour of the successful southern tender?

Answers:—

(1) "Tenders were advertised in *The Courier-Mail*."

(2 and 3) "Twelve tenders were received and they are:—Fitzgerald & Williams Pty. Ltd. Parramatta, N.S.W., \$213,243; K. D. Morris & Sons Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$237,134; Leighton Contractors Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$259,360; Paramount Contractors Pty. Ltd. Surfers Paradise, \$268,191; Kratzmann Holdings Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$268,204; Thiess Bros. Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$289,527.35; Welch Bros. (Queensland) Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$327,471; E. A. Watts Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$361,775; Hornick Constructions Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$370,125; Harris James Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$373,280; McDougall-Ireland Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$394,896; and F. A. Pidgeon & Son Pty. Ltd. Brisbane, \$439,900."

(4 and 5) "Preference is not applicable to Queensland contractors. Preference is however applied to materials and goods of Queensland manufacture. It will now be evident to the Honourable Member that the accepted tender is most favourable when compared to the other tenders submitted. I am advised that the accepted tender provides that all material to be used will be purchased in Brisbane and the Principal of the firm has indicated that it is intended to sublet the rock-bolting work to an approved local sub-contractor."

SITES FOR NEW HIGH SCHOOLS, CAIRNS
AND STRATFORD

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

(1) What are the present enrolments of the Cairns and Trinity Bay High Schools and what are considered to be the maximum desirable enrolments for these schools?

(2) Has further consideration been given to the site for a proposed third high school in the Cairns area?

(3) Is his Department aware of the great amount of subdivisional work and building activity north of Cairns?

(4) Has the Government yet completed the acquisition of land for the proposed high school at Stratford?

Answers:—

(1) "Cairns, 973; Trinity Bay, 761. It is considered that Cairns High School could grow to 1,200 and Trinity Bay High School to at least 1,000."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "I am aware that over the next five years there is likely to be considerable residential development in the northern suburbs of Cairns."

(4) "Yes."

BURNING-OFF OF UNDERGROWTH, FAR
NORTH QUEENSLAND

Mr. B. Wood, pursuant to notice, asked
The Minister for Lands,—

(1) Does the Rural Fires Board in Far North Queensland burn off undergrowth in times of fire danger and, if so, is this partly in an attempt to encourage the growth of fire-resistant varieties?

(2) Has any research or investigation into the efficacy of such burning-off been carried out?

Answers:—

(1) "No. The Rural Fires Board does not burn off during times of fire danger. The burning off experiments are undertaken at times of minimum fire risk and have been aimed at protecting the existing scrub edges and if possible, restoring the rain forest to areas formerly occupied by this type."

(2) "The situation in the Cairns-Kuranda range area where the main experimentation is being undertaken is that the original jungle or rain forest species has been removed by continued annual burning. This type of scrub will not sustain a fire, but is susceptible to fire damage. The small areas originally damaged were replaced by grass and undergrowth which provided fuel for a fiercer fire the following year, which damaged more scrub and the unfortunate process accelerated each year until a considerable part of the range adjoining the road was denuded of rain forest. When an officer of the Rural Fires Board was appointed to Cairns in 1968 he secured the co-operation of the Forestry Department, the Main Roads Department and when necessary, the Railway Department, in an endeavour to halt this process. It was noted that there was scattered regeneration of scrub species through the grassed areas, but owing to the nature of the species, the burning of the surrounding grass destroyed the regeneration also. Experiments were carried out in downhill burns during mild weather conditions and it has been ascertained that prescribed burning in carefully selected conditions can be undertaken without serious damage to tree and shrub regrowth which is more than 15 feet high. The burns, however, have not been entirely successful as a permanent procedure because, in the steep areas concerned, it is a very difficult matter to burn downhill except at times of a reasonably high reading on the fire danger index, and in these conditions the fires are liable to circle around and burn uphill with an undesirable intensity. In this respect some consideration is now being given to replanting these areas, and in fact one local Bush Fire Brigade has successfully established exotic pines on private property in the area as a restoration operation. In

addition the board (again in a joint venture with Forestry and Main Roads) is carrying out match-trap burns along the road edges. These have been satisfactorily carried out by use of dessicants four to six weeks before burning and provide some, though of course not a complete, protection from fires started by the travelling public. Experiments of this nature need to be carried out over a fairly lengthy period before conclusions can be reached. They are being continued."

PLAYING FIELDS, INNISFAIL HIGH SCHOOL

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

With regard to the resumption of land from the Innisfail State High School ovals for the purpose of a main road leading into Innisfail from the new bridge across the South Johnstone River and as the occupying of over 700 students is a major task in the area that is available at present, will he assure me that the filling of the low area to be used by this school for playing fields will be completed before work is carried out on the ovals?

Answer:—

"Yes."

ENGLISH PAPER, SENIOR EXAMINATION

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

In view of the statement in *The Courier-Mail* of November 11 by the English master at the Church of England Grammar School, wherein he was reported as saying that all but the best students would have been staggered by this year's Senior English paper, when will his Department or the Queensland University consider removing English as a compulsory pass subject in all faculties other than arts?

Answer:—

"The newspaper report referred to one question only and to the English master's view that it was 'very sticky'. There have been no other complaints. The university is not giving consideration to the removal of English as a compulsory subject."

SALARIES, STAFF AND ENROLMENTS,
TEACHERS' COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES
OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

(a) Mr. P. Wood, pursuant to notice, asked
The Minister for Education,—

(1) What is the ratio of academic staff to students at the Kelvin Grove, Kedron Park, Mt. Gravatt and Townsville Teachers' Colleges?

(2) What is the anticipated ratio of academic staff to students at the schools of teacher education in Toowoomba and Rockhampton?

(3) What ancillary staff (a) is employed at existing colleges and (b) will be employed at Toowoomba and Rockhampton?

(4) What salary range is paid to a lecturer, Grade I, at (a) existing teachers' colleges and (b) institutes of advanced education?

(5) How many lecturers have resigned from teachers' colleges to take positions in colleges of advance education during 1971?

(6) How many lecturers in teachers' colleges have resigned to take up appointments in colleges of advanced education next year?

Answers:—

(1) "The ratio of academic staff to students at October 31, 1971 was—Kelvin Grove, 1 : 13.0; Kedron Park, 1 : 15.1; Mt. Gravatt, 1 : 14.6; and Townsville, 1 : 13.1."

(2) "It is not possible to give comparable figures for the departments of teacher education at Toowoomba and Rockhampton as some of the lectures will be given by staff of other departments in the institutes."

(3) "(a) The following ancillary staff are employed at teachers colleges:—

—	Administrative, Clerical and Technical	Wages Staff	Total
Kelvin Grove	17	19	36
Kedron Park	11	11	22
Mount Gravatt (Residential)	15	21	36
Townsville (Residential)	11	17	28

(b) The total ancillary staff to be provided at the institutes (all departments) in 1972 is—Toowoomba, 96; Rockhampton, 87."

(4) "(a) The salary range for lecturer at existing teachers colleges is \$6,778—\$8,691. (b) The salary range for lecturer at institutes of advanced education is \$6,697—\$9,286."

(5) "None."

(6) "None."

(b) **Mr. P. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) What is the anticipated enrolment in the schools of teacher education at the Capricornia and Darling Downs Institutes of Advanced Education for 1972?

(2) What numbers are enrolled under Commonwealth Advanced Education Scholarships and under Queensland Teachers' Scholarships?

(3) On what basis will teacher-scholarship holders be allotted to the various colleges and institutes?

Answers:—

(1) "Provision has been made for the enrolment of some 110 students at each of the institutes of advanced education mentioned."

(2) "This information will not be known until the scholarships are awarded in January, 1972."

(3) "Teacher scholarship holders will be allotted to the various colleges and institutes on the basis of the places available taking into account as far as possible the place of residence of the students."

COMMONWEALTH ADVANCED EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

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

(1) How many Commonwealth Advanced Education Scholarships were made available for teacher education for 1970 and 1971 and how many will be offered in 1972?

(2) What amount will be made available for recurrent expenditure for teacher education at the Capricornia and Darling Downs Institutes of Advanced Education for 1972 (a) under the *States Grants (Advanced Education) Act* 1969 and (b) from State funds?

Answers:—

(1) "The Commonwealth Advanced Education Scholarship Scheme is administered by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Science. I suggest that the Honourable Member address his Question to that Department."

(2) "(a) and (b) *The States Grants (Advanced Education) Act* 1969 made provision for an expenditure of \$340,000 in 1972 for teacher education at the Capricornia and Darling Downs Institutes of Advanced Education. The Commonwealth share of this amount will be \$119,300; the State share will be \$220,700."

PROPOSED BOATING REGULATIONS

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an announcement in *The Courier-Mail* of November 17 regarding the new boating regulations to be introduced before the end of the year?

(2) Are the new regulations and the existing regulations uniform with those of other States? If not, will he consider having all boating safety equipment regulations made uniform with other States?

(3) Will he consider the publication of the complete regulations in order to give wide publicity to these important regulations?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "As nearly as practicable, the regulations are uniform with those of other States. In preparing the draft regulations, officers of the Department of Harbours and Marine conferred with the Maritime Services Board of New South Wales and studied existing Victorian regulations."

(3) "I anticipate that these regulations will be ready for consideration by the Governor in Council before the end of 1971. The draft regulations will provide that they become effective as from March 1, 1972. Subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, the purport of the regulations will be circulated to the owners of all registered boats in Queensland and will be given all available publicity on Press, radio and television."

NURSING SISTERS, EDWARD RIVER HOSPITAL

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

(1) How many qualified nursing sisters are at present attached to the Edward River Hospital?

(2) For what period during 1970-71 were two sisters attached to this hospital?

(3) Are double-certificated sisters normally engaged?

(4) Have all sisters employed at Edward River held double certificates and, if not, how many possessed a single certificate?

Answers:—

(1) "Establishment is for two sisters—presently vacant. The positions are advertised with prospects of early filling. The vacancies occurred as a result of resignations effective on September 24, 1971 and November 19, 1971."

(2) "From December 2, 1970 to January 30, 1971 and March 20, 1971 to September 24, 1971."

(3 and 4) "The policy of the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs is to employ certificated sisters and at a higher level than single certificate, wherever possible and practicable. Since 1968, eight qualified sisters have been appointed to Edward River. Of these, three held double certificates."

TRAVEL CONCESSIONS FOR TEACHERS AT ISOLATED SCHOOLS

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

(1) As high air fares for travel to isolated places such as Mitchell River and Bamaga often prevent teachers from leaving their schools during the May and August vacations, will he consider granting air fares to such teachers at least once during the school year other than for the Christmas vacation?

(2) Will he also consider granting full transport charges incurred in the transport of teachers' vehicles on boats to certain isolated areas?

Answers:—

(1) "Teachers from the following isolated schools are granted return air fares to the nearest railhead during the midsummer vacation:—Thursday Island; Bamaga; Weipa North; Weipa South; Mitchell River; Edward River; Lockhart; Coen; Birdsville; Bedourie and Laura. Extending this privilege for teachers would involve consideration of the same additional privilege for other public servants serving in the same areas and, as such, is a matter for the Department of the Public Service Board. It should be noted that all of these schools are in areas which attract high extra cost of living allowances."

(2) "The full cost of transporting a teacher's vehicle is met by my Department. There are two conditions: viz., that prior departmental approval is obtained; and that the arrangements for freighting the vehicle are made at the same time as the other arrangements for effecting the teacher's transfer. An application for freighting a private vehicle on a boat is a matter for determination by the Public Service Board."

COMPARATIVE SALARIES OF TEACHERS

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

In view of the Minister for Education's reply on December 3 regarding salaries for teachers after two years' and three years' service, etc., will he compare these salaries with those for engineers, draftsmen, chemists and accountants in industry with similar education qualifications and length of experience?

Answer:—

"The comparison is as follows:—(a) Classified teachers (two-year trained) with draughtsmen, chemists and accountants (clerks)—1st year salary—Teacher, highest; clerk (19 years), second; trainee draughtsman, third; and chemist, no information (in 3rd year of university course). 2nd year salary—teacher, highest; chemist (qualified assistant), second; trainee

draughtsman, third; and clerk, fourth. 3rd year and 4th year salaries—Chemist (registered assistant after three-year course and one year practical experience), highest; teacher, second; clerk (with Intermediate Accountancy Certificate), third; and draughtsman—detail, fourth. 5th year salary—Chemist (registered assistant), highest; teacher, second; draughtsman—senior detail, third; and accountant (clerk with Intermediate and Final Accountancy Certificates), fourth. 6th year salary—Teacher, highest; chemist (registered assistant), second; draughtsman—senior detail, third; and accountant, fourth. 7th year to 12th year salaries—Teacher, highest; draughtsman—designing, second; chemist (registered assistant), third; and accountant, fourth. (b) Classified teachers (three-year trained) with draughtsmen, chemists and accountants (clerks)—1st year salary—Teacher, highest; chemist (qualified assistant), second; trainee draughtsman, third; and clerk (20 years), fourth. 2nd year and 3rd year salaries—Chemist (registered assistant—after three-year course and one year practical experience), highest; teacher, second; clerk (with Intermediate Accountancy Certificate), third; and draughtsman—detail, fourth. 4th year and 5th year salaries—Teacher, highest; chemist (registered assistant), second; draughtsman—senior detail, third; and accountant (clerk with both Intermediate and Final Accountancy Certificates), fourth. 6th year, 7th year, 8th year, 9th year and 10th year salaries—Teacher, highest; draughtsman—designing, second; chemist (registered assistant), third; and accountant (clerk with both Intermediate and Final Accountancy Certificates), fourth. There is no award of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Commission of Queensland covering engineers in industry.”

TEACHERS AND ENROLMENTS,
TOOWOOMBA HIGH SCHOOLS

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

(1) What is the present enrolment of students at the Toowoomba high schools—(a) Mount Lofty, (b) Centenary and (c) Harristown?

(2) What is the number of teachers, and what are their classifications, at each of these schools?

Answers:—

(1) “The present enrolments at each of the Toowoomba high schools are as under—Centenary Heights State High School, 528; Harristown State High School, 1,002; and Toowoomba State High School, 1,245.”

(2) “I table the information sought by the Honourable Member.”

Whereupon Mr. Fletcher laid the following schedule on the table:—

Classification	Centenary Heights S.H.S.	Harristown S.H.S.	Toowoomba S.H.S.
409 .. ..	..	1	..
408	1	5	11
407 .. ..	..	1	..
406 .. ..	..	1	1
405	1	..	2
404	1	..	..
403	1	2	1
402	1	3	2
401	1	2	2
311	1	4	9
310	3	1	2
309 .. ..	..	1	1
308 .. ..	..	..	..
307 .. ..	..	1	..
306	1	..	..
305	1	1	..
304	1	1	2
303 .. ..	..	..	..
302 .. ..	..	1	2
301 .. ..	..	..	..
212	1	1	1
211	2	3	2
210	2	1	2
209 .. ..	..	1	..
208	2	1	1
207	1	1	..
206	1	4	4
205	1	1	..
204	1	1	..
203	2	1	4
202	2	..	2
201	1	2	2
Principal	1	1	1
Deputy Principal	1	1	1
Senior Mistress .. ..	..	1	1
Manual Training Teachers (610) .. ..	..	7	6
M.T. Teachers at Centenary Heights given ordinary two year classification	..	..	..
Supply “B” Teachers—	..	..	..
305 .. ..	..	1	..
206 .. ..	..	1	..
201 .. ..	..	1	..
Total	30	55	62

LONG SERVICE LEAVE ENTITLEMENT,
RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

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

Do Railway Department employees enjoy an entitlement which enables them to take a minimum portion of four weeks of their long service leave on a basis similar to that applying to State public servants?

Answer:—

“Unless there are special circumstances, the minimum period of long service leave which may be granted for the initial entitlement period of continuous service shall be three calendar months. The initial entitlement period is 15 years. Subject to an employee having completed not less than 15 years’ continuous service, he is entitled to further long service leave, subject to his having served a further period which would entitle him to not less than one calendar month’s long service leave.”

MINIMUM ENGLISH STANDARD FOR
PUBLIC SERVICE APPOINTEES

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

In view of the Education Minister's concurrence with Mr. Guymer's statement that a rating of 1 is not necessarily a poor result, is the Public Service Board prepared to accept applicants whose academic rating in English is 1? If not, what minimum rating is required in this subject and why is a rating of 1 not acceptable when the Minister for Education has stated that a student with such a rating has not really failed in the subject?

Answer:—

"In common with Public Services generally, the Queensland Public Service, by Regulation, prescribes certain standards based mainly on experience of what is required academically of applicants for appointment. It should be understood that the standards required by the Public Service in staff selection are not necessarily those appropriate for other uses. The Public Service Regulations generally require an overall minimum performance with stated minimum performances in some compulsory subjects, including English. A clerk from Junior level of education must obtain grades of at least 4 in English and Mathematics A, plus scores of at least 3 in three other subjects from a wide list; overall he must have a total score of 20 in six subjects on the list. Thus, one score of 1 for most subjects would be acceptable provided the applicant had higher grades in other subjects."

DEBITS AGAINST HOUSING COMMISSION
TENANTS, TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) How many debit charges, excluding arrears of rent, have been raised against ex-tenants of the Queensland Housing Commission in the area of the City of Townsville since July 1, 1969?

(2) What was the amount of the largest debit and how many of the debits have been (a) paid voluntarily by the tenants and (b) recovered by the Commission by court action?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "These charges are not recorded in districts and to extract the information sought would require excessive time in dissection of accounts. If there is any particular instance in which the Honourable Member is interested, and I recall that he wrote to me recently on one such case, I would have same examined."

REPAINTING, BIRKDALE STATE SCHOOL

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

With reference to his assurances some months ago that the Birkdale State School would be repainted—

(1) Was the project deferred or cancelled and, if so, why?

(2) Is he aware that paint is peeling off and that this will have a possible detrimental effect on the structure in the next wet season?

(3) Will he immediately reconsider the matter with a view to having the necessary work carried out at the earliest possible date?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "On September 28, 1970, I informed the Honourable Member of the acceptance of a quotation for the external repainting of the Birkdale State School. After several requests were made by my Department for the painting contractor to undertake the work, he withdrew from the job in July 1971 without making a commencement. Consequently, it became necessary to invite fresh quotations and, in September, 1971, a fresh contract was entered into for the carrying out of the work. The new contractor, who is presently painting another school in the district, anticipates commencing work at Birkdale State School in about three weeks time."

UNESCO SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE,
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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

With reference to the new UNESCO social studies course which is to be introduced into secondary schools—

(1) Are there to be trial or pilot schools and, if so, for what period and at which schools?

(2) When is it planned to introduce the course to all Queensland secondary schools and to what grades will it be introduced in the first instance?

(3) Will the proposed course be an elective or a core subject and will it replace another existing subject?

(4) Does the proposed course embrace history, geography, economics and sociology and, if so, to what extent?

(5) Will the areas of control of relevant subject masters have to be reorganised to fit in with the new subject and, if so, what will be the future position of history and geography subject masters?

(6) Is it intended to phase out history and geography subjects?

(7) What will be the position of future weaker students who would otherwise have continued with the old social studies course?

(8) What was the recommendation, if any, made by the committee set up to plan the course for Grades 11 and 12?

(9) Is UNESCO supplying the cost of books for the trial or pilot courses and, if so, what is the cost per school?

(10) If and when the courses are universally adopted, will the parents or the State be responsible for the supply of the expensive books required?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. Pilot courses are to be introduced in eleven high schools from the beginning of 1972, and they will continue in Grades 9 and 10 in 1973 and 1974. The high schools selected to trial the courses are Acacia Ridge, Cavendish Road, Banyo, Corinda, Kelvin Grove, Holland Park, Coorparoo, MacGregor, Heatley, Pimlico and Townsville."

(2) "The date on which the course will be introduced into all schools will depend on the evaluation of the course; it is hoped, however, that all schools will be able to offer the Grade 8 course in 1975."

(3) "This has not yet been decided. Initially the course will be offered as an elective additional to existing courses."

(4) "The course aims at providing a general education in the study of man in his environment. The course includes elements of history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology and Government presented within an integrated framework."

(5 and 6) "No decision has been made that geography and history will disappear. It is hoped, however, that many of the teachers and students of these subjects will find the new subject attractive."

(7) "No decision has been made nor will be made until the Social Sciences course has been evaluated."

(8) "The recommendation of the State Working Committee was that this course be continued in Grades 11 and 12. The Curriculum Branch of my Department is working on this recommendation."

(9) "No."

(10) "No decision has been made but it is assumed that as this course will be taken instead of another one in the curriculum, the purchase of one text book (at least) will be the responsibility of the parents. My Department will supply the necessary reference books."

WEIGHTS OF NESTLE CHOCOLATE PACKS

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

(1) With reference to the weight marking and weight reduction of chocolates and other confectionery, has the Consumer Affairs Bureau received complaints regarding the obliteration of marked weights and the reduction of weights by the Nestle Company as is evidenced by the proof which I have submitted to him?

(2) If complaints are justified, will he take action to have the extent of the fraud determined and endeavour to have the company punished by way of a payment, either in chocolate or its equivalent in money, to crippled children's homes or Pakistani refugees?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "In respect to weight of the samples of Nestles block chocolate Regulation 271 (d) of "The Weights and Measures Acts, 1951 to 1966" exempts confectionery of less than 3 ounces gross weight from the requirement to be marked with a statement of weight. The sample tendered with the weight obliterated is less than three ounces gross weight and the other is over three ounces gross weight. There is, therefore, no breach of the Weights and Measures Acts."

LOT-FEEDING OF DAIRY CATTLE

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

(1) Have any experiments or trials been conducted, either privately or at Governmental level, on the economics of the lot-feeding of dairy cattle for the production of milk and vealers?

(2) As the possibilities of turning pasture land into more productive crop-growing land are obvious, what has been the directing of Government advice on this matter?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. Lot feeding is unprofitable except in special circumstances such as a producer with restricted land acreage and a large retail price milk outlet, or for short drought periods. When availability of land is not the major factor restricting dairy production, the extra returns from green-lot-feeding are often insufficient to compensate the farmer for the extra effort required. As returns from vealer production are lower than from dairying the economics of lot-feeding in this application are even less attractive."

(2) "The possibilities of turning pasture land into more productive crop-growing land are far from obvious. The guiding principle is that each acre of land should

be treated according to its capabilities. Some land is too steep, some too stoney. Some soils are too shallow, some so sandy and deep that crops could not be grown. Further, there is much pasture land in Queensland where the rainfall is too low or too unreliable to be used for crop production. In giving advice on conversion to crop land, my technical officers take into account—Conservation and best land use; rainfall and reliability; soils and their suitability; and markets and the economics of crop production in the locality in question. In this State the area of cultivated land has increased from 2.9 million acres in 1957 to 6.9 million acres in 1971."

CONTROL OF DATURA WEED

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

(1) What effect has datura seed had on the marketing of grain in Queensland?

(2) Is the plant more commonly known as the castor-oil plant and what is the method of controlling it?

(3) Is this plant poisonous and, if so, is it or are its seeds responsible for human deaths?

Answers:—

(1) "Under 'The Agricultural Standards (Stock Foods) Regulations of 1964', the sale of grain containing seeds or parts of plants of *Datura* species is prohibited."

(2) "The standardised common name for *Datura* is Thornapple and two species are common as weeds in Queensland. One species is commonly called Castor-oil plant on the Darling Downs, but this is a misnomer. It is not related to Castor-oil and has none of its properties. Weed species of Thornapple can be controlled by cultivation, or if germination takes place after the crop has developed they can be controlled by overall spraying in the very young stage with a mixture of picloram and 2,4-D at very low rates."

(3) "The *Datura* plants contain varying amounts of atropine, hyoscyamine and hyoscyne, all of which are dangerous alkaloids and are regarded as poisonous to all animals (including man) and poultry. However, less is known of the toxicity of the seeds though there are references to poisoning with seeds in the scientific literature."

SHORT-GRAINED RICE

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

(1) Is the short-grained rice produced in Queensland comparable in quality and cost of production to that grown in other States?

(2) Does Queensland rice command a premium on world markets and what overseas countries are purchasers of paddy rice and short-grained rice?

Answers:—

(1) "Queensland does not produce short-grained rice commercially. The rice grown in this State is high quality long-grained rice. It is not therefore comparable with short-grained rice produced in New South Wales."

(2) Overseas markets fluctuate, but high quality Queensland rice attracts prices at least comparable with similar grades of long-grained rice from other countries. No Queensland rice is exported as paddy rice. It is all milled before export. As indicated in (1) above, there is no commercial production of short-grained rice in Queensland, consequently none is exported."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

USE OF CANNABIS (MARIJUANA); STATEMENT BY DR. N. RIBUSH

Mr. MELLOY: I ask the Minister for Health: In view of his ministerial statement this morning relative to the inconclusive nature of Dr. Ribush's serious statement, does he intend to call upon Dr. Ribush to substantiate his statement? If Dr. Ribush fails to do that, what action does he propose to take? In any case, will he have a full investigation into the circumstances alleged by Dr. Ribush, particularly his claim of personal knowledge of 50 doctors taking cannabis?

Mr. TOOTH: As I have indicated already, Dr. Ribush was called to the office of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services and various conversations have taken place.

The honourable member referred to the inconclusive nature of my statement. My statement is quite conclusive on the vital matter of whether cannabis is good, bad or indifferent and whether or not its use should be permitted. It is the subject to which I directed my statement.

With regard to the allegation of the use of cannabis by about 50 doctors, Dr. Ribush has been questioned and asked if he knows of 50 doctors who use it. It is a good, round figure, of course, so it would appear to be a guess. Nevertheless, he has been questioned and his answers, I understand, were to the effect that he knew a number of doctors, both here and in the South, who use cannabis, but, naturally, he was not prepared to reveal their names. I am unaware of any method by which the department could compel him to reveal their names; indeed, I am not certain of the propriety of endeavouring to force him to do so.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I ask the Minister for Health: As Dr. Nicholas Ribush has indicated that he is radically out of step with public welfare and national policy on drugs and as his statement could influence young people unduly, is any disciplinary action against him contemplated?

Mr. TOOTH: It is true that the fact that Dr. Ribush is a probationary employee of the Health Department has caused the department—and perhaps the Government—some embarrassment in that he has made statements that are so diametrically opposed to the policy of this Government and, indeed of all Governments in Australia. It is also true that there is the question of the propriety of an employee of the department giving vent to expressions that are so greatly at variance with the policy of the department and the Government.

Although I personally feel that the doctor's activities are more a foolish expression of youthful exuberance than anything more sinister, I think I should mention that some consideration is being given to extending the period of his probation.

EFFECT ON ROMA STREET STAFF, RAILWAY CONTRACT FREIGHT RATES

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: Is he aware of the inroads being made into railway revenue, which is estimated to have lost \$2,000,000, as a result of contract freight rates ex Roma Street? In view of this new situation, what are the future prospects of railway staff employed there?

Mr. KNOX: If I understood the honourable gentleman's question correctly, it was related to contract freight rates from Roma Street eroding railway revenue. I am not aware of any erosion of railway revenue as a result of the existence of these rates; in fact, because of the increased business they bring, they contribute to railway revenue. Consequently, if there is an increase in business, I cannot see that any of the permanent employees of the Railway Department are in jeopardy.

SAND REPLENISHMENT, GOLD COAST BEACHES

Mr. BROMLEY: I ask the Premier: Has his Government shelved plans to restore sand to the Gold Coast beaches?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: My Government does not shelve any plans it has undertaken to carry out. This matter is at present in the hands of the Gold Coast City Council.

USE OF OFFICIAL AEROPLANE BY NORTHERN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. CASEY: I ask the Premier: In view of his announcement about a possible additional sitting week in the present session of Parliament and as northern members have used

up all their air warrants, will he make the Government aircraft available to transport them to and from Parliament next week?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: It is a simple question and requires a simple answer, which is "No".

A Government Member: What's wrong with using the railways?

Mr. Casey interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Mackay will do well to remember not to argue or to engage in cross-firing during question time.

BRISBANE MEAT DELIVERIES

Mr. HUGHES: I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: As meat for human consumption in the metropolitan area continues to be delivered in an unhygienic manner because the rear door of delivery trucks is left open and uncovered meat is carried across roadways and footpaths, can he inform the House what progress has been made by his department in its investigations relative to obviating this undesirable practice?

Mr. ROW: This is a hardy annual from the honourable member for Kurilpa. I have previously replied to him quite frankly on this matter. If he wants the price of meat to Brisbane consumers increased, then the meat will be covered when it is carried from the truck to the butcher shop. We have investigated this matter, having particular regard to prices and hygiene, and we do not envisage taking any further action at this stage.

DISALLOWANCE OF QUESTIONS

Dr. CRAWFORD: I ask the Minister for Health: Did the Department of Health receive a detailed statement from the Australian Medical Association 18 months ago regarding essential improvements in organisational and other aspects of hospital and health-service function? If this document has not been buried deeply in a Tutankhamen-tomb-type pigeon-hole—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Questions without notice are to be framed in a way exactly similar to that in which questions upon notice are framed. They have to conform to the rules. The honourable member's question does not conform to the rules, so I cannot allow it.

Mr. LANE: I ask the Minister for Health: In view of the gravity of the Minister's statement today regarding the long-term effects of the use of cannabis, will he make ample copies of his statement available to those Right-wing members of the A.L.P. who are bravely resisting the movement within the Labor Party to legalise that practice?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question is completely out of order.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) proceeded to give notice of a question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I believe that the honourable member is seeking advice on Government policy. If so, the question is not in order.

Mr. BENNETT: I will delete that part of the question.

BRISBANE CRICKET GROUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Brisbane Cricket Ground Acts 1958 to 1961 to certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.10 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Brisbane Cricket Ground Acts 1958 to 1961 in certain particulars."

The principal purpose of this Bill is to provide security to the State Government Insurance Office for the funds that the office is investing in the redevelopment of the Brisbane Cricket Ground.

As honourable members would know, there was a very pressing need to upgrade these grounds and facilities. Certain of the buildings and stands on the grounds were in varying stages of disrepair and in some instances were virtually beyond hope unless enormous sums were spent on them.

The finances of the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust were such that it was experiencing difficulty in meeting its running costs. It was unable to find the necessary massive capital sums required to redevelop the ground. Furthermore, it would not have been able to repay the debt charges on such sums had they been found.

As an indication of the financial strength of the trust, I mention that in recent years its receipts were running at about \$50,000 per annum and these were proving insufficient to cover the operating costs of the ground. Furthermore, the trust was already servicing two Government-guaranteed loans from the State Government Insurance Office totalling about \$180,000 negotiated for earlier ground improvements.

Property consultants, Jones, Lang and Wootton, the State Government Insurance Office by virtue of the mortgages already

held over the land, and the trustees of the Brisbane Cricket Ground explored various schemes for a commercial development on unwanted land held by the trust which would itself be sufficiently rewarding financially to enable the provision of the necessary ground improvements at little or no cost to the trust.

These studies were undertaken prior to the constitution of the Greyhound Racing Control Board and therefore necessarily had to be a feasible proposition without regard to any benefits that might accrue to the trust from greyhound racing.

The proposition that Cabinet considered and finally approved, subject to further study of the various parts of the development and the acceptance of them by the State Government Insurance Office Board as an investment proposition, provided for a total expenditure of about \$3,700,000 at the 'Gabba ground. This included about \$2,500,000 of commercial undertakings which it was expected, with an underwriting by the trust, would support ground improvements totalling about \$1,200,000. Cabinet also approved that the State Government Insurance Office would be provided with adequate security for the investment of its funds.

The proposal calls for the development to proceed in stages, with each stage being a financially viable proposition in its own right. Stage 1 consists of the building of the outer stand and shops facing Stanley Street and ground improvements at a cost of approximately \$340,000. This is supported by the income from the shops together with a guarantee from the trust, the Queensland Cricket Association and the Queensland Cricketers Club that in all would be sufficient to secure an adequate return to the State Government Insurance Office policy-holders.

Stages 2 and 3, which involve further ground improvements and the building of the main stand, have not been commenced. These depend on feasibility studies being conducted into the commercial ventures proposed to support these further developments. Commercial ventures being looked at are an office block, a motel and possibly serviced apartments. However, the principle will be the same. Before the main stand and further ground improvements proceed, a commercial venture will have to be found that will be able to pay also for this further development.

The provision of facilities for the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club was added to the original concept following the nomination of the 'Gabba grounds by the Greyhound Racing Control Board as the venue for night greyhound racing in Brisbane. This additional work for the greyhound club is expected to cost a total of \$800,000, and it was outside, and in addition to, the original scheme. The club negotiated with the State Government Insurance Office for the funds it required.

The greyhound club is expected to be able to meet the commitments on its facilities in full without any support or underwriting by the trust. In fact, the club will be contributing to the resources of the trust by its payment of a ground rental for the use of the track and other trust facilities. On present predictions, the financial prospects for the greyhound club are bright, and it is expected that there will be quite substantial surpluses available for the improvement of the sport after the club has met its ground rent to the trust and its commitment to the State Government Insurance Office for the capital invested in its very fine facilities.

The Bill provides specifically the several measures necessary to provide security for the State Government Insurance Office investment, whilst maintaining the best possible position for the trust and cricket itself. The Bill provides that the lands on which the presently proposed commercial development is situated become freehold land. This is then vested in the State Government Insurance Office for a period of 40 years, or such longer period as may be necessary to fully recoup it for its investment. After that time, the land and the improvements thereon revert to the trust at no further charge.

It also provides that the State Government Insurance Office will lease back all of this freehold land to the trust, which will then sub-let to commercial enterprises on terms and conditions satisfactory to the State Government Insurance Office.

The Bill further provides that additional lands may in the future also be designated commercial lands by the Governor in Council. It will be seen that this will be necessary as and if stages 2 and 3 proceed, and if further similar development is intended in later years.

Mr. Sherrington: Will the freehold land be held by the State Government Insurance Office?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Only during the period of the debt. Immediately it is paid, the land will revert to the trust to be held as it is held now. In other words, the Bill merely provides the security of the mortgage to be issued. That is the principal reason for the introduction of this legislation.

Provision is made for the trust and the State Government Insurance Office to enter into an agreement to ensure the repayment of the moneys invested in the scheme by the State Government Insurance Office, together with interest at rates approved by the Governor in Council, and, to enable it to do so, the trust is empowered to offer, as security to the office, a mortgage over its other lands.

With the intention of the legislation being to secure the investment of State Government Insurance Office policy-holders funds

whilst ensuring that the land at present held in trust eventually reverts entirely to the trust, the Bill provides that the State Government Insurance Office have freehold land for 40 years and mortgage security as required. But it also provides that, in the event of default, all right of sale accruing to the office under any security or freehold will be subject to prior approval and consent of the Government of the day.

The Bill also provides that, whilst money is owing to the State Government Insurance Office, a representative of that office will be a member of the trust. This member will have the authority to approve or otherwise all contracts and commitments of the trust in excess of \$1,000, which right, of course, is a reasonable safeguard to ensure as far as possible the trust's ability to meet its repayment obligations to the State Government Insurance Office.

Finally, the Bill stipulates that the trust itself is a public authority, and that all of its profits in this venture and otherwise will be ploughed back for the good of the sport and the ground.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville North) (12.20 p.m.): I indicate on behalf of the Opposition that honourable members on this side of the Chamber are prepared to allow the Bill to be introduced so that they can study it and properly pass judgment on it at the second-reading stage. I think the Treasurer would be in agreement with that attitude.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I am in full agreement with it.

Mr. TUCKER: This morning the honourable gentleman talked about—

Mr. Hughes: You can't "knock" Clem's future job.

Mr. TUCKER: That is not a matter for consideration at the moment. The fact is that the Treasurer has spoken of Government-guaranteed loans to the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust. He has mentioned also that the State Government Insurance Office has mortgages at the Brisbane Cricket Ground, that it is intended to provide money for the building of a commercial enterprise on certain land at the Woolloongabba ground, and that the trust will then transfer, if I may put it that way, land to the S.G.I.O. so that it will have a freehold title to it. He has spoken also of loans made by the State Government Insurance Office to the 'Gabba Greyhound Racing Club. To hear of all these matters in the course of a few minutes can be very confusing, and I think it is reasonable for Opposition members to have time to consider them and pass judgment on them at the second-reading stage.

Looking at it very quickly, the proposal put forward by the Treasurer appears to follow the lines of action taken in certain other areas of the State. I suppose it would

be true to say that most sporting clubs and associations are now in financially straitened circumstances. I know that is true of such clubs and organisations in the city of Townsville, from which I come. Therefore, I have no argument against the proposal if moneys obtained from the commercial undertakings mentioned in this instance eventually go back into the sport concerned and are used to provide comfortable seating and other amenities for its ordinary patrons. If it can be shown that that will happen, probably it is a good thing. In this instance, of course, cricket and greyhound racing are the sports involved.

As I said earlier, the financial burdens of all sporting clubs continue to escalate year by year. Probably every honourable member is interested in a sporting club of some type and would know the cost of running it. It costs between \$5,000 and \$8,000 a year to run even a small football club, and, incidentally, clubs such as that have faced further financial embarrassment because of a crack-down on bingo and other fund-raising activities.

It could be argued successfully, I think, that all sporting clubs make a very valuable contribution to the welfare of the youth of the community—in fact, the whole of the community—but they are not all in the fortunate position of having a commercial enterprise placed on their land—in other words, of being able to build for investment and receive a return that might offset the financial burden they are carrying today. It appears that the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust is in that very fortunate position. One could say that it is virtually going into business to lift to some extent the financial burden now placed on its shoulders.

In the area that I represent, I know that some trusts have been forced to adopt certain methods of supplementing their income in order to provide amenities for the general public. There may be some who say that the isolation of sporting grounds in recreation areas is not in the best interests of the public. From one point of view, that could be true. However, I hope that both I and other members of the Australian Labor Party are realists, and, having looked at the problems from every angle, we realise that the alternative to a proposal such as this would be stagnation for many sporting clubs. If this is the only alternative, we may have to say, "If this is the way to get out of the difficulty, perhaps we may have to go along with it, although in most respects we do not support the alienation of Crown land." The Opposition understands that the stage has been reached at which some action of this type must be taken if sporting clubs are to grapple successfully with their problems.

There are others in the community, too, who recognise that. We have to be fair and pay a tribute to them. Some of the oil companies have recognised the need to assist sporting bodies, and have made certain

moneys available to sporting organisations. Various sporting associations have borrowed from them so that they could commence building, with the hope of a financial return from their investment which would assist them to provide ground amenities for the general public. In this way, admission fees can be kept down.

At times the breweries have been asked to finance certain buildings, and they have assisted various sporting organisations in that way. Perhaps it could be argued whether they should or should not assist, but the fact is that they have. In some instances they have made a very valuable contribution.

Mr. Dean: They get their profit out of it.

Mr. TUCKER: That could be argued, too. But we have to face the truth, and that is what is happening today. Many sporting associations that look for ways to raise money are met with a blank wall, but when others find a company that is prepared to assist, they take advantage of the opportunity.

I commend the fact that State Government Insurance Office finance is to be used in this instance to assist the sporting clubs and the trust concerned. It is much better that State Government Insurance Office funds be used in that direction rather than be channelled into private enterprise. The Treasurer says that on this occasion \$3,700,000 will be invested by the S.G.I.O. in the Brisbane Cricket Ground—\$2,500,000 for commercial undertakings and the balance for ground improvements.

An article in "The Courier-Mail" of 24 February 1971 reads—

"Gabba start soon

"Work on the redevelopment of the Brisbane Cricket Ground will start almost immediately.

"The general manager of S.G.I.O. (Mr. B. E. Riding) announced this yesterday.

"The S.G.I.O. is financing the \$3.7 million modernisation programme.

"Tenders are being called for Stage One of the project and Mr. Riding believes that work will start in a few weeks."

I do not know what has held it up. I think the Treasurer said it will be starting in a few weeks' time.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No. The first part is on its way.

Mr. TUCKER: Then probably it was correctly reported.

The same article mentioned the outer stand. It stated—

"Stage One includes the erection of a new stand in the Outer to accommodate 2,000 and the reshaping and levelling of the oval.

"It is hoped that the winter tenants of the ground, the Queensland Australian National Football League, will have the minimum of inconvenience.

"The design of the outer stand is such that it will incorporate 15 shops fronting Stanley Street.

"Secretary of the Q.C.A. and the Cricket Ground Trust (Mr. Lew Cooper) said last night that the stand should be completed in five months, in time for the visit of the South African cricketers in November."

Sir Gordon Chalk: I suggest you go to the next line. It was opened last Sunday.

Mr. TUCKER: The article continues—

"Motel, too

"Later improvements to the ground include the erection of a new main stand which will feature at its rear, a 150 ft. long liquor bar offering a clear view of the field.

"A multi-storey motel is planned for the area about where the scoreboard now stands and a four-storey office block will be built in an, as yet, undefined location.

"The scoreboard will be shifted to a position adjacent to the new practice nets."

It looks as if eventually there will be a pretty solid commercial undertaking at the Brisbane Cricket Ground.

Sir Gordon Chalk: And also a first-class cricket ground that will be a credit not only to Queensland but also to Australia.

Mr. TUCKER: I have no argument with it at all. We are not arguing against the proposal. I am just trying to point out how much is needed today to keep such a sport alive.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It is not so much to keep it alive as to help a commercial undertaking that will find the money to ultimately repay the debt—in other words, to service the debt. Of this money, \$1,200,000 is non-productive.

Mr. TUCKER: Whichever way one looks at it, if these amenities are not provided patronage will decline.

I think the Treasurer has written a clause into the Bill dealing with the question of default. I do not suppose he envisages that there will be some default but he nevertheless realises that, in such matters, there may be.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I have to protect the public.

Mr. TUCKER: That is correct. Nevertheless, under conditions existing today, none of these trusts is able to raise the sum needed in this case to provide the amenities about which I speak.

Mr. Hinze: Introduce "pokies" and they will get the "dough" they need.

Mr. TUCKER: Is the honourable member advocating the introduction of poker machines on behalf of his party?

Mr. Hinze: I have been doing so for years.

Mr. TUCKER: Perhaps that may be another way of financing this cricket ground and other sporting clubs, but I must say on behalf of the Opposition that we do not necessarily subscribe to what the honourable member is saying. I am simply acknowledging his interjection, and I understand that he is speaking on behalf of the Country Party in regard to this matter.

Mr. Hinze: I am speaking on behalf of myself. Anyway, that is what the Surfers Paradise Labor-in-Politics Convention decided.

Mr. TUCKER: Such a decision did not go through the Surfers Paradise convention, no matter what the honourable member may say.

However, at the moment I am commending the fact that on this occasion S.G.I.O. finance was used to assist this sporting club and trust. These bodies are representative of the people, and we have no argument with what has been done.

I noticed some years ago that certain moneys were lent by the T.A.B. to private enterprise. In my opinion, if the T.A.B. had some surplus funds it was able to invest in private enterprise, they could well have been lent to sporting bodies.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Most T.A.B. money is on short call, whereas this is an investment over 40 years.

Mr. TUCKER: Nevertheless, there are times when the matter of lending surplus T.A.B. funds to sporting bodies could well be looked at. I do not mean that the money should be taken out of that which goes back into racing, but there are times when certain surplus moneys are held by the T.A.B. and, rather than let them go into private enterprise, we should consider using them to assist sporting bodies.

On behalf of the Opposition, I reiterate that we are prepared to allow the Bill to be printed. At the moment, it looks as if we will not be arguing against it although there may be certain provisions that we will query at a later stage. On the face of it, it appears to be a commendable Bill.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (12.34 p.m.): The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has indicated that at this stage we see no serious objection to the introduction of the Bill. However, I think that the Minister's explanation warrants some further questioning, particularly at this stage. While I fully support and applaud any move that will improve the Brisbane Cricket Ground, I am not completely satisfied that the Treasurer has fully explained some facets of the Bill.

Over the years Brisbane has not been blessed by being chosen as the site of the Olympic Games or some other major event that would have assured it of a cricket ground comparable with Melbourne's. Furthermore, of course, every second year

we hear the usual rumours that Queensland will lose its cricket test match. I feel that as a result of the lack of an international-standard cricket ground in Brisbane the sport in this State is in the doldrums. However, I do not entirely blame the ground for that. When I was a youth I played cricket, and I am still an ardent supporter of the sport, but the standard these days of some cricket I have seen can only be described as ghastly, and that, too, is to blame for the stagnation of the sport in this State.

To attract crowds to cricket matches, particularly tests, the organisers of the sport must provide decent facilities. On many occasions while I have been a spectator at the 'Gabba, I have looked at the crowd in the outer and wondered how on earth they could sit there all day in the blazing sun—on what is virtually a hill in a desert. How anyone can enjoy watching a game of cricket in those circumstances is beyond me. It is bad enough for the crowd at Lang Park to have to watch a football match lasting about 1 hour 20 minutes, so why anybody would want to watch an all-day cricket match from the outer at the 'Gabba is beyond my comprehension.

Just by the way, something needs to be done to lift Queensland cricket out of the doldrums so that this State can win the Sheffield Shield. As a matter of fact, it is often said jokingly that the only way Queensland will win the shield is in a raffle. On a more serious note, I stress the need for a good cricket ground, so I welcome any move that will raise the 'Gabba to international standard.

The Treasurer said, in effect, that in return for the loan of the necessary finance to carry out the proposed developments, the land now being held in trust in the 'Gabba reserve will revert to freehold title. I take it that that title will be held by the S.G.I.O. and that at the expiration of 40 years, or whenever the loan is repaid, the land, together with all improvements, will revert to the trust.

Sir Gordon Chalk: That is right.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: To develop the 'Gabba along the lines suggested, it will be necessary for the financial enterprise to raise money by way of rental and certain other means in order to repay the loan. The query that has arisen in my mind is whether, while the S.G.I.O. will hold the freehold title to the land, there is any guarantee that the land will revert to the trust if over 40 years this business undertaking—that is virtually what it is—proves not to be viable.

Sir Gordon Chalk: If it was sold to someone else under any condition, it would still be on the basis that the land would revert to the trust.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I wanted to establish quite clearly, so that I may be satisfied nothing is amiss, that the development of

this ground is based on its being a commercial undertaking. Firstly, it will depend on the success of the shops that have already been built in Stanley Street—indeed, they were opened last Saturday. The business undertaking will depend on whether these shops are successful, but with the advent of the freeway, commercial undertakings in that part of Brisbane could well suffer. Over the years the 'Gabba has been recognised as a great shopping centre, but, in the same time, I have seen it decline. The problems will be added to when the freeway is constructed and a great volume of traffic is diverted from the general 'Gabba area.

The success of the project will depend on whether the area can be developed as a trading area. If it does not develop in that way, and this proposition is not viable, will the land revert to the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust? Under such circumstances would the S.G.I.O. be able to dispose of the freehold land, or will there be some safeguard in the legislation so that, in the event of an economic failure, the land will still revert to the trust? I require an answer to that question before I can support the measure whole-heartedly. I take it that at least some study in depth has been undertaken to ascertain the possibility of this development being a financial success over 40 years.

Sir Gordon Chalk: We have done that. That is why we are proceeding first with stage 1. After it reaches a state of equilibrium, we will proceed with stages 2 and 3.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I believe that the Treasurer should have explained more fully to the Committee what has been done.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I said that had been done with stage 1, and that we were continuing the feasibility study of stages 2 and 3.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The Treasurer said that stage 1 was to comprise the present block of shops, and stage 2 would comprise the motel and some other type of complex.

Sir Gordon Chalk: We will put the money in only as we are satisfied on the feasibility study that it will be repaid. We do not want to be bringing in a Bill every week.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree that it is essential that this development should be a financial success, but I believe that the Treasurer should have explained to us, firstly, what type of study was made for stage 1, and the information he had that it would be a success, and so on. Secondly, I believe he should have told us what study had been made of the motel business—if that is a contemplated feature of stage 2—to determine whether it would be a financial success.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: I should imagine that those studies have been made.

Sir Gordon Chalk: They have been.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Surely I am entitled to ask these questions.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I thought I cleared up those matters.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not think the Treasurer did. As we are transferring land under freehold title from the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust to the S.G.I.O. I am surely entitled to ask these questions. If this undertaking is not a financial success, and the loan money cannot be repaid to the S.G.I.O., I want to be sure that the land will not be sold and taken from the control of the trust. Surely I am entitled to have that cleared up.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: My point is that these surveys would have been made before the loan was made.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Surely I am entitled to ask these questions. In the light of the agreement made a few weeks ago, which was welshed on by the Premier and the Minister for Health, I am entitled not to trust the Government at all. I no longer accept, just because the Treasurer is supposed to be an honourable man, that what he says in this Chamber is correct. I have every right to question what he says. This is a very important aspect of the legislation. We do not want this land, under any circumstances, to go out of control of the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust for all time, because, in a city of this size, it is important to have a cricket ground of international standard.

Sir Gordon Chalk: There is nothing in this Bill that affects the actual ground on which cricket is played or what we know as the cricket oval. The only area of land involved is that on which a commercial undertaking is built.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is the assurance I seek. Like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I have some knowledge of this matter. I was an executive committee member of one of the "A" grade cricket clubs in Brisbane and for a year I was chairman of selectors for that club. I know the cost of running even an ordinary district cricket club.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much audible conversation on my right.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Members of that group would definitely be baseball players.

Souths Cricket Club previously had its headquarters at the 'Gabba and, I played some part in its development of Fehlberg Park as an "A" grade cricket ground. Therefore I know the cost of ground improvements in an ordinary club. I want to be sure in my mind that what we do here today will not possibly end up as a disaster for the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust.

While it is very desirable, necessary and vital to have a cricket ground of international standard, it is also essential to know what is going to happen. I hope that, once a decent cricket ground is established, people will come in droves to watch the game. I still think that cricket is the greatest game of all.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have also played Rugby League.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Bring the Springboks back?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will not go into international politics. I applaud the attitude of the South African cricketers and the way they stood out against their own Government.

I should also like to have some sort of assurance that parking facilities will be provided. Over the years whenever there has been, not so much an interstate match, but an international match at the 'Gabba, parking has been a complete shambles, and this problem will be even greater when night coursing starts at the 'Gabba.

Mr. Baldwin: It will be more like a menagerie then.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes.

I do not think it is an inaccurate forecast to say that night coursing will attract larger crowds to the 'Gabba than cricket. We have already witnessed the complete parking shambles in the vicinity of the cricket ground whenever a match is being played. I hope that some type of off-street parking complex will be incorporated in one of the stages of this development, not only to cater for patrons of night coursing but also for use as the terminal of a feeder-bus service from the 'Gabba to the city, so that the parking complex could be used daily the whole year round. I think there will be very great traffic problems at Woolloongabba when night coursing begins. I hope that some provision for parking is included in plans for the development of this area.

Apart from the couple of objections that I have mentioned, I, like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, believe that all Queenslanders welcome the fact that at last the cricket ground is to be improved, and support moves that will give Brisbane a ground of international standard.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (12.51 p.m.): This is exactly the type of Bill that I would expect to be introduced by the Government, and to be loudly applauded by the A.L.P. It is purely a Brisbane-centralisation Bill. Under A.L.P. Governments, the only liquor bar permitted at any cricket ground in the whole of the State was at Woolloongabba. Looking at the matter from a party-political point of view, I suppose I cannot blame either the Liberal Party or the Labor Party for this attitude, as they are concerned

primarily with the Brisbane electorate and the Brisbane people. After the current redistribution and the next election, Brisbane—this over-fed, rat-ridden city—will send 34 members to this House, and another 18 will come from within a radius of 50 miles. Why, then, should they worry about the great open spaces?

Whilst all this money is being poured in a golden stream into the coffers of the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust, cricket in other parts of the State is struggling for survival. In Townsville there is a large sporting complex in the Douglas area, near the Ross River Meatworks. There is a sports reserve there, and the sporting bodies are struggling to raise a few dollars. Every time they apply to the Government for financial assistance, they are given the old cold shoulder. They know it is useless making representations to A.L.P. members for help in expanding sport in North Queensland, because they know they will get a more resounding knock-back from the A.L.P. than they will from the Liberal Party.

Mr. F. P. Moore: What rot!

Mr. AIKENS: Of course, people do not play cricket in the Mourilyan area. The only way anyone can go onto a playing field there is in big mud boots, because the mud is always about 9 inches thick and cricket cannot be played under such conditions.

Mr. F. P. Moore: They play football.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, they play football—and good football, too.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Salisbury stood up and said, "We must have a Brisbane cricket ground of world standard." Not very long ago the people of Australia had an opportunity to see the finest cricket team the world has ever produced, the present South African team, and what happened? The Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Clem Jones, and all his greasy friends knuckled under and "cocked their dots" to the rowdy element, the riff-raff, the abuse artists, and all those who were at their full flush of vituperation and violence during the Springbok tour.

Instead of bringing the world's best cricketers to Australia to let the people see them playing, what did they bring out? A collection of old no-hopers who, frankly, could not hit a water-melon with a pick-handle! I am very happy that the visit to Queensland of the so-called "rest of the world" team was the shocking financial farce that it was. I feel sure that the Government, with the full support of the A.L.P., will pick up the tab, and that the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust will not be in the financial "red" as a result of that visit.

I am glad that the Bill refers to the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust and does not go in for the sophistry and casuistry of calling it the "Queensland Cricket Ground Trust",

in the same way as the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities refers to what is in reality the Brisbane Conservatorium of Music as the "Queensland Conservatorium of Music".

The honourable member for Salisbury referred to the fact that the Queensland team has not done well in the Sheffield Shield competition. As a matter of fact, it is the permanent "wooden spooner" in the Sheffield Shield and all other interstate cricket competitions. No matter how good the ground at Woolloongabba is—whether the field is inlaid with mother-of-pearl and the stumps are of beaten gold—this State will never have a good cricket team to represent it until full recognition is given to the young men in North Queensland, Central Queensland and other country areas, who can play cricket better than anybody else in Queensland today. Do they receive any recognition from the people in Brisbane, who only have to put out their hands to the A.L.P. and the Liberal Party to have them filled with gold belonging to the people of Queensland? Not on your life! So if there is a big decline in the standard of cricket in Queensland—and goodness knows there is; I do not think the State side can be any worse than it is at present—the Bill will not do anything to amend or rectify that situation. It will merely give Brisbane-ites a glorious cricket ground, access to goodness knows how many hundreds of thousands of dollars of the people's money from the S.G.I.O., and the right to go hay-wire and spend that money how and when they like.

I remind honourable members that something similar was done once before, when the former Treasurer, Sir Thomas Hiley, introduced a Bill to amend the Brisbane Cricket Ground Act to unload thousands and thousands of dollars on the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust. I shall tell honourable members something else. I do not know how Clem Jones gets away with as much as he does, but someone suggested to me that if the Treasurer ever leaves the Queensland Parliament, he is next in line to become A.L.P. Lord Mayor of Brisbane. If one can judge him by his performance with Clem, he would probably win in a canter.

Under the Bill, the shops built and to be built along Stanley Street by the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust are not to be built back off the road alignment, as other shops now have to be. The building regulations of the Brisbane City Council are to be scrapped, and although every little shopkeeper and battler has to dedicate 20 feet or more of his land to the council, the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust will not be required to do so under the Bill. It will get an "open go" to build shops how it likes on the footpath alignment. I would not mind betting that some of them will be built well onto the roadway alignment, with the trust using some of the roadway for its own benefit.

So when honourable members are considering putting a Bill such as this on the Statute Book and making it the law of the land, they should try to ensure that its provisions are a little more equitable than those suggested by the Treasurer. Let us ask the Government what it is prepared to do—it is no use asking the A.L.P., because members of the Opposition could not give us an answer without telephoning Tommy Burns or Jack Egerton and asking what they should say—to assist the development of cricket in North Queensland and the other country areas of the State. The answer will be, “Nothing”. I ask the Treasurer what he intends doing. Is he going to give cricket associations in other parts of the State generous consideration and treatment similar to that which the Government has always given to the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust, or is the Brisbane Cricket Ground to be something apart from and more important than other areas of the State?

I do not intend to vote for the Bill, as a protest against the continuance of the Brisbane motto, which, as I have told honourable members before, is “Greasibus obesibus porkibus Brisbaneus”. That is Latin and, translated into English, it means “Grease the fat Brisbane pig”. The Bill now before the Committee is another example of how the present Government—and former Labor Governments were equally bad—lives up to that motto and greases the fat Brisbane pig. The Government will not grease the fat Brisbane pig with any vote of mine.

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

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (2.15 p.m.), in reply: From the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the honourable member for Salisbury, I think it would be fair to say that from what the Opposition knows of the Bill from my opening remarks, it is in general accord with its broad principles. I know that honourable members opposite have reserved the right to raise any points they desire during the second-reading stage. I appreciate their attitude. The Government's whole desire in the Bill is to ensure protection for the finance of the State Government Insurance Office and its policy-holders.

The Government has a responsibility to assist a sporting body when a feasible and viable arrangement can be made. However, not all sporting grounds are in the same fortunate position as the Brisbane Cricket Ground. At Woollongabba a certain area of land is available to be put to commercial use. By being so used, it will provide funds that will not go into the pockets of any particular citizen, but will repay the money that has to be borrowed, plus a rate of interest in keeping with general lending rates, leaving a surplus which can be channelled into further improvements. That has been the whole endeavour behind the exercise.

The honourable member for Salisbury raised the point about protection for all time and the need to ensure that there

is no fleecing away, as it were, from the trust. The only land involved is the land on which the commercial enterprises are built, and it is right and proper that there be protection for the policy-holders of the State Government Insurance Office. After all, the insurance premiums are paid by the individual policy-holder, whose policy may not mature for many years. Consequently, the money that finds its way into the hands of an insurance company must be invested so that it has a growth factor commensurate with what will be the requirement of that money when the policy matures. We are ensuring the protection of the investment.

The point raised by the honourable member for Salisbury was one that he was entitled to raise. He will find a further safeguard in the Bill, in that nothing can be done with the land on which the commercial venture takes place unless it has the approval of the Governor in Council. I believe that we have written full protection into the Bill.

As to the point raised by the honourable member for Salisbury about the development of the land, I point out that a complete feasibility study was made of the whole project. From the figures made available to me right from the beginning of the venture, both the State Government Insurance Office and I are convinced that this is a viable scheme. On the other hand, the whole of the development cannot be undertaken in the one stage. If that were done, the capital invested would be \$3,700,000.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! There is too much audible conversation on my right.

Sir GORDON CHALK: I do not believe it is desirable to introduce a separate Bill for each stage. First of all, as I have indicated, the stand that has been completed and the commercial portion of the enterprise, which is also reaching completion, will cost \$340,000. We will look very closely at stages 2 and 3. I have indicated the exact proposal. Some members of the Cricketers' Club have asked me when the second stage, and possibly the third stage, will proceed. All I can say is that, at the moment, we are examining the proposal to construct a motel. If I may put it this way, it has to have a head tenant. Certain people are interested in it, but we have to be sure before we proceed with this portion of the project that we not only have a head tenant but that the structure would be in keeping with the best requirements of the area.

Within a short period we will see a further step in the construction of the main stand. When I looked at the grounds in the first place, I was rather staggered at their condition. It was shocking. But anyone who was at the 'Gabba grounds last Sunday and saw the improvements that have been carried out up to date, and the change in the general facilities, would, I believe,

agree that what is being done there is in the best interests of cricket and that the amenities being provided will be appreciated by the public.

Let us think of that in relation to the remarks made by the honourable member for Townsville South, who has criticised this scheme as being merely for the people of Brisbane. I regard a major facility for any sport as a facility provided for the State. This is not just the Brisbane Cricket Ground. That is its name and it is used by Brisbane cricket clubs, but Australian and Queensland matches are also played on this ground. We are not building something simply for the city of Brisbane. Admittedly, it is located in the city of Brisbane, but it will benefit the sport generally throughout Queensland.

Mr. Aikens: Everybody but country cricketers plays there.

Sir GORDON CHALK: The honourable member says that everybody but country cricketers plays there, but I believe that when the facility reaches a high enough standard some changes in that situation will occur. On the other hand, if the honourable member for Townsville South or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can show me a set of circumstances in North Queensland, or in any other part of the State, where similar facilities could be provided on a viable basis, such as we are endeavouring to promote in this case, then I will be the first to acknowledge that the Government would and should show interest in it.

Mr. Aikens: How long will you be Treasurer?

Sir GORDON CHALK: It is not a question of how long I will be Treasurer; it is a question of showing that a set of circumstances exists in some other place that would make such a scheme viable. That is the process being followed on this occasion. We are endeavouring to assist in the development of the ground for the betterment of the community and of the State as a whole.

Mr. Aikens: I think you will make a very dignified Governor.

Sir GORDON CHALK: The honourable member says "dignified". I do not think he made a very dignified speech. In fact, he talked about "rat-ridden" Brisbane. I regard Brisbane as part of the State. Any criticism by the honourable member of the metropolitan area does not do him very much good.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

Question—That the motion (Sir Gordon Chalk) be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided.

Resolved in the affirmative under Standing Order No. 148.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Sir Gordon Chalk, read a first time.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Lickiss, Mt. Coot-tha, in the chair)

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (2.31 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Medical Act 1939-1969 in certain particulars."

This short amending Bill contains two measures. One will enable medical practitioners who hold satisfactory qualifications gained in Canada to become eligible for registration in Queensland without further examination. The other proposes to give effect to a recommendation of the Auditor-General regarding an improved certification in respect to the annual statement of the financial operations of the Medical Board of Queensland.

It is imperative in the case of professions such as medicine that the members permitted by law to practice have adequate knowledge and training. This is usually achieved by demanding that eligibility for registration be dependent on evidence that an applicant for registration has successfully completed an approved course of training and had subsequent experience in an approved institution. When the British first came to Australia there were, of course, no medical schools. The doctors in those early days were almost all British trained. Then medical schools were established, first in the southern States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, and in the late 1930's in our own State of Queensland. Now all States possess medical schools, some more than one.

In former days, when movement between countries was more restricted than at present, medical registration boards in this country registered their own and interstate graduates and had full reciprocity with the British General Medical Council. With greater movement among countries, there has been recognition of medical courses in countries other than Australia and the United Kingdom. The countries whose medical courses are recognised in Queensland in this manner are divided into two groups. The first group includes Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. The Medical Board of Queensland will accept as a basis for registration a medical course at any medical school in any of these countries. The board is satisfied that the standard at all such institutions in these countries is acceptable.

The second group includes at present the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Ireland. In these two countries there are medical schools of high standard, but the board is of the opinion that not all the diplomas from institutions in these two countries may be so recognised. The courses at

individual universities are examined closely to determine the standard and, when the board is satisfied that a particular course meets the requirements, the university is recognised by an Order in Council.

It is proposed to add Canada to the second group. The Dean of the Queensland Faculty of Medicine, Professor E. G. Saint, has expressed the opinion that the Canadian medical schools are excellent and turn out graduates in every way comparable with those of the University of Queensland.

At the present time difficulty is experienced in staffing country centres with medical officers. The group of students which has just completed the medical course in Queensland is insufficient to fill all first-year resident medical officer posts in our Queensland hospitals. Many hospitals in England would be very short of their staff establishments were it not for overseas graduates. There is also a great shortage of medical man-power in the United States and New Zealand. We are also in some difficulty in this respect. It is therefore felt that the time is opportune to extend the right to registration in Queensland to graduates from approved medical schools in Canada and to encourage practitioners from that country to migrate to Australia.

I would add that the holding of a primary degree or diploma from an approved medical school is not in itself sufficient for full registration. No matter what course the applicant for registration has undergone, he must in addition have had a further practical period of experience which has been gained in a manner satisfactory to the board.

I now turn to the second proposed amendment. The present Act demands that the board publish an annual statement showing receipts and disbursements during the preceding year, certified as correct by the Auditor-General. However, the Auditor-General has advised the board that a certificate of correctness indicates complete exactness and this is often quite impossible from an audit viewpoint. He has suggested that the audit certificate should rather indicate that the statements are in agreement with the books and accounts and fairly set out the financial operations for the period under review.

I consider that both amendments are desirable, and I commend them to the Committee.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (2.35 p.m.): Apparently the proposals are of a machinery nature, and I do not think the Opposition has any substantial argument against their implementation. From what the Minister said, the recognition of Canadian doctors will be policed closely. I take it that these doctors will be subjected to further examination in this State?

Mr. Tooth: Not a written examination, but an investigation of their practical experience.

Mr. MELLOY: There will not be unrestricted or automatic registration of Canadian

doctors? They will be subjected to some form of investigation?

Mr. Tooth: Yes, as is also the case with doctors from Ireland and South Africa. In short, the board must be satisfied.

Mr. MELLOY: Is there reciprocity between Queensland and Canada? Are Queensland doctors accepted in Canada?

Mr. Tooth: Up to the present, this has not arisen because of our lack of willingness. It is something that can now be explored.

Mr. MELLOY: The Opposition agrees to this proposal, which will protect the standard of the medical profession in this State.

If the Auditor-General makes a request, the Government should accede to it, so that the proposal relating to certification of the annual statement of receipts and disbursements is essential. The Opposition has no objection to the proposal.

In the past few days, reference has been made to the taking of drugs by medical men. This is a serious matter. The Minister, in a ministerial statement this morning, went to some length to indicate the dangers of taking cannabis and its derivatives. He quoted various overseas authorities, and he said that urgent radio-telephone calls had been made on this matter. What concerns me greatly is the effect upon the community of any established medical man approving the use of any drug, if its use is contrary to legislation on our Statute Book. This matter cannot be treated lightly, and more must be done about the statement by Dr. Ribush in which he indicated to the community at large, particularly the young, that the taking of cannabis and its derivatives is not dangerous. I do not think that was a very wise statement for him to make.

Irrespective of the effect of these drugs (I am not debating that point now), any inducement or encouragement to young people to explore the field of drug-taking is dangerous. It may be that cannabis is not dangerous either in the short term or the long term, but in these days, when drugs are held out to young people as the panacea for all mental ills, there is the temptation to take minor drugs in the belief that they will not do any harm. That may be true, but once having taken drugs, in looking for further stimulants young people may well move beyond the less dangerous drugs into the field of harder drugs. It is for this reason that any encouragement to take drugs is to be deplored.

It is particularly deplorable when encouragement or inducement to take drugs, or any form of approval of drug-taking, comes from a medical practitioner. As Dr. Ribush has indicated that he has personal knowledge that 50 medical men take drugs, I think that he should be called upon to convey this information to the Department of Health. After all, drug-taking is illegal, and the appearance of a letter written by a medical practitioner

in an authoritative journal such as the "Medical Journal of Australia" is very serious. I think he should either be called upon to substantiate his claim that 50 young medical men are taking drugs, or retract what he has said. Apparently he was referring to young medical men.

Because the taking of drugs is so very serious, I think the Minister must give further consideration to the statement by Dr. Ribush. Section 35 of the Medical Act clearly states—

"... a medical practitioner . . . shall be guilty of such misconduct who—

(i) Was within the period of 12 months next preceding the date when he is so charged, guilty of addiction to intoxicating liquor or to any deleterious drug;"

I think the doctor should be required to produce the evidence on which he made his statement.

Mr. Tooth: You are referring to the section dealing with addiction.

Mr. MELLOY: "Guilty of addiction", yes.

Mr. Tooth: I have no evidence that Dr. Ribush is addicted to drugs.

Mr. MELLOY: No, but there is no evidence that he was not referring to addiction. He said that these doctors are taking drugs, and they could have been taking them over a long period.

Mr. Tooth: I have no evidence that anybody is not addicted.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true, and that is why I say it is incumbent upon the Minister to investigate the situation to see if there is any evidence to substantiate Dr. Ribush's claim.

Mr. Aikens: The doctor was probably "high" when he wrote it.

Mr. MELLOY: That could be true. I think it is the responsibility of the Minister to pursue this matter further because of the public interest that has been aroused following Dr. Ribush's statement.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Was there anything in the statement to say that all those doctors were in Queensland?

Mr. MELLOY: No, but he included Queensland in his statement. The fact that he is a Queenslander, whose close association would be with Queensland doctors, would indicate that his reference was, to a large degree, to the situation in Queensland. He mentioned Australia, but his association with the medical world would be, to a great extent, in Queensland.

Mr. Tooth: He is a Victorian.

Mr. Aikens: That is a hard thing to say about any man.

Mr. Tooth: That is true.

Mr. MELLOY: In my opinion, the position is such that the Minister should pursue the matter further in the public interest.

There is only one other matter that I wish to raise. A number of honourable members—myself included—have had reported to them many instances where doctors have failed to respond to a call to a patient's home. Judging by the number of complaints that I have received, particularly in the past few weeks, such failures are becoming more prevalent year by year.

Often when a call is made to a doctor, the doctor tells the patient that he will have to attend the surgery if he wishes to be treated, because the doctor is too busy to visit him or is going out to another case. Some reason is given why the doctor is not able to attend the patient concerned at home. In fact, it happened in my own home during last winter.

This is a very serious matter and some provision should be made to overcome it. In these days of clinics, when four, five or more doctors practise at one central point, it should be possible to arrange for at least one doctor of the team at the clinic to visit the home of any seriously ill person, and such a person should not be asked to visit a doctor's surgery when he or she is not fit to do so. As I said earlier, that does happen very frequently. In addition, if the patient does visit the surgery as requested, on many occasions, although he is seriously ill, he might have to wait for an hour or an hour and a half to see the doctor. To my knowledge, that has happened even though the doctor has given the assurance, "I will see you if you come down straight away." In fact, I suppose a doctor cannot really give such an assurance, because he does not know how long he will be attending to other patients who may need urgent treatment.

I realise that there is a shortage of doctors in the community and that doctors are very busy in their clinics and their practices. However, I repeat that, when there is a clinic of four or five doctors, at least one should be available to visit homes in cases of emergency. I am sure that people do not ring a doctor's surgery and ask him to visit the home if there is not an emergency. If there is not and it is night time, they wait till next morning. Otherwise they go to the surgery during the day, as suggested by the doctor. But they do telephone and expect to receive medical attention in an emergency.

I am aware that people who wish to protest against such procedure are entitled to ring the Australian Medical Association and lodge their complaint.

Mr. Aikens: They would be wasting their time.

Mr. MELLOY: I suppose they would, because it would be an appeal from Caesar unto Caesar.

But the Act provides that any person aggrieved by any alleged misconduct in a professional aspect—and I suppose that, in the eyes of a person who is very sick, the failure of a doctor to respond to a call would represent professional misconduct—may complain to the Medical Board about the conduct or misconduct to which he or she objects. The Board is required to investigate complaints of that nature. But I do not think that is the answer. Even if a doctor is reprimanded, that does not correct the lack of availability of home visits by members of the medical profession.

In areas like the one I represent doctors are not always available. I refer to places such as Cribb Island and Nudgee Beach. On many occasions patients have had to be conveyed by ambulance to a doctor's surgery because that was the only way they could receive medical attention. I hope that the Minister will give some consideration to this matter. I am not sure of his powers in this regard, but he should do all he can to improve the medical service to the community.

As I have stated, we have no objection to the Bill as it has been presented to us by the Minister. Unless there is anything in it that he has not mentioned, we will approve of the proposed amendments.

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (2.52 p.m.): Mr. Lickiss, —

Mr. Aikens: What would you know about it?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am sorry I had to disadvantage the honourable member for Townsville South, who is so knowledgeable about medical matters, particularly the various things that doctors are supposed to do and supposed not to do.

Mr. Aikens: You just sit there and listen to what I have to say. Don't run away when you are finished.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! I trust that the honourable member for Townsville South will sit there and listen to the honourable member for Wavell.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It is important that medical standards not only throughout the English-speaking world but also throughout the non-English-speaking world be maintained. To date, throughout the former British Commonwealth, and now in those areas where the British type of training is available, it is a fact that the standard of medical graduate produced by the universities in those various countries is remarkably uniform. One has to travel away from this country and work in other countries to realise how amazingly uniform the standards are. I remember very vividly having a young man from a Middle East country working for me in the United Kingdom. He was highly intelligent, but during his training he had not been able to acquire an ordinary modicum of common sense, and as a result his standard

of practical doctoring was abysmally bad. That does not apply to the people with whom one normally works, particularly to graduates from the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and most of the United States universities. It is also true that if one works with graduates from South African universities, and other universities scattered throughout the African continent where the British were responsible for their initial setting-up, one soon realises that their standards conform to the generally accepted standards.

I completely agree with the idea behind the Bill. Although it is only a minor machinery measure, it does bring the Canadian situation into the correct perspective as far as Australia is concerned. Canada, of course, has the same problems with medical staffing as have other parts of the world. I should not like to see the situation where we recognise Canadian medical graduates but had great difficulty in obtaining reciprocity for our own people who wished to work, either permanently or temporarily, in that country.

As honourable members know, in recent years there has been a great amount of travelling between Canada and Australia by teachers. I believe that the movement of professional people between continents, with the opportunity to work with various cultures, can only help the general development of the individuals involved in their own particular professional spheres. Therefore, it will be necessary for the health authorities in this and other States to co-operate so that our graduates will have reciprocity with those from the universities of other countries with comparable standards. So far as the United Kingdom and foreign graduates working there are concerned, it is true and, as far as I can ascertain, will remain so for many years, that if graduates from other universities were not present in the United Kingdom, that country's whole health service would collapse.

It is a worth-while thought for the various authorities to bear in mind that they cannot treat medical graduates like so many pieces of flotsam and jetsam, and that they cannot adopt a dictatorial attitude towards medical men, nurses, or paramedical people—in fact, towards any professional group—because if these people do not like the conditions provided they will simply leave. In effect, that is what has been happening in Queensland, for various reasons, in recent years.

Dealing now with the junior staff in any institution, in this State we have, quite correctly, a provision that young graduates must do a year's compulsory hospital service. This provision did not apply when I graduated, but it has applied in the United Kingdom for many years. It is correct and proper that graduates should have to do a year of compulsory service in a hospital under the adequate supervision of more senior people. Therefore, I trust that this legislation is implemented in such a way that any Canadian who comes

here will have to produce a certificate that he has had a year of instruction in an approved institution in that country. I do not think we will need to do more than that. After having accepted his university as a place of proper and correct training, all we then have to do is to make sure that he has had a year of compulsory practical training after graduation. We can then accept him into our system.

Of course, all universities make an effort to maintain standards and it is important that we, as a country producing university graduates, both State and Commonwealth, should make quite sure that we maintain our own standards and help to establish and maintain similar standards in developing countries. This, of course, does not apply to Canada; but it applies very strongly to many universities in Africa, and I think it is important that at all times the necessary facilities should be available to enable our young doctors—and our more senior doctors as well—to go to other parts of the world where they can help developing universities, particularly on the African continent and in South-east Asia, maintain the standards which we know are necessary for the practice of correct medicine.

In the matter of reciprocity, university commissions go to a great deal of trouble to make sure that any institution in a foreign country that wishes to have reciprocity with an English-speaking country has the necessary standards already maintained. This applied very much over recent years to the Indian subcontinent, where a great amount of work had to be done to make sure that new universities were producing graduates of the correct standard. This work must be kept going. As a State we have responsibilities in these matters, and I believe that we must adopt an international attitude in the world context not only in standards of behaviour but also in academic competence.

The honourable member for Nudgee mentioned standards of behaviour. It is most important, as I have often said, that all professional standards, not only medical standards, be maintained. This applies also to lawyers and university personnel, as well as to anybody else who claims to have professional status. It is also vitally important for every professional person to accept responsibility for any action taken in that capacity. As the honourable member for Nudgee is well aware, certain doctors have been deregistered for either drug or alcohol addiction.

In an imperfect world, the imposition of this type of penalty is essential, but it is extremely important that under no circumstances should bureaucracy be placed in the situation where the mere suspicion of addiction or of any misdemeanour or criminal action is accepted as sufficient evidence for deregistration. Any such suggestion must be resisted at all times.

The honourable member for Nudgee complained about home calls by general practitioners. All countries are facing difficulties in the provision of suburban general-practitioner services. One reason for this is, of course, the great decrease in the number of general practitioners. The University of Queensland is attempting to remedy the situation. For some years young medical students have been farmed out during their latter years of study to general practitioners so that they can see the advantages, as well as the disadvantages, attaching to general practice.

The simple fact is that there are not enough general practitioners to provide a complete home service to everyone who desires to avail himself of it and, in spite of the grouping of doctors into clinics, both small and large, this shortage will continue. The best advice I can give to any person in the community is to attach himself to a reputable suburban general practice, either single or multiple, and ensure that the doctor or doctors concerned know that he is their patient. In those circumstances there is mutual respect between doctor and patient, and the doctor knows that when he is called by that person he is not being called on some frivolous errand. Calls of that type are the major cause of the refusal by certain doctors to visit people whom they do not know.

Mrs. Jordan: We are finding with Ipswich group practices that sometimes the doctor has to travel all the way from Jindalee in response to a call from Ipswich. The travelling time involved could mean that a person who has suffered a very severe injury will die before the doctor gets to him.

Dr. CRAWFORD: That is true, and it brings me to the point of dealing with the organisation of medical practices in our society. As a result of the expansion of the public hospitals into what has become a massive general practice, there is a tendency for everybody—patients and doctors—to say, "We don't need to worry; we can go to the public hospital." Such a tendency must be deprecated, because it simply cannot lead to efficiency. Certainly it does not allow an efficient local service to be given, and it cannot lead to efficiency in the services provided at public hospitals. Invariably the waiting time involved in public hospitals and doctors' waiting rooms, even for fairly urgent cases, exceeds normal expectations.

Very recently I was contacted by a citizen of Brisbane who had occasion to transport a neighbour's child to a public hospital. She was told that although the child had quite a bad wound the more urgent cases had to be attended to first, and she and the child were required to wait for about four or five hours.

It is no use simply deprecating doctors in hospitals or in general practice; we must set about enthusiastically to correct the

whole situation. Until we do that, the many anomalies that detract from the efficiency of our medical service will continue.

Punitive action—whether carried out by a Government agency, a legal agency, or an association like the Medical Board—in disciplining professional people does not really accomplish anything. There can be no argument about it; we cannot function without the special skills of professional people. Our conditions would be similar to those of Saigon, Manila, and other ghastly places in the East if we did not have adequate professional groups. Although I would be the last to advocate any form of misbehaviour or malpractice in a profession, it is most important that we should not introduce legislation—or have a department with this as its main function—to punish or victimise people in order to bring them to heel, merely because there have been some so-called misdemeanours. If such situations exist, we must correct the system itself, not the end products of the system.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (3.6 p.m.): I propose, within the limits of my ability, to keep to the principles of the Bill. I will not make a long, extemporaneous decantation on the medical profession, as was indulged in by the honourable members for Nudgee and Wavell. Under one of the principles in the Bill we will admit doctors from overseas, particularly from Canada. If they have the appropriate qualifications, I see nothing wrong with that, provided there is some measure of reciprocity. However, one matter agitates my mind, namely, that Canada is a bilingual country. We should be certain that any doctors we bring from Canada can speak English fluently enough to be understood by Australian and Queensland people.

Dr. Crawford: Very few Canadians cannot speak both languages.

Mr. AIKENS: The honourable member may have his own ideas on that, but the other day I met a Canadian who could speak only French. He could not speak a word of English. If he were brought to Australia as a doctor, what a pickle we would be in. At the Queensland University and the James Cook University there are lecturers from other countries who cannot speak comprehensible English.

Dr. Crawford: That is true.

Mr. AIKENS: I am glad to have the vindication of the honourable member for Wavell. As a result, students have not the faintest idea of what the lecturer or tutor is saying. What would be the position if an overseas doctor admitted to practice here was in the same position as some university lecturers, tutors or professors brought from overseas?

The medical profession has one cardinal virtue that is not shared by the other professions. When we are talking about the professions, we should remember what

Winston Churchill said about them, and no-one could claim that he was a member of the *hoi polloi*. He repeatedly warned people against the tyrannies of the professions. A member of the medical profession is automatically debarred if he seduces a patient. We had a case the other day in which a solicitor seduced a client, but it was ruled by the Full Court of Queensland that he was a fit and proper person to practise as a barrister.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! The honourable member's statement is outside the scope of the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: I used it merely as an analogy to show that the medical profession, in that one respect, is a little higher than the legal profession, not that anyone could not be higher than members of the legal profession.

The term "doctor" in Australia is mainly a title of courtesy. In other countries an M.D. is a Doctor of Medicine and a Doctor of Surgery. I would say that in Australia 99.8 per cent of doctors are Bachelors of Medicine and Bachelors of Surgery. For example, they sign themselves as "Mr. Tommy Claputipooch, M.B., B.S."

The honourable member for Nudgee raised and dealt adequately with one point I intended to make. From now on, if doctors are detected taking drugs, we should insist that they paint on their signs outside their doors, on their letterheads and on their bill-heads the letters "M.B.B.S.P.S." The letters "P.S." stand for "pot-smoker". The sooner we nominate these people, finger them and eradicate them from the medical profession, the better it will be for the people of Queensland.

The honourable member for Nudgee mentioned many complaints he has received about doctors. The honourable member for Wavell said that all doctors are not alike. That is true. I now want to state my opinion of doctors as a profession or a trade. Like all other tradesmen, some of them are very good, some are good, some are mediocre and a few of them are "no-hopers". In any aggregation of men and women in any profession, it would be impossible to have all of them very good. I pay a tribute to those who are good and very good, and even those who are mediocre and are batt'ling along. But to look to the A.M.A. to rectify public grievances about doctors is a waste of time. The honourable member for Nudgee should know, as the shadow Minister for Health in the A.L.P., which hopes to take office in 1986, that at least 44 per cent of Queensland doctors are not members of the A.M.A. The A.M.A. is supposed to be a trade union. It is not. It is an ethical union and some of its members do not know the difference between ethics and etiquette. So, if 44 per cent of doctors are not members of the A.M.A., what is the good of ringing the A.M.A. or writing to it?

The pages of "Hansard" contain details of many individual cases I have quoted where I have written to the A.M.A. about doctors. Some of them have put up shocking performances. One doctor in Townsville named Elyan was a prominent member of the A.L.P. He was to be that party's candidate for the mayoralty. He was indubitably mad. There is no doubt about that. When he returned to England, he wrote a book entitled, "Doctor on the Dole". Anybody who reads it will discover what type of man he was. As I said, he was an A.L.P. mayoral candidate until I exposed him as a "no-hoper", grasping, greedy, medical charlatan.

There is a good deal of snobbery in the medical profession. I do not know where it came from. I do hope that the Minister for Health will not be suffused with it. It is peculiar that we refer to a doctor of any kind by his profession. We do not say, "Go and have a talk to Arthur Crawford." We say, "Go and have a talk to Doc. Crawford." We do not say, "Go and have a talk with Peter Delamothe." We say, "Go and have a talk to Doc. Delamothe." Why do we not do that with other professions? For instance, why do we not refer to Barrister Bennett, Hotel-owner Hanson, Grazier Rae, Accountant Hewitt, Electrician Houston, Cane-farmer Row, Carpenter Newton, and Dental-technician Melloy? Why do we not give their professions the same snobbish credit that we give to the medical profession?

The honourable member for Nudgee also said it is difficult to obtain the services of a doctor after hours. It is difficult to get some doctors after hours, and it is particularly difficult to get, after hours, some of the new breed who earn their money too easily and too quickly with too little effort. I have said previously, and I repeat it, that some of them could not write a prescription and some could not read one written, for instance, by Arthur Crawford, if I can call him Arthur Crawford instead of Dr. Crawford. I know he will not mind.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! I should hope that the honourable member would refer to him as the honourable member for Wavell.

Mr. AIKENS: That is so. I pitched for that rebuke, Mr. Lickiss, and I am very glad that, in rebuking me, you rebuke all members of this Committee. In future we will not have to refer to him as Doc. Crawford or Dr. Crawford.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I am glad that I did not disappoint the honourable member.

Mr. AIKENS: The honourable member for Nudgee said that the services of doctors are very difficult to obtain after hours. They are; some doctors could not be dragged out with bulldozers. This situation all goes back to the days when some doctors decided to set themselves up as specialists. One asked

what constitutes a specialist, and the ruling given was that a specialist is a doctor who arranges for his patients to become ill only between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If a person wants to see a specialist, that is the only time he can see him. A specialist will not visit a patient's home; the patient has to go to his surgery between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Young general practitioners (not that there are many of them left) now adopt the same tactics. Many of the older ones do not; it is to their credit that they are practising in the best traditions of the medical profession of the old days. A young doctor today, after leaving the university and completing his 12 months' service at a hospital, hangs up his shingle at a luxurious apartment. As a matter of fact, most doctor's apartments are better than the Whip's room here. It is, I might say, the best in Parliament House, and deservedly so because it accommodates a man who is probably the most dignified member of the Parliament.

Young doctors sit in their palatial surgeries from 10 o'clock in the morning. When one goes to see them, one is given a cursory examination. If they can pass their patients off with a prescription for a box of tablets or pills, they will do so. If they cannot do that—and writing prescriptions is absolutely beyond them—more often than not they will pass the patient on to a specialist such as the honourable member for Wavell. I do not know whether the honourable member practises dichotomy, but I know that many specialists do. Not only does the general practitioner then get a fee from the patient, but he also receives a percentage "kick-back" from the specialist to whom he referred the patient.

Dr. Crawford: I can assure the honourable member that specialists in this city do not do that.

Mr. AIKENS: I will accept the honourable member's personal assurance, but I will not accept his assurance with regard to other specialists because he is not in a position to give it, any more than Dr. Ribush was in a position to say that other doctors were smoking "pot". He might have been smoking it himself, and he might even have been "high" when he wrote his article for the medical journal. I will not accept one doctor's assurance concerning the tactics and practices of another.

What happens today? One of my oldest friends is a member of the medical profession. He is a man from the West, who still lives and practises in the West. He is an institution in his western town, and he is a person of whom the whole West is deservedly proud. He told me that for many years after he started work his bad debts amounted to anything between 40 per cent and 50 per cent of his fees. I will admit that he never bothered to collect his fees from people who could not afford to pay them. He had to struggle along, and he was lucky

if he received between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of the money owing to him. However, he did not mind that. That man told me the other day, "Tom, I just don't know what to do. I have a young fellow helping me, and we are snowed under with money."

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! The Chair has been very tolerant with the honourable member. I hope he will now return to the principles of the Bill.

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Lickiss,—

Mr. B. Wood: He won't be here tonight.

Mr. AIKENS: Would the honourable member like me to say where he gets to at night? If he goads me too much, I will, and that will slam him down once and for all. I like these self-professed prudes who throw sneers and smears at everybody else!

When the Bill becomes law, Canadian doctors will come into this State and practise under the very system that I am talking about now. The bad debts of the doctor in the West to whom I referred now represent only 8 per cent of his fees. He said to me, "We do not have to bother collecting debts from patients, as we did for years and years. We now get paid by medical benefits funds, the Repatriation Department, the Workers' Compensation authorities, and the Social Services Department. We do not have to bother about collecting from patients, so we are sitting pretty financially." He and the young fellow working with him are now earning so much money that they do not know what to do with it.

There is no doubt that doctors are "sitting pretty" financially. Some young doctors are trading on it, and sponging on it. I also want to say, from my own experience and observation, that the great majority of doctors, particularly those who are middle-aged and older, and even some of the young ones with old ideas, are living up to the best traditions of the medical profession. I sincerely hope and trust that the young men who are brought in under the Bill (if they can speak comprehensible English and if they get into the right hands, not into the hands of Dr. Cass and other members of the A.L.P. who advocate the legalising of marijuana and hashish, and so on, or those who advocate on-the-counter abortion, as the A.L.P. does) do not become abortionists and hashish men, as the A.L.P. thinks they should.

Mr. HANSON: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member has said that the A.L.P. endorses on-the-counter abortion. That is completely untrue, and I ask that the remark be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Port Curtis has taken objection to the statement made by the honourable member for Townsville South. I ask the honourable member to accept the statement by the honourable member for Port Curtis.

Mr. AIKENS: I accept his statement, Mr. Hooper. I would not want to offend the honourable member for Port Curtis, because he is one of the few reputable members of the A.L.P. in this Chamber. He does not believe in abortion or homosexuality.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: I cannot say that for the rest of them. I shall conclude on that note.

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (3.21 p.m.), in reply: I understand from the comments of honourable members that the general principles of the Bill are acceptable, and I am grateful for that.

Let me deal now with one or two of the comments that were made. First, there is the statement made by the honourable member for Nudgee relative to Dr. Ribush and his assertion that some 50 doctors of his personal acquaintance are experimenting with marijuana. As I said earlier today, 50 is a good, round figure. Although Dr. Ribush has been questioned about his statement, it is not within my competence or the competence of my officers to force him to reveal the names of the people about whom he is speaking. I wish to emphasise to the honourable member, and to the Committee generally, that when breaches of the law occur, whether under the Medical Act, the Hospitals Act, the Vagrants, Gaming, and Other Offences Act, or whatever Act it might be, the Department of Health is not a law-enforcement authority. The law-enforcement authorities take over and deal with breaches of the law, and the Department of Health does not go outside its province and its brief.

Mr. Melloy: You can ask the board to have a look at it, though, can't you? That is your responsibility.

Mr. TOOTH: The board is not an investigating authority. When evidence is placed before the board, it has certain duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Melloy: Who enforces the Act?

Mr. TOOTH: The Act is enforced by the board.

Mr. Melloy: Yes.

Mr. TOOTH: And by the department—of course it is! The honourable member is talking about the investigation of breaches of the Act.

Mr. Melloy: Yes.

Mr. TOOTH: I submit that there is a proper way to go about that, and it is not my duty to investigate allegations of breaches of the law.

Mr. Melloy: It can be enforced only by policing it.

Mr. TOOTH: Dr. Ribush has said that he knows 50 doctors who are experimenting in the use of drugs. He is not prepared

to tell the Director-General of Health and Medical Services who they are. As far as I can see, that is the end of the road for the Department of Health.

Mr. Aikens: What was his condition when he made that statement.

Mr. TOOTH: I am not aware of that. Quite frankly, I do not know what condition he was in when he wrote the letter in question. The statement was made in a letter that was published in the correspondence columns of "The Australian Medical Journal".

The honourable member for Nudgee referred also to the failure of doctors to respond to home calls. He outlined the problem at great length and adjured me to look at it, and the implication of his remarks was that I probably have some remedy for the problem. I assure him that I have not. Somebody must ultimately find a remedy for it, but there are many facets of the problem that must be taken into consideration. Until such time as there is a sufficient supply of doctors, so that the ordinary economic force of competition arises, I am afraid that there is little or nothing that we as a department can do to enforce upon doctors the necessity to go out when they are called at night or in the wee hours of the morning.

Mr. Melloy: Or in daylight hours.

Mr. TOOTH: The same statement applies.

The honourable member for Wavell spoke about reciprocity with Canada. I indicate to him, and to the Committee generally, that the Canadian authorities are seeking discussions on reciprocity. The subject is currently under consideration, and no doubt will be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

Dr. Crawford: Are all the other States doing the same?

Mr. TOOTH: I cannot say.

Dr. Crawford: It would have to be done on a Commonwealth basis.

Mr. TOOTH: That is possible. I do not know what the conditions are. I have not gone into the details of this; I am leaving it entirely to the Medical Board. It is a problem for that body.

The point raised by the honourable member for Townsville South about the capacity of Canadian doctors to speak English was well taken. He will be glad to know that specific provision is made in the Bill that they must be proficient in the use of the English language. Under the terms of the amending Bill, any Canadian doctor who speaks only French will not be eligible for registration.

Mr. Aikens: I wish the universities would take the same step.

Mr. TOOTH: At least we are setting them an example.

I now wish to refer to some of the comments of the honourable member for Wavell about staffing in Queensland and the effects of some of the things he has been criticising on whether doctors stay in Queensland or move out. If I remember correctly, he said they had been moving out of Queensland for many years. That may have been so in the past, but it is not currently the position. On the contrary, we have been recruiting substantially from other States. Indeed, some of my colleagues in the South are somewhat reproachful when I talk to them about this particular feature. The fact is that Queensland has been attracting a number of southern graduates. Our own graduates apparently are not moving out, although quite recently a number of very gloomy prophecies were being made as to what would happen with this year's graduates.

Mr. Marginson: Some of those who passed recently have left the State.

Mr. TOOTH: I shall quote the figures. Of 119 students who sat this year for the final-year examination, four failed, 12 received supplementary examinations, and 103 passed. Of those 103, 92 have already accepted positions in Queensland, two have not yet replied to letters of appointment, and nine either declined appointment or did not apply for positions in Queensland. All the 12 students who have been awarded supplementary examinations have applied for positions in Queensland, and those positions are being kept for them should they pass. In summary, out of the 115 who have either passed or have gained supplementary examinations, it is expected that 106 will stay in Queensland, provided that all those who have been granted supplementary examinations are successful.

To give honourable members a little more information that will be of interest to them, I point out that, between them, the two major hospitals in Brisbane—Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra—require 136 first or second-year resident medical officers for their own establishments, and 19 extra resident medical officers for rotation with the smaller provincial-city hospitals such as Maryborough and Bundaberg. That is a total requirement of 155, as against which 156 applicants (including Queensland and southern graduates) have already accepted appointment. Replies are being awaited from another 16, including two Queensland graduates who have already passed the examination. In addition, there are six supplementary-examination candidates who will be appointed to one or other of the hospitals if they pass.

The position of resident medical officers in provincial cities is important. In the case of Cairns, Ipswich, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville, the situation for 1972 is favourable. Twenty-seven Queensland graduates have applied for positions at provincial-city hospitals. These, with the second-year appointments and graduates

from outside Queensland, will fill the establishments at the larger provincial-city hospitals. Approval has been given for some of these hospitals to create supernumerary positions in order to accommodate all the Queensland graduates who wish to work there. The Committee can see, therefore, that the position is relatively healthy.

Dealing with registrar positions, of 126 such positions at the Chermside, Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals, all but three have been filled for next year, and it is expected that the remaining posts will be filled before the beginning of 1972. The registrar positions at the provincial-city hospitals have not yet all been filled. They are still being advertised.

Mr. Melloy: How many?

Mr. TOOTH: I cannot give the honourable member the figures. I do not have them with me.

Mr. Melloy: You have the figures for Brisbane; why not for the whole of the State?

Mr. TOOTH: I will get them for the honourable member. They are quite easily obtained. The honourable member has an extraordinary habit of suddenly asking me a question on minute detail. I imagine that he thinks I have a computer mind; I have not. What I have listed I can give him; there are things that I cannot. I cannot possibly remember all these details.

With regard to overseas recruiting, the Director-General was successful in attracting 11 United Kingdom doctors to Queensland. Five of these have already arrived and are working—one each at the Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and Townsville Hospitals. The Agent-General for Queensland in London has already informed us of travel arrangements for most of the remaining six. One doctor from South Africa has been appointed to the Toowoomba Hospital. With one or two exceptions, appointments for a three-year period beginning January 1972 have been made for 308 visiting specialist positions in the metropolitan area and 150 in provincial-city and country hospitals.

I have taken a little time to give this information because I know there was a considerable degree of pessimism regarding the prospects for next year. While there are still vacancies, our situation is relatively good; and it is infinitely better than that in some of the southern States. I am sure that honourable members generally, and those who have particularly interested themselves in this problem, will feel very gratified at the situation. I therefore commend the motion to the Committee.

Motion (Mr. Tooth) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a first time.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (3.35 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Hospitals Acts 1936 to 1967 in certain particulars.”

The proposed amendments to the Hospitals Act deal mainly with administrative aspects and seek to clarify certain sections of the present Act and to delete others, which by the passage of time are no longer necessary. Several new sections have been included and, to a large extent, are matters which are presently governed by regulations under the Act.

In general, the main purposes of the amendments are—

(a) To provide for the appointment of a person to carry on the functions of a hospitals board where a hospitals board is dissolved or ceases to exist, due to mass resignation of members or for other reasons;

(b) To define clearly the term of office of all members of a hospitals board;

(c) To bring within the provisions of the Act the power to deal with disciplinary and other offences by employees of a hospitals board which previously were prescribed by regulation.

It is proposed that the title of “Manager” be substituted for that of “Secretary” of a hospitals board. The role that is played by hospitals board secretaries has changed since the Government accepted the financial responsibility in 1945 for the conduct of our public hospitals, and this officer to day can be looked upon surely as the chief executive officer of the board. It is considered that the title of “Manager” is more appropriate in the light of the duties and responsibilities which this officer now assumes, and, indeed, the definition in the present Act of “Secretary” refers to the “Manager or Secretary” of a board. There is no intention to alter in any way the duties, responsibilities or the authority of the chairman, medical superintendent, or matron as presently defined in the Act and Regulations.

Sections of the Act which refer to the payment of precepts by local authorities will be repealed. Precepts have not been paid by local authorities for a considerable period of time, and those sections dealing with these payments are, of course, no longer necessary.

Some confusion has arisen in recent years as to when the term of office of members of a hospitals board expires. The amendments propose that, apart from casual vacancies on a hospitals board, the term of office of all members shall commence on 1 July of the calendar year in which the

member is elected or appointed, and terminate on 30 June in the third calendar year following such appointment or election.

There is no power within the Act to provide for the dissolution of a board. Circumstances could arise where it is desirable for the good government and management of a hospitals board that provision should be made for such dissolution. In such cases as this and in the case where there is no board member due to mass resignations, no provision exists for the functions of a board to continue, and the operations of a hospital could, therefore, be seriously disrupted. Where such circumstances arise, it is proposed to provide for the appointment of a person to carry on the functions of a hospitals board for as long as is required.

The amendment proposes that the allowance payable to a chairman of a hospitals board, or a deputy chairman in his absence, shall be fixed by the Minister. The proposed amendment will write into the Act what is at present being done administratively.

An officer or employee who has been suspended from duty and subsequently punished by a hospitals board may appeal against such punishment to an appeal board constituted under the provision of the Act. Where such appeal is upheld, the existing legislation makes no provision for reinstatement or payment of salary during suspension, and the amendment proposes that in such cases the employee shall be reinstated in his position without loss of salary during the period of suspension.

At present a hospitals board is required to invite tenders for the execution of work or furnishing of materials where the amount is in excess of \$200. Wages and cost of materials, since the amount on which tenders are to be invited was first fixed, have increased considerably. In order that a hospitals board may deal more expeditiously with minor items, it is proposed to permit boards to invite quotations for amounts from \$200 to \$500 and for the calling of tenders for sums in excess of \$500.

In country areas, difficulty is experienced from time to time in obtaining signatures on cheques drawn on the various funds of a hospitals board. In the metropolitan area, the chairman of the various hospitals boards is required to devote a great deal of time to signing cheques. This time could be better utilised on visits of inspection or other administrative matters. In order to overcome the problem mentioned, the amendment proposes that additional persons shall be authorised to sign cheques drawn on the various funds of a board.

The compilation and adoption of budgets by hospitals boards in respect of other than the general fund, does not serve any useful purpose. The amendment proposes that, for these funds, statements in a form to be determined from time to time shall be submitted. Other minor amendments are also proposed in respect of budgetary procedures.

The administrative procedure presently requires that a hospitals board shall obtain the approval of the Minister before inviting or accepting any tender for any project financed from Loan Funds. The amendment proposes to bring within the Act the present administrative requirement. The amendment will also clearly indicate the procedure to be adopted by a board before proceeding to borrow money.

Representations have been made by one of the metropolitan hospitals boards which has experienced considerable difficulty in policing and prosecuting offenders in respect of existing by-laws regulating parking within hospital grounds. The amendment proposes that a hospitals board may make a by-law providing for "owner-onus" in respect of parking breaches and will materially assist boards in prosecuting offences under existing by-laws.

Fees payable for the attendance of members at meetings of a hospitals board or committee are fixed by regulation. There is thus no need to retain the provision for a board to make by-laws in respect of such fees and the amendment proposes to delete such provision.

Several new sections are proposed in the amendment dealing with disciplinary and indictable offences committed by employees of a board. These provisions are presently contained in regulations under the Act and the opinion has been expressed by solicitors of hospitals boards and the Solicitor-General that by embodying the provisions of such regulations in the Act they will then have force in law. An important change is proposed, however, in the penalties for various offences. The regulation presently provides that an officer or employee who is found guilty by the board of misusing board property shall be dismissed by the board. The mandatory provision of dismissal is considered to be too harsh and it is proposed to delete this provision and to allow a board, if it so desires, to impose a lesser penalty. It is also proposed to delete the provision whereby a board may deprive an employee of his annual leave or part thereof. It is not felt desirable to interfere with the recreation leave entitlement of any employee.

At present the regulations provide that a board may impose a monetary penalty of a sum not exceeding \$20. It is proposed to increase this sum to \$100 as this amount is considered to be more realistic in the light of present-day salaries and wages. It will enable a board to impose a penalty less severe than that of dismissal but, where circumstances warrant, a greater penalty than can be imposed under the other penal provisions. In line with the Public Service Acts, it is proposed that the provisions of subsection (1) of section 19 of the Offenders Probation and Parole Acts, 1959 to 1968, shall not apply to employees convicted of indictable offences. It is also proposed that dismissal will not be mandatory where an employee is convicted

of an indictable offence, and under these circumstances it is felt that a board has greater latitude to deal with such employees in the light of circumstances surrounding the offence of which an employee was convicted.

Honourable members will be in a position to study the proposed Bill in greater detail after it is printed and, no doubt, many matters will arise which can be dealt with at a later stage.

I commend the Bill and recommend its introduction.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (3.44 p.m.): As outlined by the Minister, the Bill contains a considerable number of amendments. It would be very difficult to deal with all of them at this stage. The Minister said he expects that they will materially affect the administration of hospitals, with particular reference to boards.

The first amendment outlined by the Minister deals with the renaming of the position of secretary of a board. He will now be called "Manager". The amendment is justified because, as the Minister pointed out, a secretary of a hospital board is the chief administrative officer of the hospital. On him falls the responsibility of making many decisions and of implementing board decisions. The change in designation is an improvement. The normal duties of a secretary are to officially record the minutes of board meetings and board business. He is the administrative officer of the board and is the manager of the hospital or hospitals controlled by that board. Therefore it is more fitting that he be referred to as the manager. The Opposition agrees with that proposal.

As the Minister pointed out, precepts by local authorities have long since "gone by the board" and there is no longer any need for the Act provisions. We agree with that proposal.

When we receive a copy of the Bill, we will look closely at the provisions covering the term of office of a board member. The dissolution of a board, in certain circumstances, is a matter of prime importance. The appointment of an administrator when a board is dissolved, and his powers, are important matters in the light of public involvement in the affairs of hospitals boards. The Minister said that he is very jealous of the right of public involvement in hospitals and ambulances. All these matters will receive our close scrutiny. As an Opposition, we feel that we must preserve the rights of the community in this matter.

The next proposal concerns the reinstatement of an employee following a successful appeal against suspension. It is long overdue. In many cases, the term of suspension imposed for some misdemeanour has resulted in the loss of an appointment. Therefore reinstatement is very important because, without it, an extra penalty is being imposed for an offence.

I did not get the full import of the Minister's statement about calling tenders. I think he said that at present it is necessary for the Minister to approve of tenders. Apparently this is being rectified to some degree. I imagine that whether or not the Minister is required to give approval depends on the amount of money involved. The Opposition will study this matter closely.

The next proposal deals with the discipline of a member for theft from a hospital, and its effect on his recreation leave. Nobody should be deprived of recreation leave by way of penalty for some offence. By virtue of his service to the board, he would be entitled to recreation leave. I shall be interested to read the relevant clause.

I do not suppose that the increase in penalties from \$20 to \$100 is out of line with modern developments, because penalties under many Acts are well out of date as a result of inflation.

As I said earlier, so many amendments have been introduced that it is not possible to look closely at all of them. We will be endeavouring to make such an examination when copies of the Bill are received. I think the Minister will appreciate our situation. There are, however, certain matters that I want to refer to concerning hospitals generally. During the presentation of his Estimates, when he so blatantly absorbed most of the time available for the discussion of hospital matters, the Minister mentioned that the Opposition would have full opportunity to discuss health services on the presentation of various Bills dealing with health.

First of all, I wish to deal with what is going on in hospitals today. No-one can be happy with the present situation in Queensland's hospital system. In fact, only about two years ago the Australian Medical Association called for an independent inquiry into it. So disturbed was the A.M.A. by what was happening in hospitals that it felt that an inquiry was essential if proper health services were to be provided for the people of Queensland. After a meeting held to discuss these matters, the president of the A.M.A. at that time, Dr. Cameron, said that it was imperative that the Hospitals Act be reviewed in the light of modern conditions.

I agree with the honourable member for Townsville South that only 40 per cent of medical men are members of the A.M.A. We cannot deny, of course, that the A.M.A. speaks for the medical profession, and if 60 per cent of medical men prefer not to join the A.M.A., that is their business.

Dr. Crawford: It is the other way round—60 per cent in and 40 per cent out.

Mr. MELLOY: Well, if 40 per cent prefer not to be members of the A.M.A., that is their business. However, as things stand, the A.M.A. speaks for the medical profession, and we must have regard to any

opinions that the A.M.A. has on hospital services. Dr. Cameron said that, in view of the importance to its members of adequate training and the necessity to provide a sound service to the public under rapidly-changing modern conditions, the A.M.A. believed that a thorough investigation by an independent authority was warranted. I agree with that.

I appreciate the Minister's difficulties in providing hospital staff, and I have no doubt that the situation concerns him, too. But he should admit the deficiencies, instead of trying at all times to present the picture that everything is right. Each time the Minister is criticised on hospital matters, he tries to denigrate those who voice the criticism. Nobody wants to destroy the faith of the public in the hospitals of this State. One of the chances that has to be taken by those of us who criticise the hospitals is that we may in some degree lessen the confidence of the public in the hospitals system. After all, at any time we, our children, or our grandchildren may have to receive treatment at a public hospital, and one likes to feel that in such circumstances the essential treatment will be available.

If it were not for the dedication of the staffs of hospitals—doctors, nurses, and others associated with the treatment of patients—the public would not be receiving the treatment it deserves. But why should conditions be imposed upon the staffs of hospitals that are not desirable if they are to carry out their duties efficiently? Deficiencies in equipment and staff in hospitals impose a tremendous burden on staffs of hospitals in providing the services that the public expects.

Turning to nurses, I draw the attention of the Committee to a recent Press item about the Bundaberg General Hospital. I know that the honourable member for Bundaberg will forgive me for intruding into his territory on this occasion. The Bundaberg Hospitals Board applied for an increase of six nurses in its establishment, but its application was rejected by the Department of Health. The Press report said that the request was made because of problems associated with rostering during examinations, study sessions, and sickness, but a letter from the department claimed that the hospital had sufficient nursing staff and that reorganisation of annual-leave rosters would overcome the problem. That is not correct. Members of the Opposition have visited many hospitals and seen the problems facing the nursing staff. Therefore, we are very sympathetic to the application by the Bundaberg Hospitals Board for an additional six nurses.

The burden is being carried to a large extent by nursing aides, who are being called upon to carry out the duties of trained nurses and trained student nurses. That is not desirable if adequate nursing services are to be provided for patients in hospitals. It is not fair to ask nursing aides to accept the responsibility usually accepted by student

nurses who have had the necessary training. The nursing aides are trained to a certain degree to enable them to carry out a number of duties. But that is not where it stops, because subsequently they are imposed upon and expected to perform the duties usually carried out by trained student nurses.

What I have said is borne out by the statement of the matron at the Bundaberg General Hospital, who said that the hospital would be better off if it reverted to the system used at the Maryborough Base Hospital, where fewer trainees are accepted and more nursing aides are employed. That is very undesirable, and I hope that the Minister will give instructions to the Department of Health that when a hospital applies for additional trainee nurses—it was six at Bundaberg—it should be allowed to engage them. The Hospitals Board would know what is being done from the financial point of view, and it should be able to employ six more trainee nurses if it believes that it can afford to do so. I ask the Minister to give further consideration to that aspect of the hospital system.

Recently I asked the Minister several questions concerning the Royal Children's Hospital, including this one—

“What facilities are required at the hospital to help paediatricians in their work and when will these facilities be provided?”

The Minister's reply was that the normal facilities required in children's hospitals are available at the Royal Children's Hospital. I do not think that is so. From what I have seen and been told, the requirements for the proper functioning of a children's hospital are not being met. There is no secretary available in the out-patient department to take letters dictated by part-time staff to referring general practitioners; there is no poison centre; there is no diet kitchen; and the services of the dietitian are available only for a few hours each week. I have no doubt that diet in a children's hospital is every bit as important as diet in the adult section of any hospital.

Further, there are no facilities for on-the-spot consultations with a consultant radiologist other than during two sessions each week. It is very difficult to have on-the-spot consultations with pathologists, as the pathology block is far removed from the Children's Hospital. Pathological advice is not readily available at the Children's Hospital, so that mothers very often have to carry their sick children to and from the pathology block. That imposes a further hardship on mothers who are already distressed because their children are ill and require medical attention.

The general set-up at the Children's Hospital is such that the Minister should pay close attention to it. I asked him recently about accreditation of the Children's Hospital by the Royal College of Physicians. In reply he said that the General Hospital was already accredited by the Royal College

of Surgeons. That is a totally different body. I referred to the Royal College of Physicians. He told me that it was only recently that any move had been made by the Royal College of Physicians to give accreditation to the various hospitals.

Mr. Tooth: No, pediatric accreditation. This has just been dealt with in the last few weeks.

Mr. MELLOY: For pediatric facilities, yes. In Sydney the children's hospital conducts a pediatric course for nurses.

Mr. Tooth: What is that?

Mr. MELLOY: A pediatric course for nurses.

Mr. Tooth: I thought you were talking about physicians.

Mr. MELLOY: No.

Mr. Tooth: You are now moving to nurses?

Mr. MELLOY: I am referring at this stage to nurses. It is very important that we should have an established course in pediatrics for Queensland nurses. At the present time nurses spend 12 weeks at the Children's Hospital. That is not sufficient. We should have a full-time course in pediatrics for nurses.

(Time expired.)

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (4.4 p.m.): This legislation opens up the whole gamut of the Hospitals Act and could be the basis for a drastic review of the entire Act. In consequence of such a review, the situation could arise where our over-all health and hospital facilities could be markedly improved. There are many anomalies in the health machinery. One or two mentioned by the honourable member for Nudgee are perhaps worth commenting upon. The Bundaberg nursing situation is no doubt pertinent to these matters, and I point out that the whole organisation relative to health and hospitals in this State is conditioned to the practical aspect that the final decision in all matters connected with health is embodied in the Health Department. Although in many instances the department agrees with recommendations by hospital boards, the decision lies with the Health Department and that is where the recommendation is ultimately considered. As a result, it frequently happens that recommendations, particularly from distant hospitals, which should be considered very closely by the central control are not looked at in an enlightened manner.

It is also pertinent in this context to point out that following the implementation of the new nursing course last year, the number of nurses necessary throughout the State needed to be increased by one-third so that there would be adequate numbers of nurses available for their block training and, at the same time to ensure that the staffing of the wards would be adequate during the time they were

away being taught. It would be interesting to ascertain the present numbers of nurses in Queensland and to know whether they have, in fact, been increased by one-third during the last 12 months.

The Minister mentioned in the debate on the previous Bill that the position as it affected the new resident medical officers had been reorganised this year and that they had all been allotted to positions before the examination. This is true and I am very pleased that it has occurred, particularly as last year the Director-General was not prepared to do this, with the result that great difficulty was experienced when final-year students came to take up their appointments and, in fact, had to compete for them with southern graduates. However, this year the Director-General adopted this changed attitude because in 1970 the final-year students became militant as to their requirements and were not prepared to work under the former conditions.

Mr. Marginson: Were they more militant than those of the previous year?

Dr. CRAWFORD: Yes, and I give them full marks for this. This very grave problem has been resolved, and I should not like to see it recur every year. It will not happen next year, of course, as there are now much larger numbers of students.

Mr. Tooth: You will be interested to know that the concern was previously with provincial-city hospitals.

Dr. CRAWFORD: But the students were prepared to apply for provincial-city positions.

Mr. Tooth: This year we have had more applications than we needed.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I realise that, and this again is a good thing.

Mr. Tooth: It demonstrates that there was something very artificial about what occurred last year. There were some "stirrers" around the ridges, and the plain fact of the matter is that when the students in this year's group knew about the conditions in provincial hospitals, we had more applications than we needed.

Dr. CRAWFORD: This is good; but the Minister will also agree that it means that with a little goodwill from the department many of these problems can be resolved without adopting the dictatorial attitude, "Do as I say, not as I do."

Mr. Tooth: And also with less "stirring" by others.

Dr. CRAWFORD: The whole of the health legislation has been opened up by this Bill, and there is no doubt that, basically, we still have the Act that was introduced into this Assembly in 1936 and was thought by the Labor Government of that day to be desirable.

Mr. Marginson: It was a good start.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It was basically a piece of socialist legislation.

I think it would be a useful exercise to dissect some of the premises on which the Federal Labor Party has based its Commonwealth health scheme, which it says it will introduce if and when it occupies the Federal Treasury benches. This, too, will be a piece of socialist legislation; it contains many proposals which match in detail the Queensland legislation. In many respects the parallels are quite remarkable.

First of all, the Labor Party's proposed scheme is geared to be paid for by a levy of 1.35 per cent on the taxable income of all the nation's taxpayers. This will be subsidised by an equivalent amount. In my view, these financial arrangements are full of all sorts of unpleasant innuendoes, implications and connotations of doubtful morality, and I do not believe that, if examined in sufficient detail to ascertain exact figures, any particular political party would be proud of them. Recent figures show that the general tax levied throughout Australia totalled approximately \$2,500 million, so a levy of 3 per cent on the gross national product would result in a huge increase in taxation.

The next point made on behalf of the Federal Labor Party by both Mr. Whitlam and Mr. Hayden was that a general subsidy of \$10.30 per occupied bed, based on the 1969-70 figures, would be provided throughout the land. The figures for the 12 months ended 30 June show that in Queensland the actual daily cost of beds is as follows:—

Hospital	Daily Cost \$
Redcliffe	17.03
Princess Alexandra	22.46
Chermside	12.56
Royal Brisbane	25.97

It would seem, therefore, that at present twice that subsidy would be necessary in this State's major hospitals to ensure financial viability, and the costs would be doubled. Already the 1.35 per cent levy on taxable income amounts to an untenable figure.

Recently Mr. Hayden had certain conversations with the Federal body of the Australian Medical Association during which he was asked many questions on this matter. He could not answer some of them, and thereby clearly illustrated that he had not looked at the situation to the depth that one would expect. However, he said that low-income earners who support a family of one or more children will be automatically covered on public expense when their taxable income does not exceed \$1,730 per annum, which is a weekly income of \$33.27. That, of course, is well below the base of \$46.50 at which a family may secure free medical and hospital benefits under the

present system. There is certainly no advantage whatever to low-income families to have this changed. In practice, it would mean that a very large number of families who now are entitled to free medical and hospital benefits through the medical benefits organisations would be paying for their medical and hospital services.

Mr. Hayden was also asked whether a country doctor in a small town who performs X-rays and simple pathology tests, therefore saving a great deal of time for the patient, would be forced to discontinue this practice. He replied that a fee-for-service payment could be arranged. I point out that in Queensland, under its 1936 socialist-inspired legislation, small towns with hospitals suffer bitterly because no resilience and flexibility are allowed, and doctors are not even permitted to staff hospitals on a roster system.

I know there are various reasons for that, but, in fact, that is the position. Any doctor who has ever expressed disapproval of the system is not allowed to darken the door of a State hospital. This has meant that in a town like Caloundra, where there should be ample staff available at the hospital on a roster system, no doctor has been available at the hospital for many years—I am aware that one is going there next January—and a doctor has had to come from Nambour to attend at the hospital. In other words, socialist control of medical services does not work in practice.

Mr. Marginson: The doctor at Nambour knew the conditions when he went there.

Dr. CRAWFORD: That is so, but he subsequently went out into private practice.

Mr. Hayden does not seem unduly concerned about over-utilisation of services, as has occurred in the United Kingdom under a scheme similar to that proposed by him. He does not even seem very concerned about the possible use of "feldschers", which is a term applied to half-trained doctor-assistants who are used in certain backward countries. If we had half-trained people organising our medical services, or as part of the medical service, we would really be reducing standards.

In some hospitals in Brisbane—because of its inadequate facilities the Royal Children's Hospital provides a prime example—we have a system of urgent priorities. I referred to them in my previous speech today when I mentioned patients having degrees of urgency and some having to wait till the more urgent cases had been attended to.

In the United Kingdom, where there has been State control of the entire medical services since 1948, the waiting list for non-urgent surgery throughout the land has increased from five years in 1960, when I was last there, to 10 years at present. That is what over-all State control means.

Mr. Sherrington: There is a dental waiting list.

Dr. CRAWFORD: That is true.

In the proposed Australian scheme, Labor admits that private insurance, in addition to the universal insurance, is reasonable. In effect, in the United Kingdom about 20 per cent of the population have become so fed up with the delays, particularly for elective treatment, that they have arranged to insure themselves for treatment under private auspices.

I might also ask: How efficient are institutions that are completely Government controlled? A very good example is the "Eventide" homes for the aged in Queensland. They provide a very satisfactory comparison. Special facilities such as intensive nursing, which is an expensive pastime, are not a feature of "Eventide" homes. The last figures available show that it is costing the Queensland Government \$35 a week for each "Eventide" resident, and every honourable member knows that we have a large number of "Eventide" residents throughout Queensland. A church organisation which provides roughly similar services, but, on the whole, better housing, and under whose auspices one-third of the residents needed nursing care of varying degrees, was able to carry on at a cost of \$19 per resident per week.

Mr. Sherrington: What is the comparison in population?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am pointing out the difference in efficiency of organisation. If a bureaucratic organisation, here or in any other part of the world, has control, it does not necessarily carry out the task efficiently.

Mr. Sherrington: I would like a comparison between the two organisations.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Most of these homes cater for between 70 and 100 people. It could not be said by anyone that hospital-type services can best be organised by any Government department. With all due respect to bureaucrats—we will have them with us for the rest of our days—it is very simple for any Government organisation to base its calculations on a 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. arrangement. But that just does not apply to hospital services, where proper arrangements have to be made for 24 hours of the day.

In this general context, I remember a repeated experience concerning the blood-bank organisation that I had when I was working in the United Kingdom. The only way I can describe it is to say that we were badgered by those who were charged with distributing the blood for operative procedures through the general organisation to such an extent that one could imagine that they were making a personal donation. It was as bad as this. They would say, "Surely you aren't going to want blood for "A", "B", and "C" cases tomorrow. It is difficult to organise." Bureaucracy gone mad again.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: We certainly lead the world in this regard.

Dr. CRAWFORD: We do very well in this State in providing blood for transfusions. It has been a combination of private industry, work well done by many of our pathologists, and a well-organised Commonwealth blood transfusion service. There has been a co-operative effort. There were initial difficulties, but we do very well now.

It is quite important to look at this health legislation in some detail and not assume that everything is under control and will continue to be under control, because any central bureaucratic control of matters connected with health and hospitals just does not work out efficiently.

As far as political connotations are concerned, I do not believe that any Labor organisation would introduce into Queensland, at this time, legislation similar to the 1936 legislation. Irrespective of whether it was thought to be good or bad at the time, it is now an anachronism and it must be drastically revised so that a few things which should happen shall happen.

As far as efficiency and patient attention are concerned, rather than looking after only the bureaucratic part of the organisation and not the patients, I mentioned in a previous speech some of the end results of patient care. It is incredibly naive of people to suggest that if an organisation is doing certain things, the patient will receive good care.

The running of individual base hospitals should be carried out by a lay board, together with trained administrators. It is vital that they be constantly advised by doctors and nurses with qualified autonomy. The suggestion could be made that part-time visiting staff should have one-third of the votes on any board; that the chairman should be elected by the board and should not automatically be the local stipendiary magistrate in a country town; that one-third of the members should be appointed by the Government; and that the remaining one-third should be elected by the local region so that local people interested in these matters would run for office. It should be laid down that the medical superintendent should have the right to speak and vote at meetings. A similar provision should be made for the matron.

Present arrangements, under which the stipendiary magistrate is chairman, do not work as well as they could in most respects. The chairman automatically becomes a Pooh-Bah. He is the "Lord High" everything. He is chairman of the board, manager of the hospital, and coroner, and, with all due respect to some very fine stipendiary magistrates who do their best in country hospitals, he frequently adopts the attitude, "Nobody can criticise my hospital." Under the circumstances, any reasonably adequate or constructive suggestions coming forward, particularly from the medical staff, are just not accepted.

The whole system needs drastic revision. We are at the cross-roads of decision. Irrespective of the money situation, we must look

at how it functions from the patient level. I have indicated in the past how many of these money shortages can be corrected through medical benefits funds. All political parties want reform based on efficient services. It is not advantageous to adopt the Whitlam-Hayden formula of nationalisation as, however much the package may be gilded with the tinsel of oratory or wrapped in colourful election promises, it does not work efficiently in practice.

(Time expired.)

Mrs. JORDAN (Ipswich West) (4.24 p.m.): Most of the proposals are necessary and reasonable. Indeed, they could prove to be an improvement on the present position. I was interested in hearing what the honourable member for Wavell had to say about hospital boards, how they are set up, and their personnel. I agree with most of what he said, particularly his remarks about the stipendiary magistrates.

Magistrates often find that, by virtue of their office, they are in positions that clash. In visiting country hospitals as a member of the Health Committee of the A.L.P., I found that many stipendiary magistrates, whilst being quite pleasant persons and capable magistrates, were young men who were not very experienced in hospital matters, although they were striving to gain experience. In my opinion, they were much too young and inexperienced to be able to carry out effectively the duties of chairman of a hospitals board. I think that what was suggested by the honourable member for Wavell concerning the chairman and members of a hospitals board would be an improvement on the present situation.

I am pleased to see that the title "Secretary" is to be altered to "Manager". This change is particularly necessary in the case of larger hospitals, which need managers with even wider duties than secretaries presently have. There is a great deal of administration to be done in hospitals, particularly in the larger ones in Brisbane and the major provincial cities. Too much of the medical superintendents' time is taken up with administrative matters in these hospitals. This leaves them with less time to do the medical and surgical work for which they have been specifically trained. When one thinks of a medical superintendent, one thinks of his medical rather than his administrative qualifications. At present, medical duties are taking second place to administrative duties.

I have heard quite a number of medical superintendents complain of being inundated with administrative work. Indeed, the medical superintendent of the Ipswich Base Hospital, Dr. O'Rourke, resigned because he was so tied up with administrative duties that he was not practising and keeping up to date with the skills that he had acquired in his training. I am sure that he will not mind my saying that. He felt that he was to a great extent wasting his time at the hospital doing work

that could have been carried out by a lay manager who could discuss matters with the medical superintendent. Dr. O'Rourke is a skilled doctor and surgeon. He has gone into private practice, and is now able to follow his main interest in life without being concerned with administrative affairs.

I think that the Minister and his department could give even more attention to this aspect of hospital administration. It might even be found necessary to appoint assistant managers in the larger hospitals. I think that what the Bill proposes is a step in the right direction.

I was pleased to see some mention of punishments, reinstatement of officers and payment of salaries following appeals. I think that this is very necessary at all levels in hospitals. Whilst I do not like penalties, there are some cases in which they are required to make offenders take a second look, as it were, at themselves. This year an employee at the Ipswich Base Hospital was sacked out of hand because the secretary of the hospital board happened to enter a hotel and there see this employee in what was thought to be his working hours. When he went to work the next day, he was dismissed immediately.

Mr. Marginson: That was this year.

Mrs. JORDAN: Yes. He did not think that he had done anything wrong, because he had the permission of his foreman to keep an appointment with his doctor that had been made for him. After he had seen the doctor he went into the hotel for a drink, and the secretary of the hospitals board happened to see him.

The man concerned did not have a chance to give his side of the story, and he came to me about it. Although I put his case before the hospitals board, it would not alter its decision and he was dismissed. He did not get his job back, and he is still unemployed. I do not think he got a fair go, because, having the afternoon off with the permission of his foreman, it was up to him where he went after he had been to see his doctor.

Mr. Davis: I think you would find that the board was so weak that it was afraid to countermand the decision of the secretary.

Mrs. JORDAN: I do not know whether that was so in Ipswich. I do not intend to go into detail as to what the board did or did not think. However, it did uphold the secretary's decision, and it did not call the man before it to hear his side of the story. When he came to me and I submitted the case to the board, it still did not alter its decision. I think that man was dealt with rather harshly. Perhaps the Act laid down that he had to be dismissed and the board kept too closely to the Act. In my opinion, more consideration should have been given to the man's story because this was an isolated incident.

However, that is all water under the bridge now. As I said earlier, the man concerned is still unemployed and, in this time of shortage of jobs, he is finding difficulty in obtaining another one. The mere fact that he was dismissed without being given a reference, of course, would not assist him to get a job elsewhere. If the amendment now proposed will overcome a position such as that, I welcome it, because it will mean fair play for members of the staff of hospitals.

Mr. Tooth: The honourable member will be interested to know that the case referred to is to be the subject of an appeal. It probably will be heard on the 15th of this month.

Mrs. JORDAN: I am interested to hear that, because I told him to write to the board again and to keep writing until he got some satisfaction. Apparently he took my advice. He has not been back to see me.

Mr. Tooth: If we can get this legislation through quickly, it will assist him.

Mrs. JORDAN: I am sure that the two or three minutes that I will be speaking will not prevent his appeal from being dealt with.

I wish now to say something about the shortage of doctors and nurses in the hospitals of this State. I was pleased to hear the Minister say that student doctors are coming from the university in sufficient numbers to ease the situation, and I was very interested to hear him say also that there is no longer a shortage of nurses, that more than are required are applying for positions in provincial hospitals.

Mr. Tooth: I did not say that this afternoon.

Mrs. JORDAN: I thought the Minister did.

Mr. Tooth: No. I said that only about doctors. I do not want it to be assumed that there is an over-supply of doctors, either. There is not. There is a shortage of doctors throughout Australia.

Mrs. JORDAN: I took it that the Minister's remarks applied also to nurses. I was very surprised to hear that, because it had not come to my knowledge or to the knowledge of the nursing profession.

Mr. Tooth: I did not say that.

Mrs. JORDAN: I am sorry that I misunderstood the Minister.

As far as waiting time for operations at the Ipswich Base Hospital is concerned, there are still long delays. People are waiting quite some time for what are called "cold" operations. In fact, one young lad who had an accident at work and had rather a big piece of glass embedded in his knee has already had three appointments and each time he has been told that he has to come back, that he cannot be fitted in. He may have gone into hospital this week—if he has not been deferred again!

The glass in his leg is causing him a great deal of pain. Apparently it is too deep to be removed by a private doctor in his surgery. It is necessary for the lad to go to hospital and have the glass removed under anaesthetic. That delay has gone on month after month. The lad's father, a policeman, was killed on duty, and his mother died only about 12 months ago. He is only 17 years of age, and is living with his 18-year-old sister. I feel very concerned about him. That sort of delay is caused mainly by the shortage of doctors.

Dr. Mulhern, the present superintendent of the Ipswich Hospital, made the statement in the Press recently that many more people now have to be dealt with in the out-patient department as a result of the increase in chemists fees from \$1 to \$2. People on lower incomes are now coming to the hospital for attention because of the increased fees. He says that at the moment the hospital is able to cope with the increased demands, but how long will that be the position? I should think that all public hospitals would be faced with the same problem. It is a matter that the Health Department will need to keep an eye on, to ensure that the problem does not develop to too great an extent.

There is a need for co-ordination between the Federal and State Governments, because it is not fair that by its acts the Federal Government can place additional burdens on Queensland's hospitals. It is already difficult enough to keep the free hospital system going. I realise that it is a very expensive system, but no-one wants to see its abandonment. If that is the experience of one medical superintendent, I am sure that other medical superintendents throughout Queensland, particularly in provincial cities, must be finding the same difficulty.

I wish to deal now with some aspects of the recent inquiry commissioned by the Queensland branch of the Royal Australian Nursing Federation. All honourable members would have received a copy of the report and I am sure that many of them would be very interested in some of its contents, particularly the reference to the many extraneous duties which nurses are required to perform. It is utterly ridiculous to suggest that some of them are the duties of nurses. Their duties need to be officially looked into and brought up to date, as should their curricula. What was good enough years ago is not good enough today. With so many new drugs on the market and the very skilled operations that are performed today, nurses need a broader nursing education, with an opportunity to improve their skills, to ensure that patients get expert attention. Very often nurses are required to make a medical diagnosis because no doctor is available. Frequently when a patient comes in they have to make a decision as to what is wrong with him. They have to do dispensing, use X-ray equipment and act as medical technicians.

I do not object to those things so much, because they are connected with the nursing profession, but I do not agree with their acting as telephonists, clerks, messengers, cooks, domestic and laundry workers or wardsmen. They have to attend to hospital switchboards, file records, complete all sorts of medical forms, search for records (which is very time wasting), prepare patients' charts, act as messengers, prepare meals, and quite often prepare and serve morning and afternoon teas. In certain hospitals they have to defrost refrigerators and do cleaning and scrubbing, cleaning windows and so on, as well as attend to patients' beds, lockers and cupboards. They do other tasks as well, but I will not enumerate any others.

I do not think these tasks should have to be done by a nurse. Many young girls in our community are looking for jobs. Particularly this year when we read headlines in the Press that many school-leavers will not be able to find jobs, much of this work could be done by people who are not trained as nurses.

The introduction of nursing aides probably did help somewhat in this regard, but I feel that nursing aides themselves are beginning to be elevated in status. They have to pass examinations and do quite a bit of training. They are coming more into line with nurses and should not have to undertake many of these menial tasks. When nursing aides were first introduced, they brought meals in, prepared morning and afternoon teas, cleaned cupboards and did quite a few other duties, but now the position seems to be changing and they are entering more into the technical field of actual nursing. I think that the lesser tasks that do not require a great deal of dexterity could provide employment for school-leavers.

I spoke in this Chamber on one occasion about a person who had been to an orthopaedic specialist wanting X-ray photographs which could not be found. At that time I did not say who the person was, but I will say now that I was the person concerned and I had to kick up quite a row before those concerned even looked for the records. They implied that they were too busy and, until I pulled a bit of rank on them, I do not think they even bothered to look. They then found them very quickly indeed and I was able to take them back to the orthopaedic specialist. These things should not happen and I think it is in this area that young people could be employed. They would be paid lower wages than nurses, and their employment could well cut down on the expenditure of hospitals as well as alleviate the present shortage of nurses.

I think many of these aspects could be looked at, to lighten the load on the nursing profession. I applaud nurses for undertaking an inquiry as they did and for at last standing up and saying, "These are not nurses' duties." Of course, I do not apply this to any emergent situation, because

in an emergency it must be a case of all in, and do what can be done as quickly as it can be done. I should hate to think that any nurse would stand back in an emergency and say, "I cannot do that; it is not nursing duty."

I think nurses are so idealistic and dedicated that they would not take such an attitude, but would realise when an emergency arose and be willing to do all manner of things. But, as a general rule, I feel that the work-load of nurses must be lightened and their education remodelled along modern lines so that they can cope with modern methods of treatment, recognise the side effects of many new drugs which are not always immediately evident to the doctor in the short time he sees the patient, and so on.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BOUSEN (Toowoomba West) (4.45 p.m.): Although I believe that this legislation will have some repercussions upon the staff and members of hospital boards, it will be to the advantage of all those concerned with the administration of hospitals.

This afternoon I desire to refer to special hospitals. Of course, I realise that, unlike base hospitals and general hospitals, they are not administered by boards. However, they are controlled by secretaries, medical superintendents and various other officers who are similar to those who administer base or general hospitals.

I claim that certain mismanagement is occurring in the administration of the Baillie Henderson Hospital.

Mr. Tooth: The honourable member should realise that special hospitals do not come under this Act in any way.

Mr. BOUSEN: I appreciate that they do not, Mr. Houghton, but I am relying on you to determine whether I am to be allowed to continue in this vein.

As I have said, I wish to refer to what I believe is mismanagement in the administration of the Baillie Henderson Hospital.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! Special hospitals do not come within the provisions of this Act.

Mr. BOUSEN: I do not see how anyone can differentiate between special hospitals and general hospitals. Whether it be a special hospital or a general hospital it is a State instrumentality, and that is why I wish to refer to the administration of the Baillie Henderson Hospital, particularly to the selling of the dairy herd.

On 30 July 1970 I asked the Minister how much it had cost to rebuild the dairy at the Baillie Henderson Hospital, and his answer was that it was \$19,286.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable member that this matter does not come within the provisions of the Act under discussion. I ask him to confine his remarks to the Hospitals Act.

Mr. BOUSEN: I believe that special hospitals should be covered under this Act.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! It does not matter what the honourable member believes. Special hospitals are not covered by this Act.

Mr. BOUSEN: In that case, I move an amendment to the motion.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: What is the amendment?

Mr. BOUSEN: I move—

“Add the words—
'and for other purposes.'”

Question—That the words proposed to be added (Mr. Bousen's amendment) be so added—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 24

Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Casey
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Hanson
Houston
Inch
Jones, R.
Jordan
Marginson

Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Thackeray
Wallis-Smith
Wood, B.
Wood, P.

Tellers:
Harris
Wright

NOES, 39

Ahern
Armstrong
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Delamothe
Diplock
Fletcher
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hewitt, W. D.
Hodges
Hooper
Hughes
Kaus
Knox
Lane

Lee
Lickiss
Lonergan
Low
McKechnie
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Murray
Newbery
Porter
Rae
Row
Sullivan
Tomkins
Tooth
Wharton

Tellers:
Hinze
Miller

Aiken

PAIR:

Hungerford

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. BOUSEN: Before the division I was speaking on matters concerning the Baillie Henderson Hospital. As those matters are not covered by the Bill, I suggest that it is the Minister's responsibility to bring them under the provisions of the Hospitals Act. That hospital is a Government instrumentality and should be covered by this Act so that these matters can be debated whenever a Bill to amend it is introduced. With that in mind, I shall proceed along the lines that there has been some maladministration at this hospital.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! The honourable member will either come back to the terms of the motion or resume his seat.

Mr. BOUSEN: I still want to talk about the administration of this hospital.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will speak to the question before the Chair or resume his seat.

Mr. BOUSEN: This matter is of importance to the constituents of both Toowoomba West and Toowoomba East, who are concerned with the administration of the Baillie Henderson Hospital.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr. MARGINSON (Ipswich East) (4.59 p.m.): Prior to the division only two Government members were in the Chamber, so that the ringing of the bells has ensured a larger audience on the Government side of the Chamber. Therefore, the moving of the amendment has done some good. It brought Government members out of their hollows and various hide-outs to join in this very important debate on the public hospitals in Queensland.

Since I became a member of Parliament I have had the opportunity, together with other Opposition members, of visiting many hospitals throughout Queensland from as far west as Quilpie, Cunnamulla and Charleville to as far north as Thursday Island. I have also visited Cairns. However, I want to dwell for a few moments on my visit to Caloundra, where I found an excellent hospital. It was well constructed, and provided plenty of accommodation for the people of that area.

Mr. Hughes: Does the Bill deal with the Caloundra Hospital?

Mr. MARGINSON: The honourable member would not know.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask honourable members on my right to refrain from persistent interjections, and to obey the Standing Rules.

Mr. HUGHES: I rise to a point of order. Is the honourable member for Ipswich East in order in debating the question of the Caloundra Hospital? Does the Bill deal with the Caloundra Hospital?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MARGINSON: It is quite obvious that the honourable member for Kurilpa has not been here for some time.

I saw an excellently constructed hospital at Caloundra, but I was astounded to find that there was not a medical officer in charge of it, either full time or part time. I heard the honourable member for Wavell mention this matter this afternoon. I shall tell the Committee the facts of this case. There was a medical officer appointed for

the Caloundra Hospital, and I make bold to say that he was approached before the hospital was completed. He undertook to accept the appointment, and, from what I can gather, he knew the conditions of appointment. Then, because he could not get his own way concerning the services of locums at week-ends, he decided that he would have no more to do with the Caloundra Hospital.

We found at Caloundra a hospital that was not constructed for the use of the people in that area. Doctors were quite happy to treat patients in the private wards. The hospital was therefore for the benefit of doctors who treated patients in private wards. Honourable members know as well as I do what that means; it means that doctors were obtaining financial gain from the hospital. I make that point quite clear.

I was interested to hear the Minister say that many of these amendments are of an administrative nature. In fact, I think they are all of an administrative nature.

Mr. Lee: They tell me you drove Mike O'Rourke out of Ipswich.

Mr. MARGINSON: There is one thing that I think I will achieve, and that is driving the honourable member for Yeronga out of this Parliament.

I think honourable members know that, under the Act, hospital boards in this State are constituted by not fewer than five members and not more than nine, of whom one shall be the chairman and one shall be a representative of the local authority concerned. Not many years ago the Health Department, under the administration of the late Dr. Noble, had the idea of doing the very thing that is being done this afternoon, namely, appointing hospital secretaries as managers. That was freely mooted at that time. A further step proposed was the abolition of hospital boards. I am not suggesting that they should be abolished; I am merely saying that their abolition was freely rumoured at that time. As a result of representations by, I understand, the Australian Medical Association, that proposal was not proceeded with.

Mr. Low: I don't think it was ever contemplated.

Mr. MARGINSON: That is the information I received from the rank-and-file, whose information is usually pretty good.

Let me proceed a little further with this matter. It was found that there was no power to abolish boards. Personally, this had never occurred to me before, and I thought I knew the Act pretty well from my experience as a board secretary. I think it is necessary to have the power to abolish boards in certain circumstances. Powers exist to abolish local authorities, and many other types of board. I think the proposal to give power to abolish hospital boards is a good one, to be used when the occasion warrants, and indeed demands, it.

I fully believe that the efficiency of a hospital depends greatly on the harmony and co-operation among the medical superintendent, the matron and the secretary of the hospital board. If harmony among those three officers can be achieved, one has gone a long way towards succeeding in administering a hospital properly. Unfortunately, I know of instances—I am sure other honourable members know of similar ones—in which harmony does not exist, and I believe that under those circumstances hospital boards are starting behind scratch in endeavouring to administer hospitals in a proper manner. I am convinced that those three people must have the ability to work in harmony if a board is to maintain a good and efficient service.

I am very happy to see that the board secretary is to be given the title "manager", which in fact he has been for many years. The Act now refers to "Manager-Secretary", but other than in one or two instances—I know of one instance in a provincial city where the secretary took the full title—the secretary-manager has commonly been referred to only as the secretary. In my opinion, the proposed change is a good one, because if one looks at the work and responsibility of the secretary of a hospital board of any size, it becomes obvious that he is in fact the manager. I do not suggest, of course, that the secretary-manager should be able to override the decisions of the medical superintendent, for example. If any manager attempted to do that, he would soon upset the harmony that should exist in a hospital board. I commend the Minister for introducing that amendment.

Another amendment that is to be made relates to the signing of cheques. I take it that the suggestion is that secretaries will not have to go away from their place of employment to obtain signatures on cheques. I am happy about that, and I hope that somebody in authority on the spot will be given the opportunity of carrying out that small function. It has become a very laborious task to chase around and obtain signatures to cheques.

Honourable members may not be aware that the Act provides that there must be budgets for all funds. Naturally, there is a budget for the general fund, but there are also budgets for loan funds, patients' trust accounts, and a number of other things, small though they may be. I commend the Minister's proposal in that respect; I think it is a good one. I say this without reading the Bill, and, of course, I reserve the right to make further comment at the second-reading stage. Funds such as those to which I have referred are not necessary for budgetary purposes, and I approve of the proposal to have one statement submitted, that is, for the general fund.

The Minister referred, I think, to the approval of hospital boards to expend loan moneys. I found difficulty in making a note

of everything the Minister said because he spoke so rapidly, but I thought he said that the approval to expend loan moneys must remain with the department. That has been the custom. Perhaps somebody has been spending loan moneys without the approval of the department, and it may be that the Act did not provide that approval had to be obtained from the department. My knowledge of the Act indicated to me that no hospital board could expend loan funds or moneys in its loan account without the prior approval of the department for such a purpose. If that is not in the Bill, it would be a good provision to have.

The conditions applying to tenders and quotations are on much the same basis as those applying to local government. Departmental officers can accept prices for a project costing under \$200. For jobs between \$200 and \$500 there must be quotations but not public tendering. Of course, over the \$500 mark—as I take it from the Minister's introductory speech—public tenders must be called. This is in keeping with local authority work. Of course, it should be closely watched in the future because if inflation continues the figures will need to be increased. It is some time since they have been altered either way.

New sections in the Act will deal with offences, punishment, and appeals. I should think that, with few exceptions, all those provisions have, till now, been contained in the regulations. On one or two occasions I have had the experience of having to operate under them. There are many pitfalls. I am sorry the honourable member for South Brisbane is not in the Chamber at the moment. I understand that he was called to the telephone. Actually he was my opponent in one instance, and I might say that he succeeded. It is a good idea to write those provisions into the Bill. What I did like about the Minister's proposal was the fact that he is not including the provision that the employee will forfeit his annual leave or part of his annual leave. Am I correct in that assumption?

Mr. Tooth: That is right.

Mr. MARGINSON: It is a very good move to delete that provision, and to clean up other factors associated with offences, punishment and appeals that were not quite in keeping with what was desired.

Generally, at this stage, I rather like the proposal before us. As the shadow Minister for Health (Mr. Melloy) said, we reserve the right to make further comments on the Bill after we have had a good look at it when it is printed later in the day.

I conclude by saying that it is about time we took the precept charges out of the Act. Precepts on local government went out many years ago.

I look forward to seeing the Bill.

Mr. HARRIS (Wynnum) (5.13 p.m.): It is to be regretted that the Minister was not prepared to listen to the honourable member for Toowoomba West when he wanted to ask about hospitalisation in a special hospital. With the arrogant attitude he displayed when he applied the gag two or three days ago, the Minister was again prepared to jump up and deny honourable members the opportunity to explain just how badly organised are many of the hospitals throughout Queensland which come under his jurisdiction and supervision.

Although I am not going to speak about special hospitals, there are one or two matters the Minister should be fully aware of, because I have spoken about them in relation to special hospitals. What amazes me most when considering matters of health is the fact that the Minister for Labour and Tourism, who has in his electorate one of the biggest hospitals in Queensland, has never in my time in this Chamber referred to the conditions under which the staff at that hospital are working and the conditions under which the patients are living.

Mr. TOOTH: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is obviously discussing the special hospital at Wolston Park. I just draw your attention to that fact, Mr. Houghton, because it is possible that you would not be aware that he is talking about a special hospital.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! The honourable member for Wynnum.

Mr. HARRIS: I am fully aware of it and I appreciate your tolerance, Mr. Houghton. I will not refer to Wolston Park or any special hospital, but I wonder if the Minister is aware of just what is happening in some hospitals throughout Queensland. In saying this I am referring particularly to bad administration and the behaviour of patients in leaving hospitals and going to hotels in the immediate vicinity. If the Minister says he is not aware of it, he is again hoodwinking the people, because I personally have brought up this matter, as well as the sexual activity going on between inmates of various hospitals in Queensland. All these matters have to do with the administration of hospitals, and when some female patients become pregnant—

Mr. TOOTH: Once again I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is discussing problems that have arisen in special hospitals.

Mr. Houston: Let the Chair decide whether the matter is relevant.

Mr. TOOTH: It is possible, Mr. Houghton, that you would not be aware of the implications, as I am because I know the background of what the honourable gentleman is talking about. The honourable member is discussing matters dealing with special hospitals.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Houghton): Order! I ask the honourable member for Wynnum to confine his remarks to the matter before the Committee.

Mr. HARRIS: I was not mentioning this for any particular reason other than to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that he is not administering the hospitals as he should for the benefit of the people.

I want now to get back once again to the matter of a hospital for Wynnum, and to point out the maladministration connected with this matter, not so much with the question of the construction of a hospital but with the acquiring of the necessary land for one. I have asked the Minister on many occasions over the years why this hospital has not been built and on some of these he has informed me that the reason is that the land is too small. Let me point out that the Government has resumed land adjacent to the proposed site. As a result of my representations, the Minister's attention was drawn to land that was available for purchase for this purpose and, back in 1969, the owners submitted to the Government a price of \$2,000.

Mr. Lee: How much an acre?

Mr. HARRIS: \$2,000 an acre. It was offered to the Government at that price, but the Government made no effort whatever to take it over until 2½ years later. The owners had been prepared to hold onto the land instead of selling it to land developers from whom, in their opinion and in mine, they could have obtained a much better price. In January this year the Government approached the owners and offered \$4,000 an acre for the land required for a hospital. In August of this year, Mr. Rice, received from the department a notice of intention to resume. No negotiations had taken place, so it cannot very well be said that negotiations between the owners and the Government had broken down. The notice of intention read—

"Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of the Acquisition of Land Act 1967-1969, it is intended to take the land described in the Schedule hereto for Hospital Purposes.

"You may set forth in writing any objections, not having reference to compensation . . ."

These people should be entitled to compensation by way of rate rebates. The Government has decided to resume the land for hospital purposes. The landowners—in fact, all of my 56,000 constituents—have been promised a hospital so many times that I have lost count, and I have no doubt that within the next few months, prior to the election, once again they will be promised a public hospital.

In the meantime the Minister has decided that a geriatric hospital with a capacity of 250 patients will be provided. Although the

Wynnum district already contains eight convalescent homes able to accommodate 500 inmates, the area can do with such a hospital, so the Minister is to be commended. However, why not embody the proposed geriatric hospital in one large hospital complex? After all, early this year the Minister was reported as saying that he expected \$100,000,000 to be spent on the provision of hospitals in Queensland. I have no doubt that the Minister is doing the best he can, but I urge him to enlarge the proposed geriatric hospital to include all types of patients. He has said that it will cost in the vicinity of \$1,000,000, but that will not satisfy the people of Wynnum. I hope that the Minister will not say again that the Wynnum hospital will come after the one proposed for Mt. Gravatt.

Mr. Sherrington: That hasn't been started yet, either.

Mr. HARRIS: That is quite so, and I feel sure that it will not be commenced for some considerable time.

The Minister must be fully aware of the problems confronting the people of Wynnum—not only those who require hospitalisation, but also those who have relatives or friends in hospital in Brisbane. Just to digress for a moment, I remind the Committee that the transport problems that arise are solely the result of this Government's failure to electrify the metropolitan railway system. Such problems will continue until the people of Wynnum are provided with a local hospital.

The Minister has created dissension among the people of Wynnum because on so many occasions in an underhand manner he has hoodwinked them into believing that a hospital will be built.

Mr. TOOTH: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to the use of the expression "underhand manner". I ask the honourable member to withdraw that most offensive remark.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! The honourable member for Wynnum has heard the point of order taken by the Minister, and I ask him to withdraw the remark.

Mr. HARRIS: I withdraw it without any qualification. But the fact remains that somebody has been hoodwinked, and the only speaker for the Government on the matter of hospitals is the Minister. The people of Wynnum have been misled—perhaps the Minister prefers that word to "hoodwinked".

Mr. Lee: I think the Chair was misled.

Mr. HARRIS: That is a matter of opinion.

I wish to refer now to another shocking state of affairs that has arisen under the administration of a certain Brisbane hospital. Is the Minister aware that in one hospital in the metropolitan area child patients are served two-course meals on one plate?

Mr. Tooth: It is news to me.

Mr. HARRIS: I am telling the Minister now.

My informant will not let me state where this is happening. It is a special hospital, a hospital catering for the handicapped or the blind. I repeat that a hospital in the metropolitan area is serving child patients a two-course evening meal on the one plate. They get stew on one side and boiled rice on the other.

In supporting the remarks of the chairman of the A.L.P. hospital committee, I point out that members of that committee spent considerable time in visiting all Queensland public hospitals with a view to pointing out to the Minister inadequacies at those institutions. But, whenever one of our hospital committee puts his finger on a trouble spot, the Minister becomes abusive and arrogant.

A Government Member: He gets on the "blower".

Mr. HARRIS: He does not necessarily do that. He tries to humiliate or ridicule the Opposition member who raises the complaint.

On many occasions the Minister has given me considerable assistance on hospital matters, but I regret to say that lately his administration of the Hospital Act, in my view, and that of my constituents, has been shocking. The Queensland hospital system is in the doldrums only as a result of his poor administration.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (5.27 p.m.): In speaking on this measure dealing with the rearrangement of certain hospital administrative procedures, I point out that I do not believe Opposition members would seriously quarrel with some of the propositions advanced by the Minister.

Mr. Lee: You would quarrel with anything.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the honourable for Yeronga keeps interjecting in that way, I may start something. I am always willing to meet such charges. I could never be accused of running away from anything.

I repeat that we have no serious quarrel with many of the propositions advanced by the Minister, but I point out that the amendments providing for a change in certain administrative arrangements clearly show the need for a continuing survey of various aspects of hospital matters within the State.

I am particularly pleased to support the elimination of any provision that denies an employee his right to recreation leave because he commits a misdemeanour. The by-laws governing railway employees contain a similar provision. Railway employees who have committed a misdemeanour which in no way affected their service within the department have been dismissed. I should hope that every such provision will be eliminated from the by-laws and Acts of all Government departments.

At one time I had in my possession a letter from a Brisbane employer organisation which stated, in effect, that the organisation would not employ anybody who had been convicted of theft. The company stipulated that no person convicted of theft, whether or not he was an employee at the time, was welcome in the organisation. To apply that rule to a person who has paid his debt to society smacks of the imposition of a double penalty. I am pleased that the Bill will remove the imposition of this double penalty for a misdemeanour.

One of the reasons I rose to speak today was the reference by the honourable member for Nudgee to the call made by the A.M.A. in 1969 for an inquiry into our hospital system. The Press report at that time stated—

"Dr. Arthur Crawford, Liberal M.L.A. for Wavell, started the furore about the health system with his recent claim in Parliament that virtually every doctor in Queensland was displeased with the general standard of inefficiency at his hospital."

The article reported fully the call by the A.M.A. for an investigation into Queensland's hospital system. I do not think that anybody, in the wildest stretch of the imagination, would claim that Queensland's hospital system is perfect.

Mr. Tooth: That is not claimed anywhere in the world.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am pleased to hear the Minister's admission. It would be absolutely foolhardy for anyone connected with a complex hospital system, which ranges over a State the size of Queensland, where many hospitals are remote from well-established areas of civilisation, to claim that he was entirely satisfied with the system and that it was functioning perfectly.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: The same argument applies to education.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That could be so, although it is not necessarily so. The Department of Education is administered from one centre whereas a plethora of hospital boards throughout Queensland control the hospital system. I do not denigrate the hospital system; in fact, I applaud it. I believe in local participation in the administration of our hospitals. However, there is room for believing that our hospital system is not perfect. Of recent times, I have seen evidence of what I believe to be not serious problems, but serious deficiencies in some metropolitan hospitals.

Without denigrating the work done at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, I feel I should relate one incident. It may seem small and unimportant, but it affects many people. Some months ago, on two occasions, I took to the Princess Alexandra Hospital an 85-year-old man suffering from glaucoma. He started off visiting the hospital once a month. Then, because his treatment was

proving to be fairly successful, he had to attend, firstly, once every three months and, lately, once every six months.

I took him to that hospital for a medical check-up, particularly of his condition of glaucoma. After his consultation, he was advised by the doctor to make an appointment three or six months hence. I took him along the corridor to the section where the appointments are made. There are about six windows available for this purpose, but only one person was making appointments. As a consequence, this aged person was obliged to join a queue. By my timing, it was 20 minutes from the time he took his place in the queue till he obtained an appointment for a further visit.

Mr. Tooth: I suggest to the honourable member that when he has an aged person in his care he notify someone in advance, and he would probably be given some sort of priority. Twenty minutes is not a long wait, anyway.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: But should this be necessary?

Mr. Tooth: You will wait longer than that in a general practitioner's surgery.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: But the people waiting at the hospital, if they are not aged, are ill.

Mr. Tooth: A person can go to see a private practitioner and wait for an hour and a half.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: But he waits in the comfort of a waiting room, and has a chair to sit on. Patients at the hospital line up in a queue. I suggest to the Minister that rather than adopt, as he repeatedly does, a defensive attitude, he go to the hospital and look at what is taking place there.

Mr. Tooth: I am merely trying to help you.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If there is any spark of humanity in the Minister, which is something I have seriously doubted for a long time, he would go to the hospital and see what is happening there. I made it plain at the beginning of my speech that I was not denigrating the work done at the Princess Alexandra Hospital; I was merely drawing the attention of the Minister and the Committee to faults that I think should be rectified. Instead of going on the defensive, why does he not go to the hospitals and see these things for himself? I do not see why an aged or ill person should have to wait 20 minutes to have an appointment date written in a book, when the shutters of five or six windows are closed and only one person is making appointments.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I beg your pardon?

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: I am telling the Minister that he should hold back his positive suggestions because they fall on barren ground.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I know, from the tone of the Minister's answers to me, that he is not even aware of this problem.

There was a similar problem at the dispensary, where people waited for lengthy periods to obtain medicine, most of which would be standard prescriptions and already bottled. Patients submit their book, and then sit waiting for about an hour and a half. I observed these books being collected by the person who was dispensing the medicine rather than by assistants, such as those whom doctors have in their surgeries to attend to clerical duties. I know that in recent times an improvement has been effected at the hospital to the extent that immediately a book is lodged on the counter, the attendant calls the owner's name and, if no answer is received, that book is put aside before the dispensing is carried out. This has led to some speeding up, and it has meant that those who submit their books and wait receive priority.

In many cases prescriptions were being dispensed for people who had put in their books and gone away, to return later. I believe that the employment of a couple of assistants in the dispensary merely to take and sort out prescription books would be a positive approach to the problem, and would reduce the waiting time.

Mr. Davis: They do not have a pharmacist at the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

Mr. R. E. Moore: He can't get himself out of trouble without prompting.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not recall any occasion on which the honourable member for Brisbane has been in trouble. The only time he was distressed was when he had to listen to a speech by the honourable member for Windsor. The honourable member for Brisbane tells me that there is no pharmacist at the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

I have mentioned two matters that some people might consider are relatively unimportant, particularly in a vast hospitals system that has suffered over the years from a shortage of doctors and trained nurses, lack of equipment, and so on, in various fields. However, I do think the Minister should have accepted the call of the A.M.A. for an investigation into the hospital system in this State.

Mr. Tooth: It will probably surprise the honourable member to know that that was done. I will tell him about it later.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I hope that some day we will drag the answer out of the Minister.

Mr. Tooth: All sorts of things have happened.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is why I am complaining. The Minister sits there like the stuffed owl in the barber's shop and says nothing.

Mr. Tooth: If the honourable member waits, I will say something.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It is only when a bright young man comes in and prompts the Minister that he gets off his perch and does something.

As I said, when a system has been operating in this State for years and has been recognised by all political parties, a system that has grown and spread its operations into the far-flung areas of the State and that, because of certain circumstances, has had its problems, what is wrong with holding an inquiry? Nobody wants a witch-hunt; nobody in his right mind wants an inquiry merely to find a few scapegoats—someone who can be railroaded because there have been deficiencies.

What is wrong with holding a constructive inquiry into all the elements of the hospital system—whether we seriously lack finance; whether insufficient personnel qualified in various fields of medicine are coming forward from the university and other institutions to solve the problems that are encountered; whether a new approach is needed to some administrative arrangements in the hospitals; whether it is necessary to supplement nursing staff with nursing-aides, and so on?

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: You have been reading Dr. Crawford's speeches.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not read the speeches of the honourable member for Wavell, nor would I ask him to read mine. I am making intelligent observations, as I have done in this Chamber for the last 12 years.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: You are plagiarising his 1969 speech.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the honourable member for Chatsworth says that I have been reading the speeches of the honourable member for Wavell, he pays me the compliment of implying that I have a very retentive memory, because I have not spoken from one note this afternoon. I do not have to read briefs prepared for me by someone else. What I say on matters such as this comes, firstly, from my experience in them and, secondly, from the heart, and I hope that I shall always speak in that way. I never speak from the top of my head.

Mr. Lane: If it was a finance problem, you wouldn't be in the race.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The honourable member for Merthyr might have been all right in the interrogation room, when he was standing over a poor thug and thumping hell out of him because he could not answer back; but in a place such as this, where people can answer back, he is out of his depth.

Mr. LANE: I rise to a point of order. I find the remarks of the honourable member relative to the interrogation of suspects offensive, and I ask that he withdraw them without reservation.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! The honourable member for Salisbury has heard the honourable member for Merthyr claim that his remarks are offensive and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If he is as thin skinned as that, I will withdraw them. In any case, I find the honourable member for Merthyr offensive.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There will be no debate on a point of order.

Mr. LANE: I rise to a further point of order. I asked that the honourable member withdraw the remarks without reservation, and it did not seem to me that he did so.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair is of the opinion that they were unequivocally and unconditionally withdrawn.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: To get back to what I was saying, and to continue to make what I think was a very constructive contribution to the debate before I was so rudely interrupted, what is wrong with a constructive inquiry?

Mr. Tooth: Nothing at all, and we have had one.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have yet to see any evidence that there has been such an inquiry. Over the years the arbitration laws have been the subject of commissions of inquiry, although, unfortunately, that has happened all too infrequently. From memory, I think the last one was the Piddington Commission in 1917 or 1918. Those commissions of inquiry were set up to bring out certain undesirable features and weaknesses of the arbitration system.

The Minister agreed when I said that nobody in his right mind would say that we have a perfect hospital system. What is wrong with a properly constituted board of inquiry examining the set-up of the hospital system and its problems, and making good and valid recommendations in those areas in which it is lacking? Surely there is nothing wrong with that.

To me it was somewhat amazing that the reaction of everybody on the Government side who was interviewed when the A.M.A. called for an inquiry, including the Minister for Health and the Premier, was to take the evasive and defensive attitude of saying in effect, "There will be no inquiry." Indeed, the Premier's reply on the matter was that what was called for would mean the expenditure of extra dollars.

(Time expired.)

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (5.47 p.m.), in reply: In replying to the debate, I want to cover just a few of the matters that have been dealt with. I thank honourable members for the general acceptance of the Bill as outlined in my introductory speech. I think it is recognised that this is an attempt to streamline the workings of the Hospitals Act, and the details will be placed before the honourable members at the second-reading stage.

It is important that one or two matters that have been raised should be dealt with now. I mention the final point raised by the honourable member for Salisbury, namely, the question of an inquiry as sought by certain members of the Australian Medical Association. It may be news to the honourable member for Salisbury and certain other honourable members that before the end of last year a committee was appointed by the Council of the Australian Medical Association in Queensland, and a group of officers of the Department of Health was also appointed by me. A lengthy series of meetings was held extending well into this current year. If the highly qualified committee appointed by the Council of the A.M.A. was not competent to place before the general meeting that was held the various points that were worthy of consideration, I doubt if anybody could. What the honourable member for Salisbury wants is an opportunity for him and his "stirrers", and people like him, to create a disturbance in an open inquiry.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I am not thin-skinned, and I do not care what the Minister says about me personally.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! Will the honourable member please state his point of order?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes, I will. I do not care personally what the Minister says about me.

Mr. Lane: Who is thin-skinned now?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Marginson: He has a hide like a rhinoceros.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order or I will deal with any honourable member who gets out of line. The honourable member for Salisbury is stating a point of order and the Chair wishes to hear it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Lickiss. I resent that the Minister should launch an attack against members of the Opposition.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the honourable member please state his point of order.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am. I resent the Minister's launching an attack on Opposition members and referring to them as "stirrers", when not 10 minutes ago I had sought an inquiry that would be constructive. His remark is offensive to me, and I ask that it be withdrawn.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair rules that there is no point of order.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I take a further point of order. I regard the Minister's statement as a reflection on members of the Opposition, and I ask that it be withdrawn. He talked about them being "stirrers", which is a reflection on them.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair still rules that there is no point of order. If the honourable member wishes to disagree with the ruling, he has his recourse.

Mr. F. P. Moore interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I believe that the honourable member for Mourilyan has just reflected on the Chair. I ask him to withdraw his statement.

Mr. F. P. Moore: I was talking about the Minister.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. You felt that the honourable member for Mourilyan reflected on the Chair, Mr. Lickiss, yet you allowed the Minister to reflect on Opposition members and would not accept a point of order on it.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has already given a ruling on this matter.

Mr. TOOTH: I agree with the honourable member for Salisbury that no hospital system, either in Queensland or in any other part of the Commonwealth—indeed, of the Western world—could be claimed to be perfect, and anybody who made such a claim would be very foolish indeed. The suggestion that these amendments show the need for a continuing review is valid. Indeed, the hospital services in Queensland are under continual review, not merely from year to year but from month to month and week to week. This is the function of the administrative section of the Health Department, and it is done most efficiently and effectively. The result is that reforms are taking place daily as various problems arise with the passage of time and changing circumstances.

I have not the time to discuss all the points raised, but I want to refer to the comment of the honourable member for Wavell on the weekly average cost of "Eventide" homes and that of a church home. I am not certain which church home he was referring to, but he contrasted "Eventide", where the cost is \$36 a week per patient, and a church home, where he said the cost is \$19 a week. I would be very interested to know what home

he was referring to, but in a letter dated 23 April 1970, written by the Reverend George Nash to the Premier, this statement was made—

“Figures obtained from the nine hospitals run by the Methodist Church indicate that the weekly average cost is \$44 per patient per week.”

The costs of “Eventide” homes for the last financial year were: Sandgate, \$35.50, Charters Towers \$32.41 and Rockhampton \$30.66.

Another point with which I should like to deal is the one raised by the honourable member for Nudgee about the Bundaberg hospital. The board was asked to consider certain suggestions of the department covering lectures in the hospital's time, the new curriculum and the three-year training programme. The board was not advised that approval was not given for additional staff. The board may approach the department again if the suggestions made by the departmental officers are not considered satisfactory. That is the way in which all these difficulties are approached.

When boards put up certain proposals and make certain suggestions, they are examined by departmental experts who have had wide experience as hospital administrators or as matrons or doctors. Alternative suggestions are then made and there is something in the nature of a discussion—very often by correspondence and sometimes by visits from departmental officers to the board concerned—and ultimately something is worked out. This makes for efficiency, and that is a very important point in the conduct of our affairs.

I have time to deal with the comments made about the use of magistrates as chairmen of boards and about the structure of boards generally. From time to time I receive representations to amend the Act, particularly with regard to the appointment of practitioners and trained nurses to hospital boards. Honourable members are aware that there is no need to amend the Act for this purpose, as the necessary authority already exists for the appointment of such professional people to hospital boards in section 13 of the Act. In fact, throughout Queensland many professional people—doctors, barristers and former nursing sisters—are already on hospital boards, and there is no intention whatever of changing our policy.

However, it is not considered prudent to have employees of boards appointed as members of boards. I should think that the reasons would be obvious to most honourable members. Whilst employees of the board may not be appointed to it, nevertheless, in the case of the medical superintendent and the supervisor of nursing, they should be present at board meetings—this is the advice we give to the boards—for discussion and consultation. That is what we hope is going on.

It is appropriate also to comment on the merits of the present policy of appointing chairmen to hospital boards. Honourable members will be aware that section 13 prescribes that the chairman of the board shall be appointed by the Governor in Council, and equally aware that, with few exceptions, since 1945 the chairman of a hospital board has been either the stipendiary magistrate or the clerk of the court in the town in which the board has its office. My colleagues in other States—the other Ministers for Health—look with envy upon our system because of the reasonably tight control that it provides over hospital developments and expenditure.

Mr. F. P. Moore: Who started it?

Mr. TOOTH: It was started by a former Labor Government, and it is a very good system. We have continued it, as we have with anything we inherited that proved to be good. Surely we are not going to be blamed for that.

Our experience has shown that this policy is a very wise one. The combination of a Public Service chairman and a Public Service secretary has been a major contributing factor, coupled with the integrity of the hospital boards themselves, in maintaining the high standard of hospital services throughout the State. The stipendiary magistrate carries with him in his appointment as hospital board chairman the legal capacity to handle any legal or industrial matter that may come before the board. The board chairman who as a clerk of the court moved on transfer and promotion through various towns to larger towns and cities brings with him a wealth of experience. The experience he gains by practical involvement with the hospitals of the various towns through which he passes is of tremendous value. Over a period of years such a person comes face to face with practically all the complex problems that arise in hospitals, so it can be said that the stipendiary magistrate, on his appointment as chairman of a hospital board, brings status to that position.

All of these points can be made in answer to the complaints about the appointment of magistrates as hospital board chairmen.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

Motion (Mr. Tooth) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a first time.

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

DENTAL BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Lickiss, Mt. Coot-tha, in the chair)

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (7.16 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to consolidate and amend the law relating to dentists and to control the practice of dentistry and to amend the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration) Act 1966-1969 in certain particulars.”

The Dental Acts, 1902 to 1961, were last consolidated in 1940. Subsequent to that year, amending legislation was enacted in each of the years 1949, 1953, 1959, and 1961, and there is need, in the interests of clarity, for the Acts to be consolidated.

An examination with the view to such consolidation revealed, however, that mere consolidation would not be justified, since there were various existing provisions which were no longer required, and many features which merited retention but nevertheless required to be brought up to date. It was evident, moreover, that there was a definite need for the provisions of the Act to be set out in more orderly manner.

In addition, needs have arisen for the introduction of new provisions to accommodate altered concepts in the practice of dentistry, to meet the changing requirements of the community and to ensure that the requirements for registration as dentists in Queensland continue to allow no possibility of entry into the field of dentistry in this State of persons whose training, qualifications and ability in the practice of dentistry are considered by reliable authorities to be inferior to the generally acknowledged competent standards demanded of our Queensland dentists.

Mr. HOUSTON: Mr. Lickiss, I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention to the state of the Committee.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): There is a quorum.

Mr. TOOTH: It cannot be contested, in all these circumstances, that the time has arrived when there is every justification for repeal of the existing legislation relating to dentists and the control of the practice of dentistry and for enactment of the new legislation proposed in this Bill.

The inclusion of an amendment to the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration) Act 1966-1969 has also been necessary as will be shown in due course.

Whilst some important changes in the constitution and administrative arrangements and functions of the Dental Board of this State are provided for in the Bill, probably the most significant features relating to these matters are those which deal with:—

1. Procedures associated with the registration of dentists; and

2. Establishment of the means whereby dental personnel new to Queensland, namely, operative dental auxiliaries, may be authorised to perform, under the supervision of a dentist, a restricted range of dentistry for certain sections of the community.

These two matters require some amplification. The actual machinery whereby dentists are registered to practise in this State ensures that the standards of the dental profession are maintained and the best interests of the community safeguarded. An important object of the pertinent clauses of the Bill is to provide that the control of registration lies more securely with the Dental Board of Queensland.

Under the existing legislation, because of certain reciprocity provisions, the board could be required to register certain dentists of whom it may not necessarily approve. New provisions overcome this problem.

On the other hand, the same provisions introduce for the first time avenues whereunder the opportunity to establish entitlement to registration as dentists in this State will be afforded to various overseas dentists whose qualifications are not registrable at the present time. These avenues are subject to certain conditions and requirements on which I shall elaborate later, but I emphasise at this stage that, whilst the relevant provisions of the Bill will provide encouragement to overseas dentists previously denied the opportunity to be considered for registration, every precaution has been taken to ensure that Queensland's dental standards will be safeguarded.

Provision has also been made in the Bill to empower the board to grant registration for a limited period to dentists who have been invited to this State for the purposes of lecturing, teaching, etc. Such dentists would thus be able to include in their presentations the often all-important clinical demonstrations.

The provision in the Bill which represents the most profound departure from the practice of dentistry permitted under the present Act is, however, contained in those clauses which will enable operative dental auxiliaries to perform, under the supervision of dentists, the restricted range of dentistry I have previously mentioned.

In commenting on this departure from existing policy, I emphasise firstly that this Government is fully aware of the tremendous dental needs of the State if the ultimate goal of dental health is to be achieved. The difficulty of making any correct appraisal in this regard must be admitted by all who recognise the necessity of not confusing needs with demand, for, as we know, not all members of the community are fully aware of the benefits of dental health and many, therefore, do not seek regular dental care.

However, attitudes are changing and public awareness can be expected to increase. Under these circumstances, our dental resources as they are presently organised would be overtaxed and other than traditional solutions would be required, but not to the jeopardy of the high standards of dentistry in Queensland.

Some of the necessary developments are already occurring. Thus, the dental profession is endeavouring, by the full use of modern technology and the maximum utilisation of trained chairside assistants, to increase its productivity. This trend has by no means yet reached its full development.

A further step in this general direction will be the employment of operative dental auxiliaries, who, I am convinced, will provide most effective assistance in the great progress now being made in preventive dentistry where by far the greatest breakthrough has been in the realisation of the important role of fluorides in the prevention of dental caries.

The quite involved mechanisms of the two most widespread dental diseases, namely, dental caries and periodontal disease, are now more clearly understood and this understanding has paved the way for the application of practical preventive measures. This is why a most profitable use for operative dental auxiliaries is expected to be found in this field.

A tremendous amount of actual dental treatment must, however, still be performed, hence fillings and regrettably, extractions, must continue to be performed, allied with preventive measures, for some time. Operative dental auxiliaries could accept some of this formidable task.

Many of our health measures are directed towards the younger age groups in the community, and it is logical that the basis of dental health also be laid in this group. It is envisaged, therefore, that the first operative dental auxiliaries to be utilised in this State will be those who are trained to provide, under the supervision of a dentist, a range of dental treatments for children of pre-school and primary-school age. Emphasis would, of course be placed on preventive measures. Similar personnel have been employed for many years in a number of overseas countries, particularly New Zealand, and of recent years, in some other Australian States. Such operative dental auxiliaries are often referred to as "School Dental Nurses" although their environment need not necessarily be restricted to schools.

Experience has shown that the actual type of auxiliary to be utilised or, more specifically, the range of duties such an auxiliary might be required to perform must be developed to meet the special requirements of the country or State in which she is to be employed, as directed by the demographic, socio-economic and other conditions existing.

It is stressed that, although such personnel receive as a rule only two years' training compared with the graduate dentist's five years' training, the quality of training in a necessarily restricted field is of a very high order and the competence of these auxiliaries within their range of duties cannot be doubted. Furthermore, it is a requirement of the Bill that such auxiliaries in this State must perform their duties under the supervision of a dentist.

Mr. Melloy: How many years' training?

Mr. TOOTH: Two is usual.

Mr. Melloy: Full-time?

Mr. TOOTH: Yes, full-time training.

It is envisaged that operative dental auxiliaries will be females, and will be employed only in the State dental services initially. Subsequently, however, the employment of auxiliaries, known as "Dental Hygienists", may be permitted in either the public or the private sphere of dentistry. Such "Dental Hygienists" would normally perform a less comprehensive range of duties than the school-dental-nurse type previously described, being principally of a prophylactic nature.

In drafting the provisions of the Bill relating to operative dental auxiliaries, close attention has been paid to the recommendations of the National Health and Medical Research Council, which has studied this matter in great detail, and also to the recently published policies of the Australian Dental Association covering "National Dental Health and Dental Auxiliary Personnel". The provisions of this Bill relating to dental auxiliaries are in accord with the views of these two bodies.

This Government is, of course, aware that many patients require artificial dentures during their life-time and, in fact, that many are in a situation where this is their total involvement with dentistry. It would be unrealistic to expect the demand for artificial dentures to be significantly changed by preventive measures in the short term. However, in the foreseeable future we would expect this demand to contract.

Considering the situation at the present time, the requirements of the public in this State in so far as artificial dentures are concerned are generally being met. In the case of those with limited financial means, the State Dental Hospital and Clinic Service provides dentures at relatively low rates, and in some instances free of charge. In the more isolated parts of the State, where no private dentist is available, such treatment is provided irrespective of the patient's income, and the fees payable for such treatment range from zero to a nominal maximum, commensurate with the patient's financial circumstances. Elsewhere, there is an adequate coverage of private dental practitioners to supply this particular demand.

Regarding artificial dentures, whilst the provision thereof may seem to some people to be a predominantly mechanical procedure, it must be appreciated that many biological principles are involved. Only a dentist has received the necessary training to ensure that a patient's mouth is without pathological conditions that might be aggravated by a denture. In fact, and most importantly, a dentist in his examination may be the first to recognise a developing tumour. He also appreciates the problems that can occur with occlusion, or "bite", as it is commonly called. He is also aware of the discomfort, pain or even permanent disability that can develop in jaw joints and elsewhere in the mouth where occlusion and other vital factors are in error.

The Bill, in the circumstances, does not contain any departure from those provisions in the existing legislation that relate to dental technicians. This is not intended, however, to decry in any way the skill and importance of the dental technician, who plays a vital role in many dental procedures. His increasing involvement in fabricating complex restorations such as ceramic and gold crowns, bridgework, corrective dental appliances and splints, requires a high standard of technical training and application of skill, and these are fully appreciated.

Modern dental thinking, internationally, accepts the "dental team" concept, comprising the dentist, the dental chairside assistant, the operative dental auxiliary and the dental technician—the dentist, with his comprehensive training, being equipped to lead this team in the most efficient manner and for the greatest ultimate good of the patients under his care.

In concluding my comments on the Bill at this stage, I take the opportunity to point out that the Dental Hospital and Clinic service, which was established in Queensland to provide for those in less fortunate financial circumstances and those living in the less populous areas of the State, together with the visits by the School Dental Service to schools in areas not served by the dental clinics, represents achievements far ahead—and I emphasise this—of those of other Australian States in the field of dental services for the community.

The success attained is due in no small measure to the co-operation achieved with the private sector of the dental profession, and I believe that this Bill will assist the further development of Queensland's dental services, both State and private, in an orderly manner and in the best interests of the community.

Explanatory notes have been printed for distribution with the Bill and, whilst it is my intention to explain its provisions in greater detail where necessary, once honourable members have had the opportunity to examine the Bill I feel they will agree that its introduction is justified.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (7.30 p.m.): As the Minister has said, the Dental Act is more than overdue for revision. Some of the existing provisions date back to 1902, and there is no question whatever that the Act, with the exception of separate amendments that have been printed, does not represent the law relating to dentistry in Queensland.

One of the main problems facing Queensland is a shortage of dentists—I think that is generally acknowledged—and it does not seem likely that the position will improve when one takes into account that the maximum number of dentists who could graduate in 1971-72 is only 37. That is somewhat fewer than in previous years, and the position is actually worse than that because the maximum number who could graduate in 1972-73 is 34, the number in the fourth year of the course. It is to be expected, I suppose, that not all of those will survive the final year, so the number graduating could be even fewer than 34.

The Minister has not gone very closely into the contents of the Bill, and I am quite sure that all honourable members will be very interested to see what is in it. It will provide rather a wide field for debate at the second-reading stage.

In my opinion, the most important provision of the Bill outlined by the Minister is that relating to dental auxiliaries. That is by no means a new idea. I think it was in 1962 that the late Dr. Noble, after a visit to New Zealand, returned to Queensland full of enthusiasm for the introduction of legislation such as this. Had fate so decided, I have no doubt that he would have implemented legislation of this type.

It is to be hoped, however, that dental auxiliaries will be given the responsibility that they are given in other Australian States, notably Tasmania and South Australia. I have visited the training school in Hobart and also the Dental Nurses College, as it is called, in Adelaide. Although there is some difference between the scope of work in Adelaide and that in Tasmania, I think that even if the girls in Queensland are allowed to do work similar to that performed by the girls in South Australia, their employment will go a long way towards solving the problem of the shortage of dentists in this State.

The Minister said that they will work under the supervision of a dentist. I am not sure whether they will do so at all times, or whether they will have clinics of their own and conduct surgeries of their own. Will there be two or more dental auxiliaries working under the control of one dentist? Or does the Minister envisage one auxiliary to one dentist? Has the Minister any idea of that?

Mr. Tooth: I would not limit it to one auxiliary to one dentist, but they will be under the supervision of a dentist. The

situation here is different from that in South Australia, where there is nothing comparable to our system of dental clinics.

Mr. MELLOY: I appreciate that the set-up is quite different.

The girls in the other States are doing a tremendous amount of work, and are making an enormous impact on the dental treatment of school-children in those States. I am hoping that we will have dental clinics set up in the major country schools. I know that we already have dental clinics in country areas but, because of the present shortage of dentists, they are unable to provide adequate service. The waiting lists for dental treatment in the country are too long. If we can attach the girls to schools, as is done in the other States, they will make a notable contribution.

Mr. Tooth: Are you suggesting that we should adopt the South Australian method where they work not under the supervision of a dentist?

Mr. MELLOY: Yes.

Mr. Tooth: Our provisions are that they must be under the supervision of a dentist.

Mr. MELLOY: That is rather a pity because it will restrict the amount of work that the girls will be able to do. It will mean that they can be placed only where there is a dentist.

Mr. Tooth: As I pointed out to you, we are fortunately placed in Queensland. South Australia cannot do that because it has not our type of dental system. We have dentists in most centres of any size, and where we have not got them we have an itinerant system of dental treatment.

Mr. MELLOY: As the Minister will realise, with our school dental system there are still thousands of children who are not receiving necessary dental attention. Even those who are receiving it once every 12 or 18 months are not receiving sufficient attention.

Mr. Tooth: If a dentist was sent with one or two dental auxiliaries, the team would probably be able to do at least twice the amount of work—possibly nearly three times the amount—in the same time. That would tend to catch up the lag.

Mr. MELLOY: If you put the girls at schools, and set up clinics in the large centres in country areas, you would find that much more work would be carried out because—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! I should be pleased if the honourable member would address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MELLOY: My apologies, Mr. Lickiss.

Treatment in the schools in the other States is almost compulsory, subject to parental consent. That is what we need here.

If it is left to parents to send their children to dentists, I do not think that the children will receive treatment. Many parents are irresponsible about dental health. Unless we put dental auxiliaries into the schools, and give them authority to treat every child, we will lose a lot of the benefit that could accrue through the registration of dental auxiliaries.

However, I think the proposal is an excellent move. It is part of the Australian Labor Party policy. I shall have more to say about it at the Committee stage. It is a very important subject.

The Minister said that the demand for dentures is being met. I do not agree with that. Several years ago the A.D.A. conducted a survey which showed that 40 per cent of the public were in need of dentures. I do not think the position has improved, because as the population has increased there has not been a corresponding increase in the number of dentists. I assume that the same percentage of people still require dentures.

The Minister went to some length to point out that only trained personnel should be associated with the fitting of dentures. He indicated, in effect, that only a registered dentist would recognise conditions that would render a mouth unsuitable for dentures. I think the Act would have been improved considerably if it had provided for the registration of suitably qualified dental technicians. Again this is not a new idea; it has been implemented in Tasmania, and legislation is currently before the Victorian Parliament to register suitably qualified dental technicians.

Mr. Tooth: I thought they had abandoned that Bill.

Mr. MELLOY: No, they have not. It has been deferred till next year for further discussions with the A.D.A. and other bodies. I think further discussion with the A.D.A. in Victoria is rather ominous, because, in the view of dental technicians, the A.D.A. is a pressure body. As a matter of fact, the huge advertisement that I have here was recently inserted in two of the Melbourne daily newspapers. It appeared in "The Age" and "The Herald", and opposed the Bill currently before the Victorian Parliament.

If dental technicians were registered to perform this work, it would make a great contribution to the denture services available to the people of this State. They can easily be controlled. There would not be any wholesale invasion by technicians into the field of dentistry. There would not be any attempt to invade the fields of extractions or conservative or restoration work. That has proved to be the case in Tasmania, where there has not been any trouble over the registration of dental technicians. So many technicians in this State are at present providing dentures for the public that if that were not so, many people in the State would not have dentures. As a matter of fact,

within the last three weeks I have had occasion to make a set of dentures for a person who would not otherwise have had dentures at all. This is occurring all over the State, and it will continue to occur while dental fees are so high and there is a shortage of dentists.

Mr. Tooth: Did you make those dentures to a dental prescription?

Mr. MELLOY: I did not have to. I was quite capable of doing it without one—and it was a very successful job, I might say.

Mr. Ahern: You were not breaking the law?

Mr. MELLOY: If the honourable member can prove that I was, good luck to him.

Mr. Ahern: That is your own admission.

Mr. MELLOY: It does not matter what I admit. I have not been caught in the act of doing the job.

Mr. Tooth: Aren't you one of those who today wanted me to extract a lot of information from Dr. Ribush?

Mr. MELLOY: The Dr. Ribush matter has no relationship at all to this Bill. What I am suggesting is that this is a very important aspect of dentistry, and eventually it will have to be considered very seriously by the Government. As a matter of fact, it is the policy of the Australian Labor Party in Queensland, and, if we are returned as the Government next year—rather, as I am reminded, when we are returned as the Government next year—I can assure the Minister that legislation along these lines will be introduced. It will certainly make a significant contribution to the dental profession.

Mr. Tooth: You will see a few full-page advertisements then, for sure.

Mr. MELLOY: I would not be surprised. I know that the A.D.A. has set up a special fund purely for the purpose of fighting legislation such as this. That is why I feel that the delay in Victoria is ominous. It has been said that it is to allow for further discussions between the A.D.A. and the Minister for Health in that State.

Mr. Campbell: You are suggesting there is a big lobbying job going on?

Mr. MELLOY: It is a big pressure job.

I have not made many notes on the Minister's speech, because, although I appreciate that certain provisions of the Bill are favourable, I feel that it contains a great deal that will provide ample opportunity at the second-reading stage for the Opposition to tear certain aspects of it to pieces. I look forward with great interest to seeing the Bill and debating it at that stage.

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (7.45 p.m.): I welcome the Bill, particularly the provision that certain persons will be able to do certain prescribed work. I refer to the operative dental auxiliaries and the dental hygienists to whom the Minister referred. This move towards dental nurses has been widely recognised. In New Zealand it is regarded as being of great value, and I am sure that it will receive the same acclaim in Queensland, especially as it relates to the State dental services. The greatest value of these persons will be in the preventive field, to which I shall return in a few moments.

It is very difficult to obtain reliable figures on the incidence of dental caries in this State. To do so I had to go back to a survey conducted five or six years ago by Professor Davies of the Queensland University and Mr. B. J. Kruger and Mr. B. T. Homan, of the Dental Department of that university. The survey was conducted among 3,251 children in the six to 14 age-group in 20 country towns in Queensland. That number represented approximately 2 per cent of children in that age-group in the State. The survey covered a wide variety of matters of interest in dental health, and, most importantly, it covered the incidence of dental caries among children. It was found that in the case of deciduous teeth the incidence of dental caries ranged as high as 4.9 either decayed or filled teeth per child, and, in the case of permanent teeth in the 3,251 children, 15,408 were decayed, missing or filled, which is equal to a mean of 4.7 DMF teeth per child. This is an extremely high average of dental caries. Caries incidence in permanent teeth increased from one DMF tooth per child at six years to 2.7 at eight years, 4.4 at 10 years, 7.4 at 12 years, and 10.7 at 14 years. Quite obviously, the incidence of dental caries in that age-group was quite high.

The three gentlemen who conducted that survey said that the backlog of lesions still to be treated exceeded the amount of treatment that had been carried out. In their opinion, it would require the services of at least 394 dentists and the expenditure of more than \$5,000,000 to cope with dental decay alone in all 6 to 14-year-old children in the State. These figures are of great significance. I see no reason why the average figures should have changed since the survey was conducted, so this Bill is all the more welcome than otherwise.

There is no doubt that the greatest value of the Bill lies in the field of preventive dentistry. The Minister, in his introductory remarks, made passing reference to fluoridation as the most effective treatment in the preventive field. I wish to refer to the annual report of the Health and Medical Services of the State of Queensland for this

year, which referred to this matter in great detail. The following passage appears therein—

“The most important single preventive measure in any public dental health situation continues however, to be fluoridation of communal water supplies. Regrettably, a minority only of Queensland cities and towns have availed themselves of this safe, simple, reliable and inexpensive benefit.”

Although there is a very high incidence of dental caries in the teeth of Queensland children, very few towns in Queensland have fluoridated their water supplies. It has been proved by scientific experiment that the fluoridation of water supplies halves dental decay—a highly significant result. It also has a great effect on complaints such as idiopathic mottling. The surveyors found, in my town of Caloundra, that there was an incidence of this mottling in some 70 per cent of the children sampled at the school. Incidentally, that was the highest percentage in the State. It compared very badly with the percentage in naturally fluoridated areas that were sampled at the same time, which had an incidence of 10 per cent. In the preventive field this would certainly be the greatest incentive that we could give in Queensland, but it is not being given purely and simply because the Government has said it is the responsibility of local authority to institute this public health measure.

Mr. Marginson: Why push it on to them?

Mr. AHERN: I agree. Why should we push it on to the local authorities when it is a public health measure, which should be a State Government responsibility? As in the past, I indicate my point of view quite clearly. I think this should be a State Government responsibility. I call on all those with similar views to do some serious thinking about this matter. The dental health of Queensland children is not of a very high order, and it would be even lower if our dental services were not as good as they are. However, I emphasise that we could effectively halve the incidence of dental caries at very small cost, without causing any harm in the community. It was a matter of extreme regret to me that the Labor-in-Politics Convention threw this out as a measure. If we could have approached this problem on a non-party-political basis, we would have gone a long way to halving the incidence of dental caries in Queensland. At the same time, we would have caused a significant decrease in many other abnormalities such as idiopathic mottling.

I welcome the measure, believing it to be strongly in the interests of the children of the State. The consolidation of the Dental Act is also very welcome.

Mr. HARRIS (Wynnum) (7.54 p.m.): I support the remarks of the honourable member for Nudgee. In doing so, I point out that, like the honourable member for

Norman, he is a qualified dental technician, which is a privilege not enjoyed by the Government parties. I was very pleased to note that many Government members, including the Minister listened very attentively to the honourable member's remarks, which were offered in an endeavour to assist the Minister in providing a better service in the dental field.

I do not intend to criticise the Minister in any way on the dental activities in this State. However, I point out that there are many anomalies that can be straightened out—and I think they will be by the provisions in the Bill. The principal problem, as the Minister admitted, is the shortage of dentists, and it is the Government's responsibility to overcome this shortage. It is all right for the Minister to nod his head and smile. It is the Government's responsibility to provide enough dentists, and, if insufficient students are studying dentistry, there must be a good reason for it. This matter should be investigated so that Queensland is not dependent on getting dentists from other States.

I and my parliamentary colleagues agree with the proposal to register dental mechanics or technicians. This is part of Labor's platform. This would extend the dental service given to the people of Queensland. Those of us who have travelled throughout Queensland know the long waiting time, particularly for pensioners, to obtain upper or lower dentures, or even partial plates. This is not the fault of a particular clinic or dentist; it is because these people are overworked, and registration of technicians would improve the position considerably.

Another improvement is the reduction in the means test. This will enable the children of people on slightly higher incomes to be treated at clinics. Many people receive an income which is not sufficient for them to be able to pay for the dental treatment of their children by private practitioners. The present fees charged are extortionate, and these children have to suffer dental decay. I request that consideration be given to those families so that their children can be treated at State dental clinics.

To encourage people to look after their own and their children's teeth, the advantages of dental hygiene should be advertised. Many people in the lower-income bracket, particularly those who live in industrial development areas, have not been educated in the advantages of dental hygiene. They allow their children to go without the necessary periodic dental visits. Parents should be made aware of the importance of these visits. At present some attention is given to this matter, but it is not nearly enough. The clinic in the Wynnum electorate is comparable with any other clinic in the metropolitan area. It is well conducted and adequately staffed, but there is a very long delay in providing dentures, making extractions and filling cavities. This, however, cannot be avoided.

I have made appeals to the Minister on many occasions and he has given me assistance, but unfortunately the problem cannot really be overcome unless the Minister is prepared to extend the hours of operation of the clinic to a full week, which I know would be very difficult. If the clinic opened for four days instead of two days a week, the dentist would be able to cope with the number of people requiring treatment. In the present situation, sophisticated dental equipment and a fully equipped workshop for a dental technician are lying idle for several days a week. The real problem is the unavailability of dentists.

In my opinion, the most important thing is preventive dental treatment for children. I have been at various country schools when they have received their six-monthly visit from a Government dentist, and I found it very pleasing to see children, particularly the older ones, keen to have their teeth attended to. Although children receive dental treatment at schools, so widely spaced are visits by dentists that their teeth are often in a shocking state by the time the dentist next returns.

I commend to the Minister serious consideration of the Wynnum Dental Clinic, and I ask him to extend, if possible, its operations to four days a week so that the people of this district, who number about 56,000, will have the opportunity to obtain dental treatment, and will also become more conscious of dental hygiene.

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (8.2 p.m.): It is interesting to consider a series of medical and related measures in the one day, and to observe the way in which debate develops, particularly as the Committee now moves to a subject that could be described as para-medical. It is very important that the dental health of the community be maintained. There is no doubt that, in the context of dental attention, team work is vital; there is no substitute for an efficient, well co-ordinated team effort.

It is unfortunate that it is not practicable to organise a national dental benefits service similar to the medical benefit organisations. I believe that such a scheme could be implemented, but the main argument against it is that it would enable people to insure against a certainty. Perhaps if fluoridation were universal throughout Australia, those responsible for insurance and assurance would be more amenable to reason in the establishment of a national health organisation for dental care.

Mr. Sherrington: Don't you think that diet is just as important as fluoridation?

Dr. CRAWFORD: Exactly. It is part of the general aspect, and I shall deal with it later.

Mr. Sherrington: Don't deal too deeply with it, because I am going to talk about it, too.

Dr. CRAWFORD: There is no doubt that, as in medicine, specialisation has taken place to a marked degree in dentistry. If the people, especially children, are to be able to receive such specialised attention as is afforded by orthodontic practice, the supply of appropriate specialists will have to be continued. I am somewhat distressed when I hear quoted figures showing that the number of dental graduates is decreasing, and that young men and women are no longer as keen to embark upon a career in dentistry as they once were.

No-one would oppose the expansion of dental treatment for school-children. If the new lady auxiliaries will enable the expansion of both general attention and specialist-type assessment, it will indeed be a major advance in the community. However, I believe that education of the entire population as to the need to seek early dental treatment is most important. The large percentage of edentulous people in the community is an indictment of our educational media. It would be a service to the community if advertising, both private and Government, could be geared to explaining to people the essential nature of preventive dentistry. That education could also embrace various facts of nutrition, dental hygiene, attention to regular preventive measures that could be carried out simply in the home, and, of course, the absolute necessity of a dental check at regular intervals.

That, of course, brings me to the subject of fluoridation. As soon as one mentions in any public medium the controversial subject of fluoridation, one finds that the anti-fluoridation lobby becomes very vocal. I was surprised to find that when I first mentioned the subject in this Chamber, because I had assumed for some years that the scientific facts were so well documented and had been so well propagated throughout the community as informed and factual propaganda that the anti-fluoridationist had more or less faded away. However, that is not so, and the lobby is still very local and vociferous, and has adopted the real political trick of skating around the core of the subject and the problem. Having accomplished that, it then concentrates on such irrelevant aspects as poisoning by large doses of fluoridation and produces in its literature X-ray photographs of bones impregnated by over-dosage of fluoride.

It is possible, of course, to kill any organism, human or otherwise, by over-dosage of a whole variety of drugs. One can kill people very quickly, for example, by introducing into their system—intravenously, anyway—large doses of adrenaline, and none of us, of course, can live for five minutes without an adequate dose of adrenaline floating round in his system.

Mr. Ahern: Common salt.

Dr. CRAWFORD: And common salt, as the honourable member says.

Mr. Bennett: The Government will never kill us with kindness.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Does the honourable member think that he deserves to be killed with kindness?

Mr. Jensen: Do you know that 99.6 per cent of the water that is treated is just wasted, which means that the chemicals are wasted and add to pollution. People can get tablets from any council if they want them.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It is not an expensive pastime.

Mr. Jensen: It is a waste of money.

Dr. CRAWFORD: No, it is not. The principal point is that the amount of fluoridation that is necessary has been established scientifically at one part per million. In many parts of the world naturally occurring fluoride in local streams is already more than one part per million. Needless to say, the water in the area in which that occurred would not have any fluoride added to it. However, it is a very simple process to add that minute quantity of fluoride to water supplies and it cannot do any harm to anybody. What I find most difficult to understand is how people can actually object to this very worth-while measure when it does not—I repeat that emphatically—do any harm to anybody under any circumstances in those doses. The anti-fluoridation lobby, of course, would deprecate the efforts of all those who would introduce fluoridation to these levels, and it is very important, in my opinion, to attempt to propagate this message so that people will understand the real facts in that context.

Tasmania is a progressive State, and it has had progressive legislation with regard to both fluoride and the use of iodides. It has been placing fluoride in its water for some years, and it has been placing iodides in bread to overcome iodine deficiency and endemic goitre throughout the island. Both those measures correct naturally occurring deficiencies in the island State. I remember very vividly the statement of the honourable member for Nudgee, when he came back from a trip to Tasmania, that he no longer had an uninformed opinion on the subject, and that his prejudice had been completely overcome because he had seen for himself that the teeth of children in Tasmania were in near-perfect condition.

Of course, mottling can occur from fluoride, but the expert opinion throughout the world is that the mottling is not of any importance. It may be, as the honourable member for Landsborough pointed out, that the mottling is of idiopathic aetiology. In any event, it causes no harm, and it is far preferable to have a little mottling combined with strong dental enamel than to have a large percentage of the population with multiple dental caries, thus throwing an undue strain on the dental services.

Mr. Sherrington: Don't you think that the medical profession itself has caused confusion by its differing opinions?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I hate to say it in this context, but probably some people are playing politics in that respect. I do not think there are any real doubts in either the medical or the dental profession.

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Only a small percentage, and I think I know the reason.

Mr. Sherrington: They are in the Liberal Party.

Dr. CRAWFORD: The only doctors—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! Would the honourable member please address the Chair?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I point out, through you, Mr. Lickiss, that the only members of the medical profession currently in the Federal House are five members of the A.L.P.

Mr. Sherrington: They are not the only doctors who have spoken against it. World authorities have.

Dr. CRAWFORD: We could engage in a long discussion on this subject. I do not think there is any real doubt that the vast majority of informed opinion is as I have been spelling it out.

The worries of the honourable member for Wynnum—they are real ones—could be overcome by fluoridation. Some shires have grasped this nettle and have undertaken fluoridation on a voluntary basis. It would introduce fluoride into the water throughout the State at that strict level of one part in a million, we would not need to be unduly concerned about any vast shortage of dentists in the State.

I add one small addendum: It is very easy to be misinterpreted and have things wrongly assessed. I should just like to say to the Minister that, in respect of the Bills he has introduced today, I made the statement about weekly costs per patient of \$19 in church homes compared with \$35 in "Eventide" homes. He said that it was \$44. The \$44 per patient per week in church institutions is for heavy, specialised nursing care. Confusion about that particular situation can be just as damaging as confusion about fluoridation.

I am pleased to see the Bill before the Committee. I understand from dental friends and colleagues that there has been consultation between those who have general interest in these matters, and that the dental people themselves are pleased with the Bill. Therefore I am sure that we will find it of great value to the community.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (8.14 p.m.): Apparently the debate has opened the way for Government members to introduce

the topic of fluoridation. Reference has been made to the very high incidence of dental caries in Queensland. Because of this, some honourable members have been loud in their praise of the fluoridation of water systems. I have no strong views either way in this matter but, as I implied by interjection, part of the confusion over the acceptance or otherwise of fluoridation has resulted from differing opinions within the medical world. In overseas countries, cases have been won or lost on differing medical opinions as to its value.

It is recognised that in this State there is a very high incidence of dental caries, and I would be very interested to learn in what category of children this high incidence occurs. My mind goes back to a statement emanating from Great Britain after World War II to the effect that, following a serious shortage of starches and sugar because of wartime exigencies, there was a remarkable reduction in the incidence of dental caries in children in that country.

Dr. Crawford: There was a general improvement in everybody's health during that period.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is quite true.

Perhaps the Treasurer might care to go outside and have his conversation. He might go outside and iron out his difficulties with the Minister for Health.

Mr. Lane interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Why don't you pull your head in.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order!

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have used figures previously in this Parliament to show that there was a marked decline in dental caries amongst children in Great Britain during that time.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am speaking about war-time, when there was a scarcity of starches and sugars.

As I say, I have an open mind on the benefits or otherwise of fluoridation in reducing the incidence of dental caries, but somehow I cannot escape the conclusion that the high incidence of this disease in children stems from poor diet and lack of parental training in dental hygiene. To my way of thinking, there is room for an investigation into the income levels of people amongst whose children this high incidence of dental caries occurs, and particularly into what effect insufficient income has on providing an adequate diet for growing children, particularly during those years when their teeth are most vulnerable, which would be up to about 14 years of age.

Mr. Jensen: They are not getting enough milk in their diet; that's the trouble.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: As the honourable member for Bundaberg says, a lack of milk in their diet is possibly another feature, combined with an excess of starches and sugars. All these factors would be brought about because of the inability of their parents to provide them with a balanced diet.

When we speak about the high incidence of dental caries among children, instead of considering the palliative of administering fluoride we should be looking to the root causes of such a high incidence of the disease.

During the speech of the honourable member for Wavell I did not have the opportunity to ask him whether, even with the introduction of fluoride into water—and conceding that it could have beneficial effects on the tooth structure of young children—there would be any use in administering fluoride to children if at the same time their diet did not contain the basic elements that promote sound teeth.

Dr. Crawford: It would still harden the enamel.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am glad to hear that.

Dr. Crawford: If they did not have enough calcium in their diet.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is the point I am trying to make. At best it would help harden the enamel, but it would not withstand the attacks made on teeth as a result of inadequate diet.

I think the honourable member for Wavell will agree that the only children who would derive any benefit from fluoride would be those up to 14 years of age, and that after that age they would receive very little benefit. I do not accept the "flogging" of certain tooth-paste that contains fluoride. Last year it was chlorophyll, and the year before that it was something else. Such advertisements are entirely misleading. I have found that fluoride dental cream has certainly not assisted my artificial dentures.

As in many other things, we have looked for the easy way out; but we certainly cannot claim that fluoridation of our water will provide the answer to all dental caries problems. It is just as important to pay attention to an adequate diet for young children as it is to fluoridate water supplies.

Dr. Crawford: Most children in the community have an adequate diet.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I would be interested to learn the income group in which the highest incidence of dental caries occurs.

Dr. Crawford: It is probably in the group whose parents do not care.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I would not say that is necessarily correct, although it may be a contributing factor. If my memory serves me correctly, the latest survey showed that 600,000 people in Australia live either

in or on the verge of poverty. Even if those people care about their children, they simply cannot afford to provide them with an adequate diet.

Dr. Crawford: They are more likely to worry about feeding their children than about seeing that they get regular dental attention.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is so, but the point I am making is that because of a lack of money they would not be able to provide an adequate diet for their children. I believe that a survey of the incidence of dental caries would show that to a marked degree it is worst in the families of the poorer people.

Mr. Ahern: They would benefit from fluoridation.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: They would benefit from a healthy diet. There is more to it than the honourable member might think. It is apparent that the children lack a balanced diet that would build up general bodily resistance.

I do not agree for one moment that the fluoridation of water supplies is the cure-all for Australia's dental problems. I have an open mind on the matter and concede that it would be somewhat beneficial, but I think fluoridation of water supplies is only trifling with the problem of dental decay.

Mr. Ahern: The experience is that it halves the incidence of dental caries.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Is the honourable member prepared to accept a 50 per cent improvement? Why not strive for the ultimate, that is, a good diet? There is more to be gained from a proper diet than good teeth. First, there is a healthy body. I think the honourable member for Wavell would agree that it is fair to say that a child with unhealthy teeth caused by an inadequate diet would also suffer other health problems. I deplore the attitude which has created the misconception that if we were to introduce fluoride to the water system it would be the cure-all and end-all of dental problems.

Mr. R. E. Moore: The people of Barcaldine have fairly good teeth.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not know the effect of fluoride on the scalp. Perhaps we could investigate that, too.

I hope to see the day when we will delve deeply into the causes of dental caries; that we look further than fluoridation, which is merely a palliative, and look for the root causes.

Mr. Low: Are you in favour of it, or not?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have an open mind on it.

It is somewhat strange that, over the years, people have accepted chlorination of water as a perfectly normal operation to produce purer water. That is due mainly to the fact that there was no division of medical

opinion on the process. Everybody realised that chlorination improved the quality of water. Half the trouble with fluoridation is the division of medical opinion on it.

Dr. Crawford: Can't we fluoride all water supplies?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I should much prefer to see children getting an adequate diet. There is more than sufficient evidence to show that an adequate diet has a dramatic effect on children's health.

Like the honourable member for Nudgee, I recall the words of the late Dr. Noble after his return from a New Zealand trip. He spoke about the use of dental aides as he termed them, and their training. He more or less outlined the proposal contained in this Bill. There has been inordinate delay in this matter. As long ago as 1962 the former Minister for Health was talking about introducing a system similar to that proposed by the Bill. I support any measure that will ensure adequate dental treatment of children and young people. The Opposition does not quarrel seriously with the proposals outlined by the Minister.

No matter how hard we try to provide dental services, insufficient treatment is available to young people in Queensland. This is markedly so in the Salisbury electorate, and particularly the suburb of Inala. After several years of urging, the former Minister for Health instituted a dental clinic on a limited scale in that area. It has operated over the years and has given dental treatment to juveniles under the age of 16 years. The waiting time is now two years for dental attention, unless it is of an urgent nature. This area has possibly the greatest concentration of juveniles in the Commonwealth. At the moment something like 8,000 children attend primary schools in the area. If ever there was a need for an adequate system, there is one in areas such as Inala, with its very large juvenile population.

I claim, without being critical, that if trained dentists are not available to extend this service, there is a great need for auxiliary aides to carry out initial dental treatment of children when it is most needed. Had the Government introduced this system when Dr. Noble first mooted it in 1962 or 1963, many children in the Inala area would have had fewer dental problems. When the services of these people become available after two years' training, they should be directed first to the areas of greatest need.

(Time expired.)

Mr. JENSEN (Bundaberg) 8.35 p.m.: I rise to put a little honesty and "fair dinkumness" into the debate. Firstly, I wish to take on the honourable member for Wavell who said that dental treatment should be given at a young age. Dental clinics are the only avenue for this service. As the honourable member would know, if a child is taken to a dentist today to have one small

hole in a tooth plugged, it costs about \$3.50, and that would be the minimum. It may be \$4.00 or \$4.50. That is one of the most scandalous things in this State. And all professions are the same.

I will take on the honourable member for Wavell on this matter. A little over 20 years ago I could take my two daughters to a dentist, and for 2s. 6d. the dentist would plug any of their teeth to save them. Will any dentist do that today? The amount of 2s. 6d. in those days was nothing like \$4.50 today. I am 56 years of age, and I have not a false tooth in my head. When I went to the dentist, I rode my bike the six miles from Fairymead to Bundaberg, and the dentist was there at night to attend to me. Can one find any dentists working at night now? Of course not. They play golf every Thursday, bowls on Tuesday, and go to the club every other afternoon. They have to charge high fees because for so much of their time they are not in their surgeries to treat patients.

I want to put this matter straight. I have had to rear my children and I have had to live my life, and I do not want people trying to tell we what is wrong with the dental profession. As for bringing in fluoridation, this is one of the great—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! I trust the honourable member will stick to the Bill. There is nothing in it about fluoridation or the fees charged by dentists.

Mr. JENSEN: I am sorry, Mr. Wharton. The honourable member for Wavell referred to fluoridation, which is supposed to be most important as a means of preventing dental troubles in children. As the honourable member quite rightly said, fluoride has to be administered from birth, and it is useless to give it to children at any age over about four years. I understand that in a general scheme of fluoridation 99.9 per cent of fluoride is wasted, as only about .1 per cent of this chemical would be of assistance to children who took it early in life. Fluoridation of water supplies is a great racket for industrialists, as it is useless for the people in general. The fluoride may be good if children took it in early life.

Mr. Aikens: Do you know that under the Dental Act doctors can legally practise dentistry?

Mr. JENSEN: I am not interested in that. If they are trained for it, that is all right. In the old days, a Doctor of Science was not only a geologist but a chemist, biologist and botanist as well. Today a Doctor of Science is trained in one specific subject. My father was trained in the lot.

When I was young, I drank milk. Today nobody wants to drink milk, because the capitalists of this country are publicising

soft drinks. They are doing everything wrong for the health of this nation, and the Minister knows it. On television they even recommend drinking from dirty, stinking cans. There is no publicising of the drinking of milk.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member knows that he is not speaking on the Bill. The Bill consolidates and amends the law relating to dentists and the practice of dentistry. I ask the honourable member to confine himself to the Bill.

Mr. JENSEN: That is quite true, Mr. Wharton—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister has not raised the matters being referred to by the honourable member.

Mr. JENSEN: I do not understand what the Bill is really about because I have not read it. I am very interested in dental caries, because I am interested in the people and how they have to live today. Many people are not interested in that.

I intended to deal with the industry in which you are interested, Mr. Wharton, the milk industry, which is most important in preventing dental caries. We would not need so many dentists if everyone in the community was on a correct diet, as the honourable member for Salisbury said. However, the diet is not correct today.

Mr. Lee: He would not know.

Mr. JENSEN: He would know. He was born in my age, and anybody born in my age would know that. It is very important today. The honourable member can bring up all the side issues he likes, but—

Mr. Lee: Give us a look at your "fangs".

Mr. JENSEN: My "fangs" are pretty good. If Dr. Crawford could pull one out, he would be doing well. However, I wish to get this matter straight. Dental clinics are needed in Queensland to check the teeth of children at school and take some action, not merely send them home with instructions to go to a dentist. The ordinary worker today has no chance of sending his children to a dentist to have their teeth checked. People have come to me and said, "Look at this". The account has been for three fillings and a couple of checks, \$90. How in the world can the ordinary worker pay that? I know that it cost me 12s. 6d. when my girls had three teeth plugged and a few teeth cleaned.

Mr. Lee: You are talking about checks. Have you tried "Check" toothpaste?

Mr. JENSEN: The only check that the honourable member would know about is the "cheque" in his pocket. Like every other Tory and capitalist in this State, he is trying to ruin the nation by teaching people to drink soft drinks. The Minister is, also. He could invoke the Health Act to prevent people

drinking out of filthy cans, but he will not do it. He will not tell people to drink milk and get some calcium in their bones; in particular, he will not tell mothers to do that.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton): Order! I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the motion before the Committee.

Mr. JENSEN: I do not know what is in the Bill. The honourable member for Wavell was speaking of fluoridation, milk, and the need to attend to the teeth of young people. I wanted to follow up his remarks, because he was obviously protecting an associated profession. I will not protect any profession. I have been a member of a profession, and I know where professions stand in the community today.

Mr. Low interjected.

Mr. JENSEN: I wish to get things straight. It is all very well for honourable members opposite to throw stupid remarks across the Chamber. The honourable member is not in Parliament to do something for the people of the State, as I am. I will stand up in this Chamber and speak what I believe to be the truth. That is what I am here for. I did not become a member of Parliament to be a capitalist or to do two jobs, as some honourable members opposite do. I came here to show up any racket that I could see in the State of Queensland, and I will show it up, whether it is the stock exchange, dentists, doctors, or the legal profession.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much noise from honourable members on my right. I wish to hear the honourable member for Bundaberg, and I am sure that other honourable members do also.

Mr. JENSEN: I am sure that you know I am here for a purpose, Mr. Wharton, and it is to see that fluoridation is not introduced.

Mr. Kaus: Nor capitalism.

Mr. JENSEN: Nor capitalism. There are some rat-bags on the Government side of the Chamber, Mr. Wharton, and they have got away with a number of things for a long time. But when I rise in this Chamber, I intend to say what is right. Fluoride in water is one of the worst things that we can propagate in the community. It will benefit only a few; it will not protect the majority. The majority will be protected by the right food—milk.

It will do the honourable member for Wavell no good to urge the fluoridation of water supplies on behalf of his dentist friends. Anyone who wants his children to have fluoride can obtain and give them tablets. If a person wants to teach his children to clean their teeth regularly, he can teach them to do that. If another person does not want to teach his children

to clean their teeth, he does not teach them. If a person wants to, he can give his children bromide or any other medicament.

Mr. Bird: What about the bourbon-flavoured tooth-paste?

Mr. JENSEN: The honourable member would know all about that. He drinks bourbon every day of his life. I would not know anything about that.

I rose merely to state a case against the professions. It is said that we cannot get enough dentists. The effects of the shortage would be much less if dentists did a bit more work and charged a little less. In my day members of every profession worked much longer hours. I did 12 hours a day in my profession, and every dentist did, too. But that does not happen today. No profession wants to work and that is why the country is stagnating. The poor worker has to try to pay professional men. Members of the professions do not want to do any extra hours. They want to play bowls every Tuesday, golf every Wednesday and go to the club every Thursday. We have to get some work out of the professions. We have loafers in every profession and the poor worker has to pay them.

Mr. BENNETT (South Brisbane) (8.47 p.m.): I have listened to the debate with keen interest. It appears that the only section of the professional community that is really above reproach is the one represented by legal men. We never hear them being castigated, because they work long hours and render good service to the community. I am glad that we have been free of castigation.

Seeing that we are dealing with a Bill to amend the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration Act) of 1966, I think I should say something from the point of view of a lawyer.

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. BENNETT: There must be some sinister reason for the presence of the honourable member for Townsville South. He must be suffering from insomnia, because this is the first time in the last five years that he has been here at night-time. I commend him on his presence. He is doing very well. Perhaps he is being rejuvenated.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for South Brisbane has been absent so often that today he gave notice of a series of questions that I asked three weeks ago. He did not even know that they had been asked.

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

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Wharton, the honourable member must either be walking in his sleep or suffering from some specific

disease. You heard the nonsensical, unintelligent, lack-lustre point of order he took. It was no point of order at all. It is typical of him at night-time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the honourable member please deal with the Bill under discussion?

Mr. BENNETT: I was about to deal with fluoridation from the lawyer's point of view. It is something that is relevant to the Bill.

I have listened with interest over a number of years to the experts—scientists, analysts and what might be termed the “do-gooders”—on the subject of fluoridation. On both sides, we have had put to us, in writing and orally, rather substantial and convincing arguments both for and against, to such an extent that the ordinary layman in this field feels rather confused, uncertain and unconvinced about whether it is in fact good for teeth—or bad.

One would think that a body of professional men such as scientists—in particular, doctors and dentists—could come to some agreement on these matters in order to convince parliamentarians, who are required to legislate in this direction. But such has been the division within their ranks that even conceding that in many instances it has been a sincere and genuine division of opinion, in other circumstances it has been, as suggested by the honourable member for Wavell, a very sinister reason that is sometimes being used for political purposes and, I am quite satisfied, for commercial gain.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind honourable members, and particularly the honourable member who is now speaking, that fluoridation does not come within the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. Melloy interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The other day the honourable member for Nudgee interrupted while I was on my feet, and I warned him under Standing Order 123A. I again warn him. I remind honourable members that there is nothing in this Bill about fluoridation. I listened intently on the public address system to the discussion during Mr. Speaker's absence, and I do not intend to allow any further discussion on fluoridation.

Mr. BENNETT: With respect, Mr. Hooper, it is rather unfortunate that Parliament should be conducted in this fashion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane knows as well as I do that the discussion on the introductory stage of a Bill in Committee is restricted to the matters mentioned by the Minister in introducing it, and the Chair intends to conduct the business in that way.

Mr. BENNETT: I had no intention of reflecting on you personally, Mr. Hooper, but we have been given a ruling by two different Chairmen that fluoridation is a subject for debate on this Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable member for South Brisbane that I have listened to the whole of the debate and that no ruling has been given from the Chair that fluoridation can be debated under this Bill. I ask the honourable member not to reflect on the Temporary Chairmen who have occupied the chair this evening. I ask the honourable member to continue with the matter before the Committee or otherwise resume his seat.

Mr. BENNETT: They allowed the debate, anyway.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: I intend to move an amendment. I move—

“Add the words—
'and for other purposes'.”

When the original Bill was introduced in 1966—it was No. 24 of 1966—we were told that it was an Act to provide for the financing of the administration of the Medical Act, 1939 to 1963, the Dental Acts, 1902 to 1961, the Pharmacy Acts, 1917 to 1959, the Optometrists Acts, 1917 to 1959, the Nurses Act of 1964 and the Physiotherapists Acts, 1964 to 1965, and for other purposes. Therefore, at this stage, some five years later, I suppose we are entitled to consider the field that was dealt with and debated at length in 1966 on the original Bill—the parent and mother Bill, which was assented to on 15 December 1966. As the Government has failed to implement satisfactorily the purposes and spirit of that legislation and has since had to amend it from time to time—and is again amending it tonight—let us have a full and frank discussion on the matter so that this haphazard, weak-knee'd legislation will not have to be amended from time to time, thus wasting the time of Parliament.

Mr. R. E. Moore: What are you doing?

Mr. BENNETT: I am endeavouring to submit some constructive views on the matter of legislation.

Let us face realities. Some of the lousiest legislation we have ever seen has been enacted by this Government over the past two years, and a tremendous amount of it just does not work. Time after time it is brought back to Parliament, and we are forced to sit till even later than midnight to consider it simply because it was conceived in haste and bludgeoned through Parliament by the use of the gag. It is time we considered legislation properly and heeded the old saying “More haste, less speed”. In the long run we will achieve more if we consider Bills properly and in detail, instead

of debating individual amendments that are brought forward from time to time because Ministers have tumbled into pitfalls.

This Bill is designed to buttress the one that went through Parliament in 1969 for the purpose of financing, among other things, the Medical Act, the Dental Act and the boards thereunder, and because of that we should specifically express ourselves on the matter of fluoridation as it applies to registered dental practitioners in this State. True it is, Mr. Hooper, that the Minister has indicated that he proposes to make provision for certain people to do work in dentistry, virtually as assistants, that hitherto has been performed only by registered and qualified dentists. The honourable member for Nudgee has indicated what possibly will be the attitude of the Opposition to that proposal.

In financing the Dental Act and in determining what assistance we should give to the community, we cannot divorce the subject from the ever-present topic of fluoridation. I had intended to be very brief on this matter because I realise I do not possess the qualifications of a medico or a scientist to hold a conclusive opinion. I share the uncertainty in the minds of the community and most parliamentarians and, like them, believe that we have not heard one convincing argument one way or the other. The Australian Medical Association, the Australian Dental Association and all the other bodies that are concerned with this matter are almost evenly divided. Like the Country-Liberal Party Governments in both this and the Federal Parliament, those bodies are split.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Will you have enough numbers for the students' union on Thursday night?

Mr. BENNETT: I challenge the honourable member to throw his hat in. If I do not "do" anybody else, I will "do" him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BENNETT: As a parliamentarian and a lawyer, I feel bound to say that, unless we hear convincing arguments that the liberty of the people should be interfered with, we, as parliamentarians should not entertain any legislation that even tends to interfere with that liberty.

Mr. Ahern: They do in Western Australia and South Australia.

Mr. BENNETT: And it is being done in this Parliament, too. However, I am expressing my opinion as a lawyer. I feel that if certain sections of the community and various individuals are convinced that fluoridation is necessary, it is open to those people to use fluoride in their water supplies. However, at this stage, in the absence of overwhelming evidence to show that the use of fluoride is justified, I do not see why compulsory fluoridation should be forced on the community.

By way of illustration, we have heard a wide variety of opinions on whether or not Bundaberg Rum is good for us. Simply because we might have a Government composed of members of the intellectual standard of those who now occupy the Government benches and it decides that Bundaberg Rum is good for us, are we going to force the community to drink it? The people as a whole may not like to do that. While we should advertise anything that we believe is good, we should not foist it upon the public. If they do not accept it freely and voluntarily, but only under compulsion, they cease to live in a free, decent community.

Mr. Ahern: I should say that you have not read all the evidence.

Mr. BENNETT: I was debating this matter when the honourable member's name was still wet on the Cooroy register of births. I note that honourable members who are most personally insulting about the professions and the activities of professionals are those who cannot entertain an interjection when they are speaking because they have a prepared brief that they do not understand and cannot take their eyes off it. The honourable member is typical of them.

The A.L.P. has always been anxious about the dental welfare of Queensland citizens. We are very anxious to see that this measure is as good as it should be, and that it embodies what the Minister has outlined. Without being disrespectful to the Minister, or addressing my remarks to him personally, I point out that, in my long term in this Chamber, we have often been told what a Bill contains, only to find that it has additional principles or does not adequately cover the points raised by the Minister.

I point out that the A.L.P. provided the dental hospital and the dental school. The A.L.P. lifted the community from the state where there were only L.D.Q's to the stage when dentists receive their Bachelor of Dental Science degrees at the University of Queensland. The Government "skites" about the efforts it has made in the dental field and its successes. I concede that it has had successes. But they have flowed mainly from recommendations made by a man elevated to a high, influential position in the dental service of this State by a former A.L.P. Government. I refer to Mr. Alf Hoole, a man of undoubted qualifications. They were recognised by an A.L.P. Government.

He was given his position of influence in this field by a Government that understood quality and ability. His brain and academic qualifications have been used by the present Government. It is a pity that it has not adopted all his recommendations, and that he has suffered certain frustrations because the Government is not prepared to make available all the money that he needs to give a first-class dental service to the State.

An A.L.P. Government provided dental fellowships for the children of ordinary workers in the community who could not afford to equip themselves as dentists.

I should like to place on record my anxiety and dissatisfaction about the time people have to wait for appointments at the South Brisbane Dental Hospital. When we are making provision for more funds for the Dental Board and the implementation of the Dental Act, we should ensure that more dentists are appointed to staff the South Brisbane Dental Hospital so that unfortunate parents and small children do not have to suffer long delays in receiving proper dental attention, which they received promptly under an A.L.P. Government. They have to wait around far too long.

Mr. Hinze: You would have to be joking.

Mr. BENNETT: I do not know about that. I seldom joke in this Chamber; I approach my duties very seriously. Having observed the honourable member for South Coast from time to time, I should say he would be the biggest bite by far on the Gold Coast.

Much has been said about dental care and dental caries. I believe this measure provides ample opportunity for the honourable member for Carnarvon to advocate his local product. Because of its high cost, there are arguments on whether fluoridation should be implemented. The cheapest way of keeping teeth healthy is to chew an apple every morning and every night. The honourable member for Carnarvon did not take the opportunity to advocate that and sell his apples.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think fluoridation should be introduced in Brisbane?

Mr. BENNETT: The honourable member's maxilla seems to be out of place tonight, and his concentration is lacking. I have already dealt with fluoridation.

Dr. Crawford: His maxilla and mandible.

Mr. BENNETT: Apparently they are both out of position. Half the time it seems he is wearing a mask because they are so deformed.

The duties of doctors and dentists overlap to some extent. A person who applies for a life assurance policy or applies to join a service, such as the Public Service, is usually examined by a doctor. With all due respect to doctors, although they study dentistry to a slight extent, their skill in that sphere is not much greater than mine, even though their actual technical knowledge might be greater. Yet they have the impertinence and audacity to examine the teeth of the applicants I have mentioned. All they would know about the subject is how to administer an anaesthetic while a dentist took out teeth.

(Time expired.)

Amendment (Mr. Bennett) negatived.

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (9.8 p.m.), in reply: There appears to have been a great deal of agreement on the principles of the Bill. While there has been a considerable amount of discussion, the points at issue are not very important to the purposes of the Bill. It is true that the Bill is a consolidation and machinery measure. However, as has been pointed out, it does contain one or two important points. Probably the proposal for operative dental auxiliaries is the main departure from present arrangements in our dental service. While it will be implemented gradually and carefully, we hope that it will provide a considerable reinforcement of the dental forces in this State.

One or two points were raised. The honourable member for South Brisbane was rather disturbed because, among other things, we are making reference to the Medical Act and Other Acts (Administration) Act and are once more amending it. This is a machinery measure. As we amend various other Acts that are related to the Administration Act, minor amendments to the Administration Act are necessary. All we are doing on this occasion is changing the name of the board to the "Dental Board of Queensland." That is the sum total of the proposal. Therefore the honourable member was very much astray in being critical of our amending that Act.

Mr. Bennett: People in other circles would say that they are piddling amendments.

Mr. TOOTH: Yes, but the honourable member, as a lawyer, would realise the need to keep the Acts tidy. I am rather surprised that the honourable member takes exception to this amendment. His objection is somewhat out of character.

I think it was the honourable member for Nudgee who dealt with the supplying of artificial dentures. The total number of dentures supplied in dental hospitals and clinics throughout Queensland in the last financial year exceeded 25,000. That indicates that the department is not doing too badly, as a substantial need is being met in this field.

There was some talk of the value of allowing dental technicians to operate without the supervision of dentists, and without prescription by dentists. I think the advocates of unsupervised operation quoted the situation in Tasmania. I am advised that in that State today there are 15 fewer dentists than there were 13 years ago, due in no small measure to the policy of allowing dental technicians to invade their field. We do not want to lose dentists. They are in short supply everywhere, and if adoption of the theories of the honourable member for Nudgee and those who support him were to lead to a similar situation in Queensland, it would be very deplorable indeed, and a very retrograde step. We certainly wish to avoid such a situation.

I do not propose to proceed any further with discussion of the Bill. The problems that have been raised now will be discussed in greater detail at the second reading. When honourable members receive the Bill, they will find attached to it a set of explanatory notes that will facilitate a detailed and fuller discussion on the second reading.

Motion (Mr. Tooth) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a first time.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (9.14 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Children's Services Act 1965-1970 in certain particulars.”

It is necessary that consideration be given to amending the Children's Services Act 1965-1970 in certain aspects following, in some instances, comments by the judiciary and, in others, advice received from the Solicitor-General. In the main, the amendments are in the nature of clarification of provisions at present in the Act, but there are some involving change.

The Children's Services Act is humane in its approach to the needs of children and families. It affords protection for children who have bad home environments and who cannot remain in the custody of their parents. It provides for the relief of families to enable children to remain, if possible, in their home environment. It also assists those children who show abnormal behaviour and are involved in anti-social attitudes. It is a law that is subject continually to interpretation in courts at all levels, and in the department itself in its day-to-day functions. This day-to-day use of the Act makes it necessary for it to be under constant review. It is most desirable to ensure that, in our changing society, its provisions are keeping pace with the needs of people.

The demands on the Department of Children's Services are by no means diminishing. In all phases of its work there are greater demands stimulated by a relaxed approach to moral values and living generally. Following the agreement with the Commonwealth under which the State is recouped 50 per cent of its expenditure, the large increase in the payment of family assistance to deserted wives, wives of prisoners, unmarried mothers and other mothers living in a one-parent situation is of considerable concern, and the Treasurer has already made reference to it in his Budget statement. It

involves a need to change, in that the Act at present provides for the recovery of maintenance in respect of children only.

Now that the amount of assistance is at the same level as a widow's pension, it contains an element for the maintenance of the mother, and it is desirable that the deserting father be made to accept responsibility and not make his family a charge on State revenues. The incidence of paternal desertion is increasing alarmingly and, now that financial assistance from the State is much greater than it was in the past, there is not the same deterrent, particularly if proceedings do not follow, that will compel the father to contribute to the maintenance of his family.

The same situation applies with respect to illegitimacy, in that in many instances the girl-mother is left with the child and the father evades all responsibility. He, too, should be made to accept responsibility, at least for the maintenance of his child if it is retained by its mother and not adopted. More unmarried mothers are keeping their children, and to some degree the payments made by the State are allowing them to do this. The department does everything it can, within the limits of the law, to make deserting husbands and putative fathers meet their obligations, but this area is very complex. It involves really human problems and calls for the utmost care by the department in dealing with each individual case. The director must be given a great deal of discretion, but, on the other hand, he should be given every legal facility to recover expenditure from those who can well afford to pay.

In another area it has been found that there is need to amend the Act to enable a magistrate of Children's Courts to deal with children coming before him under the Mental Health Acts, 1962 to 1964, and at the same time to give each child the protection which a Children's Court affords. A child appearing before him for an offence may be found to need treatment in a special hospital. This provision will allow the court to deal there and then with the child so that it can receive appropriate treatment.

The amending Bill will also deal with children who, having committed major offences, must be held until the hearing by the Supreme or District Court and, if necessary, during the proceedings of those Courts. Up to the moment, the provisions of the Justices Acts have been relied upon, but it has been found that these Acts do not carry any specific provisions with respect to children. Although the children have been placed in the care of the director, strict interpretation of the law would require them to be in prison. It is most desirable that this situation be remedied.

Another problem which has been subject to comment by the judiciary is that relating to a child who attains the age of seventeen years in the course of a proceeding and is

then legally an adult. There has been discussion in the courts as to the interpretation of section 28 of the Children's Services Act and it is most necessary that the position be clarified so that if, when a proceeding commences when the offender is not seventeen years of age, during the proceeding the child attains seventeen years, the court may, in its discretion, continue to deal with the person as a child.

Section 62 is the section empowering courts to deal with children who have been found guilty of offences, and it is necessary that this section be reviewed to make it more flexible for the courts to deal with children and, at the same time, to extend the powers of the courts to determine the circumstances in which a child may not be convicted but still order restitution in respect of damage or loss occasioned by the offence, or order the child to reinstate property damaged or defaced in the course of the offence, or require the parent or guardian to pay restitution or compensation or enter into a recognisance for the good behaviour of the child.

It is not proposed to make any change or extension in that section of the Act which prevents reference being made to offences for which a child has previously been found guilty and not convicted. This particular provision, section 139, was included in the Act to protect children. There could be a single offence in a person's life, committed when a child, and it could serve no purpose in reviving the record. It could, in fact, be detrimental. Decisions to record, or otherwise, convictions in respect of a child vest in the courts and in no other authority. There is no way outside the authority of a court that an order can be made that a child should not be convicted. I know that there are some who consider that children should not be convicted, but I feel that this is an area that needs great care and study before being accepted.

There was recently some misunderstanding concerning this particular provision of the Act. A member of the judiciary claimed that the Children's Services Act debarred him from obtaining information with regard to three boys who were before him on a serious offence. This caused me some concern and I had careful inquiries carried out into the matter. I found that it was not the Act that was at fault but the persons responsible for presenting the case to the court. The three boys concerned certainly had committed previous offences, but there was not one instance when they had been dealt with on the basis that a conviction was not recorded. There was, therefore, no reason why the judge in question should not have been informed of the whole of the records of those three boys. The Act was, at the time, subject to some criticism in the Press because it was not made clear that it was not the Act that was at fault.

I should not like to see this particular provision of the Act affected in any way. A person can do foolish things in childhood which are later regretted, and would not be repeated in adult life. This is the very essence of this particular provision—to protect people who find themselves in these circumstances—but, as I said before, the power not to convict is not for universal use, but rests solely in the discretion of the courts.

There is at present no power to make restitution and the payment of costs part of the terms of a supervision order if a conviction is not recorded, but there are cases in which it would be desirable to include restitution and payment of costs in a supervision order, or to require the restoration of damaged or defaced property. An unfortunate case has arisen where a person suffered comparatively heavy loss but was unable to obtain restitution because the court concerned deemed it desirable not to convict the child. Although the court did make restitution a part of the order, it was found to be unenforceable. This has also allowed the offender to flaunt the law, and no doubt would encourage him in further anti-social acts. It has therefore been thought necessary to vest courts with the power to include, if necessary, the payment of compensation, restitution and costs, and the restoration of damaged or defaced property as terms of a supervision order. This will enable the child-care officer of the department to supervise compliance with this aspect of the order, as he does the other requirements.

I have previously spoken of my concern for children being left unattended for long periods, particularly in motor vehicles. When the Act was last amended in 1970, a regulation-making power was included to deal with this aspect of neglect. However, legal opinion advises that leaving children unattended for unreasonable periods should be brought specifically into the Act as an offence, and I propose that the Act should be amended accordingly.

Amongst other provisions which I propose should be amended, I mention the matter of children involved in street trading, principally the selling of newspapers. Under the law at present, school children over 12 years of age may sell newspapers provided they have a licence. The licensing of newsboys presents administrative difficulties, and to be really effective needs very extensive supervision. Even then it is doubtful if all boys concerned would be licensed. As the situation is similar in other States, it was discussed at the Conference of Child Welfare Ministers held in Hobart in March last, when it was decided that the requirements for street trading should be retained but, as all were experiencing difficulties with licensing procedures, licensing should be abolished. The general requirements, of course, are that the child must be a male over the age of 12 years, and that selling can take place only between the hours of 6.00 a.m. and 10.00

p.m. on any day, except during school hours. The observance of these requirements by employers will be expected, and will be subject to frequent checking.

The present law prohibits the issue of permits by the Director, Department of Children's Services, for children to perform in public entertainment on a Sunday. This, too, was discussed by the Commonwealth and State Ministers for child welfare, and they agree that there are occasions when a child may desire to perform on a Sunday and, rather than prohibit performances on a Sunday, control should be retained by the issue of permits by the Director.

There have been some unfortunate instances involving children whose names have been published as the result of court proceedings, even when they are only witnesses. We recall the case of a girl who had been placed in the care and control of the Director and who was achieving a successful rehabilitation when called as a witness in a case involving the misuse of drugs. The publication of her name caused her employer to consider she was also involved with drug misuse and she was dismissed. It was only after some hours of discussion by officers of the department and others who had cared for her that the employer accepted that she was not involved and she was reinstated. This could have had a serious effect on the girl.

Mr. Bennett: Frequently, if you don't publish their names, the police go around and tell their bosses. That is what the honourable member for Merthyr used to do.

Mr. TOOTH: That is another matter. No doubt the honourable member can supply details that can be dealt with.

Reverting to the girl in question, this incident could have had a serious effect on her, destroying much of the good work that had been done to help her with her difficulties.

There was another case also involving a girl who was under the supervision of the Director and who was also making a satisfactory rehabilitation. Her name was published as a witness, and this caused considerable embarrassment to her and her parents in their neighbourhood. It resulted in her leaving her school. In this case, definite damage was done and considerable effort had to be exercised by her supervising officer to restore the situation.

As the law now stands, the name and identity of a child may be published except if ordered otherwise by a court, but advice tendered to me is that this provision of the Act should be changed so that names and identification cannot be published unless this is deemed desirable by a court. This is reversing the present situation. I am quite sure honourable members will appreciate the necessity for this change,

particularly in cases where a child, as a witness, may suffer a detrimental reaction to undesirable publicity.

There are still some difficulties with respect to the provision to control and prescribe standards for day-care centres. Legal advice is that the power to license day-care centres must be included in the Act and cannot be included in the regulations unless the Act specifically so provides. This will receive attention in the proposed Bill.

Other matters to receive attention are: authority for a Children's Court to issue an interim order of custody and for an Acting Stipendiary Magistrate in addition to a Magistrate of Children's Courts or a Stipendiary Magistrate constituting a Children's Court to have jurisdiction in matters of guardianship and custody; and correction of the situation whereby once financial assistance is discontinued or a child ceases to be a child in care, money expended by the department in maintaining a family or a child in care cannot be recovered from the father, guardian or other person responsible to contribute to their maintenance.

I commend the Bill to the favourable consideration of honourable members.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (9.29 p.m.): Again the Minister has introduced a Bill of considerable importance to the community. I do not think that any other Government department that deals with social matters has attracted more attention than has the Department of Children's Services. It has come in for quite a deal of criticism in various ways and on various grounds. At the same time, I do not think that the work this department does is fully appreciated by the community. Within its limits and the jurisdiction of the legislation passed by Parliament, it is carrying out work that is playing a very important part in the lives of some unfortunate children. I commend Mr. Clark and his staff for the excellent work they do, and I also express my appreciation of the assistance that is always available when honourable members have to consult the Department of Children's Services.

This measure includes quite a number of important principles, and we cannot do justice to them at this stage. However, I shall comment briefly on a few of those that have been outlined by the Minister.

Firstly, the Minister referred to the responsibility of the paternal parent. A great deal of tightening-up needs to be done to sheet home to the paternal parent who deserts his wife that he has a great responsibility to provide for his children. I will be very interested to see how far the Bill goes in this regard.

Next, the Minister referred to children who appear before the courts. This is a matter of grave concern to the community, because often it is felt that miscarriages of justice could occur. I believe that this

Bill will go a long way towards tightening up the procedure in the Children's Court. As to the extension of the court's powers to deal with children who are found guilty but not punished, restitution to owners of property damaged in the commission of a crime is of great importance. The people who suffer such damage must be protected, so either the child or the parent must be held responsible for the restitution involved. I can assure the Minister that this principle will be closely examined by the Opposition.

The Minister also referred to the shocking practice of leaving children in locked cars. Time and again such cases have been reported to the police, who have found children in a state of exhaustion in locked motor vehicles parked in secluded areas while their parents are enjoying themselves in either hotels or night-clubs, or somewhere else. Such parents must have the enormity of their irresponsible action brought home to them.

I think the Minister said that the licensing of children who sell newspapers is to be removed.

Mr. Tooth: That is right, because of the difficulty of enforcing the wearing of arm bands, and so on.

Mr. MELLOY: Some control should be exercised over children who sell newspapers on the streets. I would imagine that some of them are only seven or eight years of age, and often they dart in and out between cars selling papers and thereby constitute a danger not only to themselves but also to road traffic. Their employment should be tightly controlled.

The problem of child performers in places of public entertainment has been referred to. This, too, should be looked at very closely. I do not know how far the Bill will go, but I believe that many young children who show artistic or acting ability are exploited by their parents. We should institute some control over the performances undertaken by these children. Perhaps we could regulate the amount of work they do. We might also investigate the effect of performances on their schooling and home life, the payments made to them, and the possible exploitation of their talents by parents who may not be particularly scrupulous. I am not sure if the Bill is designed to deal with any of these matters, but I believe that the control of child performers or actors should be investigated closely, with protection being provided for them in their own interests.

The Bill contains a provision dealing with the publication of the names of children involved in legal actions. This is more a matter for our "legal eagle", the honourable member for South Brisbane, because he has an extensive knowledge of Children's Court procedures. I am sure he will have something enlightening to say on this matter.

Before concluding, I must refer to payments made for children in care and the effect of other income on such payments. Recently I asked the Minister a question about the effect of Commonwealth payments on State payments in respect of these children. He advised me that, subsequent to the last increase in Commonwealth social service payments, 691 children and 605 families had been affected. I am sure that every honourable member must have received complaints about this serious matter. I do not believe that any social service payment should be regarded as income affecting children's service payments. If a parent goes to work or sells property and thus acquires added income, that might be taken into account; but when the Commonwealth Government believes that an increase in the cost of living warrants the payment of increased social service payments, that should not be offset by a decrease in payments made by the Children's Services Department. If the department believes that a parent should be paid a certain amount for children in care, that amount should be fixed. It should not be altered consequent upon an increased Commonwealth payment. The cost of living is increasing continually. If the Commonwealth Government believes that a mother requires more money, the family should get the benefit.

It seems that the Department of Children's Services is afraid that if Commonwealth payments are increased and the State payment is not reduced, the family income in some cases could exceed that of a normal family on the basic wage. It should be remembered that families with children in care live under exceptional circumstances. They do not even live the life of an ordinary family on the basic wage, where the mother might earn certain added income. Although the income from the Commonwealth and the Children's Services Department might approach the basic wage, that should not be held against a mother who is struggling to rear children on her own. Very often she has to pay someone to look after her children while she goes out to work for perhaps a couple of days a week. In some cases she may not be able to prove she pays this money. Therefore her income is really down, although she has been given an increase by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services.

Mr. Tooth: They never get less than they had before. In the latest change, everybody got an increase.

Mr. MELLOY: They might have got a portion of the increase, but they did lose on it.

Mr. Tooth: Everybody's total income went up.

Mr. MELLOY: Yes, but they did not get the benefit of the full increase.

Mr. Tooth: You said a moment ago that they would lose.

Mr. MELLOY: They are losing. Suppose they got an increase of \$1 from the Commonwealth, and the State deducted 80c. They would certainly get 20c more, but they would lose 80c that they should have got. This is terrible.

Mr. Tooth: I understand what you mean now. I did not understand before.

Mr. MELLOY: I know. There are many things the Minister does not understand. The department should fix its payments to children in care and leave them at that. If the department feels that those amounts are justified, they should be left as they are. If the Commonwealth increases the social service payment because of an increase in the cost of living, the department should let these people enjoy that benefit instead of taking one child off the scale.

Mr. Tooth: This creates serious social anomalies. This has been explained to you so often.

Mr. MELLOY: It is not an anomaly; it is a hardship.

Mr. Tooth: It creates serious anomalies.

Mr. MELLOY: In what regard? What are they?

Mr. Tooth: I have already enunciated them several times.

Mr. MELLOY: The Minister has told me that a dozen times, but it does not make sense. That is why I am raising it again. The department deprives people of the increased social service payments to which they are entitled. It is no credit to the Minister that the department takes a child off care payments because the parent is granted increased social service payments by the Commonwealth. The parent is entitled to that increased payment because of an increase in the cost of living. Previous to the granting of the increase, the department fixed the amount it would pay the parent. Why not leave the payment at that amount and let the parent enjoy the benefit of the increased social service payment? It does not cost the department anything, because it pays no more. It is committed to pay this amount before any increase is granted in the social service payment. An increase in the social service payment does not mean that the department has to increase its payment. It does not affect the department in any way. But the department takes advantage of this increase in income and reduces the amount it pays.

Mr. Tooth: The anomalous situations that arise are leading to major increases in the costs of the State.

Mr. MELLOY: What major increases? What do they get—\$2.50 for a child in care.

Mr. Tooth: The number coming on to these accounts is growing at a phenomenal rate. One of the reasons is the anomalous situations that are arising.

Mr. MELLOY: It does not matter what the number is. The Government's responsibility to each child does not decrease. The fact there are more of them means that it will cost the Government more, and it is the Government's responsibility.

Mr. Tooth: We have a responsibility to see that we do not create a situation which puts a premium on desertion.

Mr. MELLOY: The Government must continue to accept its responsibility. The number is increasing, but the Government's responsibility is not decreasing. That is no excuse. The Minister is using the increase in the number of children who are becoming a charge on the Government as an excuse for reducing the in-care payments that will be made. In reply to my question, the Minister admitted that, in 1970-71, the Government saved \$66,000 because so many children were taken off the scale. That is no credit to the Government. The Government has saved that amount, but it has deprived families of the same amount. In these times of inflation and economic hardship that has had a big effect on those families.

Do not tell me we can afford to take a salary increase of \$2,000 a year whilst the Government feels no compunction in reducing the amount paid to deserving children by \$66,000! The Minister talks about the increase in the cost to the Government of this assistance. It is the Government's responsibility to care for these children, no matter how many there are, and the Act should be amended to provide for continuity of payment in respect of children under care, irrespective of Commonwealth Social Services payments. The Government has a responsibility and it should face up to it, instead of trying to chisel on the people who sorely need assistance.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Before calling on the next speaker, I inform the Committee that, although I allowed the honourable member for Nudgee to speak on social services, that is not a matter contained in the Bill. I therefore ask other honourable members not to deal with it.

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (9.47 p.m.): It is a truism that children thrive in a home environment, and lapse into a state of disinterest and ill health when removed from it. We do not have to think back very far in contemporary history, to the experiment carried out by the hierarchy of Nazi Germany while attempting to breed a race of supermen, to see how true that statement is. In the modern context, I believe that Governments should be, and will need to continue to be, vehemently energetic in encouraging the setting up of the right type of foster homes and church homes, particularly those in which children are grouped in families of 6, 8 or 10, with foster parents. If this is done, the various problems presented by the

Children's Services Department, with which the Government has to cope, may be alleviated a little.

It is most important that a home environment be established. In fact, encouraging worth-while bodies in the community to set up correctly orientated homes, and also helping with capital funds, will be very much less expensive per child in the community needing care, and much more efficient, than maintaining large State-run institutions. Many parents in this modern age do not wish to accept their individual responsibilities, and parents who feel this way cannot really be forced to accept their responsibilities to look after their children and treat them well.

I wonder if we sometimes organise our legislation, and our lives, purely to suit convenience and expediency, rather than to provide for the welfare of children. This certainly applies in many financial aspects, and some of the things said by the honourable member for Nudgee are indeed true. If we always bore in mind that the only thing that matters is the welfare of the child and how we can best attend to this increasing problem in the community, I think we might attempt to adopt different standards. We may perhaps even attempt to have a more humane and practical outlook on the financial aspect of our involvement.

The law is now tending to remove punitive measures from the handling of delinquent and difficult children. This is something that should be applauded. Probably the best method of disciplining a child is to attempt to have the child make restitution, especially when that restitution involves some physical work such as rebuilding a rock wall that has been knocked down at a school, or helping with carpentry restoration under supervision.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Replanting a broken tree.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Replanting a broken tree, as the honourable member suggests, is a very desirable additive in that context.

It certainly is no good telling a child in the old-fashioned way that he is wrong or needs to be punished without pointing out to him that his punishment will have to be of a practical type. The over-all reforms of penology throughout our land in recent years have tended to emphasise the rehabilitation aspect of all criminal and delinquent activity. Therefore, we should be able to apply some of the lessons we have learnt in this respect to children and their rehabilitation. The basic tenet is, I believe, to have the child accept both his normal responsibility as a junior citizen and also his individual responsibility for all his actions. If this can be inculcated into him at a tender age, he will be much more easily moulded as he grows. Many responsible bodies in this field

believe that the characteristics of a child have already been firmly established by the time he is seven or eight.

The social service funds provided to deserted families lead to very great difficulties, and honourable members have heard of some of them during the debate. I believe that there should be Commonwealth and State co-operation to secure information as to the whereabouts of an absconding father, even if taxation records have to be searched for the specific purpose of locating him.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! There is far too much audible conversation on my left.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It has been accepted over the years that the Federal taxation records are sacrosanct and cannot be used for other purposes. So far as the general workings of the community are concerned, no doubt that is a reasonable premise. But as greater numbers of children and greater numbers of wives and families are deserted by irresponsible males who then move to another State and set up residence there and produce more children, it seems to me a very grave anomaly that that situation is accepted. This is simply because it is not the "done thing", or not "cricket", to use every means of locating the absconding male and forcing him to accept at least some of his financial responsibilities. In my opinion, the only way in which that can be done is by using the Commonwealth taxation records. There is no reason why such records should be used other than for the purpose of locating the male parent, and the integrity of the officers of the Taxation Department would have to be accepted if such a measure were instituted.

If the present situation is condoned, it will be found that, as the whole matter escalates in numbers because of the changing nature and the types of strata of society in which we move, the Department of Children's Services will be inundated by requests for assistance. I understand that corresponding departments in other States have indicated that they believe that the whole matter is mainly a Commonwealth responsibility, but the adoption of that attitude can only mean that the children will suffer.

Mr. Newton: Are you quibbling about what we are doing here?

Dr. CRAWFORD: We do something in this State.

Mr. Newton: We have done it for years.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I know that, but in other Australian States the Governments—

Mr. Newton: Just prove what you are saying and don't condemn this State because it is doing something.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am not.

Mr. Newton: Labor Governments did it before the present Government came to office.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am well aware of that, I am not making that point.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: You are speaking in approbation.

Dr. CRAWFORD: That is right; "approbation" is the correct word.

Maltreated children, battered children and others who need special care are, in my view, a predictable result of the various types of situation that one now finds in society, particularly due to the fact that parents abscond and that the remaining parent then finds a new partner and no-one is prepared to accept the responsibility for a child. A society which values life so lightly that it condones that type of treatment of its children is not surprisingly a society which accepts thoughts of abortion on demand and euthanasia. In this context I would mention that the United Kingdom in the last two or three years has three or four times attempted to introduce euthanasia laws. If that is the sort of society in which we are to live, I wish to have no part of it.

We must re-establish human values and not just pay lip-service to the dignity of the individual. Individual dignity is the basic kernel of the whole problem with children's services. If we cannot maintain the dignity of the individual in these matters, we are very poor citizens indeed.

Finally, if social service payments are decreased when an older child goes to work, as they are in Queensland, that child may, and often does, leave home. He leaves home because if he remains and the over-all family income is reduced by reason of his earnings, it is in some respects an advantage to his mother to have him out of the house. This is a matter which needs extremely careful thought in the actual adjustment of the amounts paid. I know several families, as I am sure other honourable members do, in which two or three—

Mr. Newton: There wouldn't be any in Wavell.

Dr. CRAWFORD: We have three Housing Commission areas in Wavell. I know several families in which two or three older children have actually left the family home that is maintained perhaps by a deserted mother of five or six children. If the older children remain in the home, the payments the mother receives from the Department of Children's Services are decreased. The Minister, and no doubt the Director of Children's Services, could formulate a very good theoretical argument why that should be done.

Mr. Newton: Why doesn't the Commonwealth Government accept its responsibilities in that situation?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I do not doubt that a formula could be worked out to provide greater justice than presently exists.

Mr. Newton: Why doesn't the Commonwealth Government accept its responsibilities?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I have just been talking about the Commonwealth Government. I ask the honourable member to please let me talk about the State Government.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated by the Chair. I warn the honourable member for Belmont.

Mr. Newton: Where is the honourable member for Belmont?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I will help the honourable member to locate himself in a moment.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Thank you, Mr. Lickiss.

I am endeavouring to draw a parallel between the moneys provided by the State and the moneys provided by the Commonwealth. Although other States do rely almost completely on Commonwealth money, we attempt in Queensland, rightly or wrongly, to use both Commonwealth money and State money. The plea I was attempting to make was that in the situation where the mother is attempting to rear four or five children by herself, a very careful examination should be made of the finances of that family when the elder children go to work, so that the reduction of the money paid to her does not result in her being worse off by keeping her children at home in the family environment. It is happening all the time. I am sorry that the honourable member for Belmont is not aware of that.

Mr. Newton: I know it is; don't worry about that! I will talk about it later. Never mind about it being a State responsibility; it is a Commonwealth responsibility.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Newton: Don't worry about that for one minute. I'll tell you about the Commonwealth Government.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! If the honourable member for Belmont does not desist from persistent interjections, I shall have to deal with him.

Mr. Newton: That is all right by me, too.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Belmont under the provisions of Standing Order No. 123A for continuing to be disorderly. I trust I will not have to warn the honourable gentleman further.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I have very little more to say on this matter but children's services legislation is a matter, I believe, that we should have a look at regularly. I disagree with the principle espoused, I think, by the honourable member for South Brisbane that all matters can be tied up at the one time. I do not think that applies to this type

of situation or to this type of Act, because our social services position continues to change as our society continues to change.

Mr. Bennett: Put us in the saddle and we will show you how.

Dr. CRAWFORD: Even if the honourable member for South Brisbane was riding Phar Lap around Eagle Farm, I doubt that he would be a winner.

Mr. Bennett: Don't suggest that I would be riding a dead horse. Give me a chance!

Dr. CRAWFORD: It might be more appropriate to suggest that he continues to flog horses alive or dead. However, I make a final plea to honourable members of this Assembly to examine these problems and to keep before them an awareness of the difficulties of the problems. I appeal also to the Department of Children's Services to extend the greatest possible leniency to deserted families, because many of these women who are rearing five or six children are doing a job that very few of us would care to tackle.

Mrs. JORDAN (Ipswich West) (10.2 p.m.): Like most honourable members, I am very interested in the matter of caring for children who have had a poor family life, particularly those who have been abandoned by their fathers and are being brought up by their mothers.

This Bill contains several amendments that are of extreme interest to the majority of the general public. These amendments will be an improvement on the present Act and will be of advantage both to these children and to their mothers. In most cases it is the father who absconds, leaving the mother to care for the children as best she can. Most mothers do not know what assistance is available to them, and they often flounder around for weeks before going to the department or before someone tells them to see their State member of Parliament, who advises them on the help they can get.

Mr. Sherrington: They have a great fear that their children will be taken away from them.

Mrs. JORDAN: As the honourable member for Salisbury says, they have a great fear that their children will be taken from them. Literally dozens of mothers, when they have come to me for help, have asked me, "Will they take my children from me?" The last thing the majority of mothers want is to lose their children.

I think one of the best things the department has done in recent months is to take over the responsibility for collecting maintenance. The mother still has to go to court, but when she gets a court order for maintenance it is often found that the husband pays up for a couple of weeks and then defaults, and the mother is left without any money coming in. She gets very confused and does not know what to do. Eventually

she has to go to court again. This goes on and on, and the more the father defaults the less money the mother has to cope with the situation.

It is a splendid thing that the department has taken over the collection of maintenance from the father. This is one of the most important steps the department has taken in a long time, and it will be of tremendous help to deserted wives with children. Even though an arrangement is entered into between the various States, very often a deserting father cannot be found, and therefore no action can be taken against him. Of course, some deserting husbands are very smart. In many instances they leave their wives because they want to "duck" their responsibilities. In other instances—I am sure the Director will agree with me on this—they take on too many financial commitments, get too deeply into debt, particularly with hire-purchase, and squabble with their wives about the shortage of money in the home.

Mr. Sherrington: In many cases they are badgered into it by door-to-door salesmen.

Mrs. JORDAN: That is true. I do not think the relevant Act has closed the gap. If I might digress for a moment, I mention a particular family consisting of a husband and wife and five children. Unfortunately the husband died and, because the mother was in financial difficulties and could not afford to continue to live where she was—in fact, she was told to get out—she applied for a Housing Commission rental home. I was amazed at the number of hire-purchase commitments that she set out in the relevant section of the form. There is no way in the world that she will be able to meet all of them out of the widow's pension, which she will eventually receive.

In many instances it is simply a case of people not realising the priorities. Often they are either ill-educated or ill-advised, or even "pressurised" into debt, and the shortage of money has an adverse effect on their families and, in many instances, leads the father to desert. Of course, other things cause husbands to leave their wives, but particularly in Ipswich I have found that financial worries are the cause of the squabbling, with the result that the husband runs away from his commitments. Neither the mother nor the father seems to realise that the order of priorities is wrong. In fact, a family that lived near me—a mother and father with a number of children—regularly borrowed money from me on Wednesday afternoons and always repaid me on Saturday mornings after they had received their pay. However, when they used to call to repay the money they owed, their children always had a number of toys or books and other things that were not of much use. Their parents wasted their money on them, thinking that the children should have some enjoyment, but they had their priorities completely wrong.

Unfortunately, as a result of the gimmick advertising that leads people to purchase trivial items that they do not need, many parents are in financial difficulties. Although this has nothing to do with the Bill, it is a shocking thing. Recently I visited Garden City and found that beside each check-out there is a bin full of little toys costing up to 50c each. Naturally, as the mother passes through the check-out the children with her see these knick-knacks, and because she is tired she gives in and buys them. Often, as soon as the children get outside, the toys fall to pieces. It seems that mothers of deprived children are particularly prone to fall for such gimmicks, which are merely a form of capitalist advertising to promote business. It is shocking that this sort of thing should be taking place within the community.

The environment in which a child is raised has a tremendous influence on his character and future attitude, even at the early age of 18 months. Children realise at a tender age when they are loved; they appreciate how they are treated, and develop according to the treatment they receive in their formative years. At one time it was thought that they were unaffected till they were five, but it is now recognised that they are affected at a much younger age. This early conditioning is carried through to adulthood. It is very hard to alter early bad conditioning once adulthood is reached and a great deal of compassion and co-operation is required. When a person is trying to change such an attitude in an adult a great deal of understanding is required, but very often it is impossible to effect a change. In many instances the whole family, and even the mother's attitude to life, can be affected. I am deeply worried about the tremendous increase in this problem.

I commend the Director, Mr. Clark, and his staff, on the very humane way in which they deal with cases brought to their notice. In some instances they cannot help, and in others people try to "put it over" them. If the department should be taken in, others in need suffer because money has been unwittingly wasted. Over the years I have come to realise how the department can be misled, with the result that the really needy may suffer by not getting what they are entitled to, simply because someone has "put over" a plausible story.

We should be deeply concerned about ensuring that deserted mothers and their children get enough money to raise their children in reasonable conditions.

Nowadays many more unmarried mothers wish to keep their babies. In earlier years the family quietly put the babies in a home and tried to pretend that they did not exist. The baby would then be adopted out.

Mr. Hughes: Social service benefits help them in this way.

Mrs. JORDAN: Social service payments help them tremendously, and the Children's Services Department is doing a good job.

Many more girls are now being encouraged to keep their babies. I will be talking to Mr. Clark shortly about one case in which the mother of a young girl who became pregnant wanted to commit suicide. Very often the innocent girls who do not know the facts of life are carried away by their emotions. They are not aware of the possible consequences of their actions, and they become pregnant. It is very seldom that bad girls have babies. They know the ropes and are not caught. I believe that in eight cases out of 10 it is the innocent girls who are caught.

In the case I have just mentioned, the daughter became pregnant. Her mother, who was a widow, had pneumonia. She wanted to commit suicide. Fortunately, a younger daughter phoned me. I was able to visit the mother and talk to her. She wanted to have the baby adopted out, but the girl wanted to keep the baby. She has now had the baby and the whole thing has been accepted as a matter of course. He is a beautiful baby boy, and everybody is happy. This indicates how attitudes have changed. She is not the first and certainly will not be the last. In this particular case, as in a number of cases, the father has absconded. The unmarried mother does not know where he is. I am sure that this matter will be ironed out by the Children's Services Department and that she will be given assistance.

There is far too much of this sort of thing and of parents without a feeling of understanding. In cases such as this, far too many parents become thoroughly disgusted with the daughter and ashamed of her, and cast her out at the very time when she needs her parents more than ever before. I admire parents who stick by their daughters at such times. I do not think these girls should be made to suffer for something that happens in their early years.

I am glad that convictions will be avoided wherever possible when children come before the courts. I do not think punishment is the answer. We speak of rehabilitation but many young people, particularly girls, have no means of rehabilitation. It is a case of education rather than rehabilitation. It is a case of being sympathetic with them and trying to understand why they have taken the course they have. Very often there is a background story or reason for their hitting out at the world. Many of them feel that the world is against them. They carry a chip on their shoulder and wonder how they can punish others. It needs understanding to get into the minds of these people and to find out just what is making them tick. If we are understanding, we will do much in this regard.

We are adopting more modern and humane attitudes to many of these matters, and the provisions of the Bill will help to achieve a

lot. I did not catch all of the proposals outlined by the Minister, as he spoke quickly on matters that are quite involved. This department has a very wide scope and application.

I shall leave anything further I have to say until I have seen the Bill and have had time to study it.

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (10.19 p.m.): I welcome the introduction of the Bill. In the field of children's services, we are keeping pace with the general mood of the community. We are affording protection to those children who come within the ambit of the department's activities. We are assisting them in their rehabilitation. The general problem of rehabilitation among youth is a growing one. Unfortunately, the difficulties that are coming to the notice of the Children's Court and the department are increasing in number and complexity. It is unfortunate that this is the case in our modern society.

Under the Children's Services Act, the Children's Court has authority to refer young people considered to be suitable cases to an agency licensed under the Act to carry out the work of rehabilitation. It is on one of these agencies that I wish to make some comments tonight. The Shaftsbury Citizenship Centre has been operating for some years, and it is now offering its ninth course in Queensland. It is handling 60 young people who are referred to it each year by the Children's Court, and it is hoped that in the near future, when new premises are completed, that number will be dramatically increased.

In my opinion, this is a project that is unique not only in Australia but in the world. Its director, Alan Male, is a very able young man who is eager to provide assistance to young people in needy circumstances, and who has a great capacity for this type of rehabilitation work. This is a project conducted jointly by Shaftsbury Homes, the Department of Children's Services, and the Rotary Club of Brisbane North. This example of co-operation between community service organisations and the Department of Children's Services for the provision of this type of service leads the field in Australia in a most worth-while area of endeavour.

In the past, it has been the practice for children, when asked to do so, to report to the Department of Children's Services once a month. Those children had to present themselves to an officer of the department once monthly, when they were asked various questions about how their rehabilitation was proceeding. I think it would be fair to say that, as a modern-type of rehabilitation service, this is useful but very sketchy. The Shaftsbury Citizenship Centre offers a new concept of rehabilitation, and I think that what is being attempted will be of interest to honourable members.

The centre is endeavouring to bring to the children referred to it a greater involvement

in the community. They attend the centre once a week, and a genuine attempt is made by the director and his staff to relate with them. The operative word is "relate", and the staff endeavour to "get under their skins", and get them involved in the community in which they live. They are given special individual assistance to attain their niche in the community and get back onto the rails, as it were. It is working exceptionally well.

In the past, much assistance has been given to youth requiring rehabilitation, but youth services and activities have generally been on the physical side. In this respect, very useful work has been done throughout the State by the Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association and the National Fitness Council, but the accent has been on physical activities alone. The Shaftsbury Citizenship Centre accents physical activities, too, but it goes further than that. This is what has made it unique not only in Queensland but in the world.

On his first appearance at the centre, each person is issued with a uniform. Each Saturday the referees appear at the centre. Trips are organised to various places of interest. There have been trips up the river on a launch of the Water Police. These young people have visited the paper mill, fire brigade headquarters, and various other places of interest in Queensland. Such visits have been of great use to them. They have also visited Marburg, Caloundra, Toowoomba and other centres. Most worthy of note is the attempt to involve parents in the over-all rehabilitation situation.

A further feature worthy of mention is that, in the future, it is hoped to run courses that actively involve the parents of children who have been referred to the centre. Some feelers have been put out and already there has been a tremendous response, particularly because young men are offered a graduation ceremony on completing a six-months course. Usually they are very keen to line up at their graduation ceremony at the end of six months and receive their graduation certificate from someone such as the Commissioner of Police, who made the presentations recently, and their parents are actively involved in it.

The Minister referred in his introductory remarks to particular amendments of the Act designed to give greater powers to the court to insist on restitution. I point out to the Committee that the centre has been doing that as part of its over-all programme. The young men who have been involved have been made to discuss the problem and have offered to go out and restore damage that they have caused. I know that some recent graduates of the centre are now working in the Navy in an endeavour to repay to their parents the amount that the parents lost when the young men absconded with the family car one night and rolled it over. That is the type of thing that is instilled into their minds that they should be doing

as citizens in the community. They are willing and happy to do it, and it is useful both to them and to the community.

I think also that the involvement with the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards has been very useful. It is in respect of week-end referral that the scheme is most valuable, because that is when young fellows find themselves with time on their hands and it is when some of the best work in rehabilitation is done. That is why I find fault with some centres, such as the H. G. Fielding Police Youth Centre in the Valley, which closes at week-ends, when it is most urgently needed, and is hired out to clubs wishing to hold dances or some other functions.

New plans are being envisaged for potential expellees from high schools to be referred to the citizenship centre, and they are very desirable. I think it is worth while recording also that the Government has assisted the centre to the extent of about \$37,500 by way of a 50 per cent subsidy on its \$75,000 investment with which it is now proceeding.

I bring to the attention of the Minister the fact that of the \$50,000 allocated by his department to youth work each year, the organisation to which I am referring, which is doing some of the most realistic work in Queensland in the youth field, receives an allocation of \$500—exactly the same amount as the Rockhampton Archery Club receives. I suggest that the centre desires a proportionately higher allocation.

I do not wish to take up too much of the time of the Committee, but I believe that Alan Male and his association have done wonderful work in the area of youth rehabilitation and in understanding "kids". Their methods have worked exceptionally well. Although the problem is very complex, Alan Male has proved that there are answers. In my opinion, there should not only be one Shaftsbury Citizenship Centre in Queensland. The results already achieved have proved that there ought to be others at Southport, Toowoomba, Mackay, Cairns—in fact, in all centres in the State—in the future. I hope that on the experience to date the value of that type of work will be recognised and that it will be extended to other areas of the State. The secret of it is that Alan Male and his leaders have been able to relate with the people who have been referred to them. They have been able to get through to them, and put them onto the path that we want them to follow.

Recently the graduates were asked to write back and say what they thought of the centre. One of them wrote the following:—

"The Shaftsbury course was one of the best clubs or groups I've been in. At the start I thought I hope this isn't another Bogga Road Jail, but it turned out all-right and the leaders were friendlier than I thought they took us to a stack of places and I thought the best

out of the lot was the two camps one at teen-Ranch Marburg, the other at Camp Cal Caloundra. We had fun visiting these places been shown how machinery works and how things were packed and stacked and receiving free samples as well as supper at a few places. One other great thing about is that they give you bus fares for the next week and always give us morning tea every Saturday morning. And overall I think the course was good and I think it was good of the men to come back to work in their own time just to show us around the factory. The leaders try to help you as much as they can and on the camp at Marburg we went on trips in the Bus and at Caloundra we went to the beech a lot."

That is a direct quote from a letter which indicates the success of what has been done for a young delinquent who was in very poor circumstances when he was referred. I bring these matters to the notice of the Committee because I feel that this experiment has achieved results, and it could definitely have wider application in the field of rehabilitation in Queensland, and not only among youth. Worth-while results have been achieved in this instance, and I suggest to those in authority that that type of work ought to be extended in the State. Alan Male's byword is that investment in youth is better than paying bail. It has certainly achieved results in this instance.

I support the Bill before the Committee.

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (10.33 p.m.): Mr. Lickiss—

Mr. Bennett interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lickiss): Order! I call the Treasurer.

Mr. Bennett: I was up first. You should not be so one-eyed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will resume his seat.

Mr. Bennett: We have had only two speakers.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I have called the Treasurer.

Mr. Bennett: I demand that I get the call.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Sir GORDON CHALK: I move—
"That the question be now put."

Mr. Bennett interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for South Brisbane under the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. Bennett: I have sat here all night and I can't get the right to speak.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I now ask the honourable member for South Brisbane to leave the Chamber.

Mr. Bennett: You have a motion before you.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already asked the honourable member for South Brisbane to leave the Chamber.

Mr. Bennett: I have to gather up my gear before I can go. I have had my notes ready to speak for two hours.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will remain silent while he is gathering up his gear.

Mr. Hughes: What about me? I wanted to speak, too.

Mr. Bennett: You haven't got the "guts". You don't get up and protest.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Whereupon the honourable member for South Brisbane withdrew from the Chamber.

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 39

Armstrong	Lane
Bird	Lee
Bjelke-Petersen	Loneragan
Camm	Low
Campbell	McKechnie
Chalk	Miller
Chinchen	Moore, R. E.
Cory	Murray
Crawford	Newbery
Delamothe	Porter
Fletcher	Rae
Herbert	Row
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Sullivan
Hewitt, W. D.	Tomkins
Hinze	Tooth
Hodges	Wharton
Hooper	
Houghton	
Hughes	Tellers:
Kaus	Ahern
Knox	Müller

NOES, 27

Baldwin	Marginson
Blake	Melloy
Bousen	Moore, F. P.
Bromley	Newton
Casey	O'Donnell
Davis	Sherrington
Dean	Thackeray
Hanlon	Tucker
Hanson	Wallis-Smith
Harris	Wood, P.
Houston	
Inch	Tellers:
Jensen	Wood, B.
Jones, R.	Wright
Jordan	

PAIR:

Hungerford Aiken

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion (Mr. Tooth) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Tooth, read a first time.

MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL
(No. 2)

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (10.44 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Mining Act 1968-1971 in certain particulars and for other purposes."

In introducing the Bill, I point out that the Mining Act 1968 was assented to on 23 December 1968 and the Mining Act Amendment Act 1971 received assent on 22 April 1971. The Mining Act 1968-1971 will come into force on 1 January 1972, and it has been found that several amendments are necessary to clear up anomalies that have become apparent. Leases applied for before 1 January 1972 are deemed to be applications for mining leases under the new Act—that is, the Mining Act 1968-1971—and as from that date are subject to the terms of that Act. This provision applies also to authorities to prospect already in existence.

The new Act specifically provides that a lease applied for on an area held under an authority to prospect cannot be granted unless the holder of the authority to prospect agrees. There was no such provision in the former Act, and this aspect was handled ministerially. The new Act appears to act retrospectively in so far as it could bring applications for mining leases on authority to prospect made before the commencement of the Act under the new provisions requiring the approval of the holder of the authority, and this could effect litigation at present before the Supreme Court. An amendment to clarify this position is essential and is incorporated in the Bill.

The minimum age for a natural-born person to take up a lease is 18 years, but section 21 could be interpreted to mean that a company must also be in existence for 18 years before it can take up a lease. This is being corrected.

The power to resume mineral freeholds which was contained in the Mining on Private Lands Acts was continued in the Mining Act Amendment Act of 1971. However, the paragraph requiring compensation to be paid for the value of minerals contained in the land was inadvertently omitted, and it is now being inserted.

Doubt exists as to whether the Mining on Private Land Acts 1909 to 1965 were repealed as from the date the Mining Act Amendment Act 1971 received royal assent or whether they remained in force until the intended date, that is, 1 January 1972. A proposed amendment will remove any doubt and will protect and preserve anything done under the Mining on Private Land Acts until the Mining Act 1968-1971 comes into force.

Opportunity has been taken also to correct several typographical and grammatical errors that have become evident. The Bill contains necessary and desirable provisions, and I commend it to the Committee.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (10.48 p.m.):
Mr. Hooper, —

Mr. Hughes: The mining magnate from Gladstone.

Mr. HANSON: In reply to the honourable member for Kurilpa I might say that my association with the mining industry is certainly clean, which cannot possibly be said about some Government members.

This is a short measure, designed to regularise many apparent anomalies that might occur should there be a confrontation under the provisions of the Mining Act 1968-1971 and the Act that we passed in this Assembly during the last session and was assented to on 22 April this year. Many things can lead to litigation. Companies or others who are interested in, or have made applications for mineral leases on authorities to prospect could certainly find themselves confronted with a mixture of legal jargon and considerable difficulty concerning the misinterpretation of what was intended by the various Acts, and what was in the mind of the Legislature when the legislation was debated.

The Mines Department, the Minister for Mines and Opposition members do not want a state of affairs in which people are unduly inconvenienced and disadvantaged by multitudinous legal terms that can only confuse the issues. Simplicity is very desirable and necessary in any legislation, and particularly mining legislation. The administrative staff of the Mines Department is bogged down with hundreds of applications and the interpretation of various Acts and regulations which were passed with the intention of simplifying matters but are in fact confusing because of the likely confrontation between the Mining Act 1968-1971 and the Mining Act Amendment Act that was proclaimed in April this year. Leases applied for prior to 1972 are now deemed to be applications under the Act proclaimed in April.

The Minister said that the age provision needs clarification. The minimum age under the Mining Act Amendment Act 1971 is 18 years. Confusion exists on whether this applies to a company, and confusion could arise between this provision and the one in the Mining on Private Land Act.

A considerable amount of concern has been expressed recently about the mining industry generally. In the past few months there have been considerable moves in world trade and there has been a deterioration in the requirement for base metals. Many large companies which are engaged in extracting ore from the earth and processing it are finding that world markets are temporarily over-supplied with base metals.

For the sake of Queensland and Australia I hope that this situation is only temporary, because we do not want to lose the obvious advantages that could occur in creating job opportunities for young people. In addition, we do not want a depressed state in the mineral industry because this could react against the economic future of Queensland and of Australia. This situation has created worries for a considerable number of people. These international marketing problems affect the smaller companies in Australia, which create employment for young people.

The new legislation pertaining to mining in every State, including Queensland, was conceived at a time of great mineral boom. Naturally, we on this side of the Chamber believe that the people of this State should enjoy many of the benefits accruing from the development of natural resources. That is a wise and fruitful policy for any political party to adopt.

As I have already said, when mining legislation has been conceived in a time of great boom, one has to look to the foreseeable future when there may be, as there is in the international field now, a temporary recession, and considering what may then be required under mining Acts is certainly a headache for responsible administrators. The Australian Labor Party, both in Government and Opposition, has, after much discussion and argument, produced the policies that we now pursue in our attempts to advance this country, and we believe that the rule of common sense should apply in times of difficulty. No-one on this side of the Chamber wants to hinder the progress of mineral development in this State. At the same time, we have our principles and a set of guide-lines laid down after much discussion within our party, and we feel that ours is the right and sane course to adopt in considering what should happen for the betterment of the mining industry of Queensland.

We believe that there is a need to impress upon Governments the right of mineral explorers to hold certain areas at minimum rentals, but we also think that conditions should be laid down under which speculative trading in exploration titles is prohibited. We believe that many of the guide-lines laid down years ago by the Labor Party when it was in Government were well chosen and, indeed, were the forerunners of legislation by later Governments to ensure that there was no unnecessary exploitation by people who were avariciously inclined. I am sorry that the honourable member for Kurilpa is not in the Chamber to hear those last few words. The system provides the possibility of transfer of certain exploration licences that have at times been granted, but the Opposition still believes that some rigid form of control is necessary.

I do not know whether, in the few short months that have been available, a proper study has been made of the minimum age

requirement. I firmly believe that, with the present temporary recession in the exploration side of mining, few people who were even near the age of 18 years would want to take out authorities to prospect or mineral leases. The amendment to section 21 of the Act will clarify the position of a company. It is only a minor one, and I do not think that honourable members on this side of the Chamber will disagree with it, because the administration is trying to regularise the position.

The measure is only a small one and does not appear to raise any undue difficulties. However, as I said earlier, notice should be taken of warnings that have been given within the mineral industry. The problems of the industry at present are principally in the field of markets. Naturally, they have a restrictive effect on the production of minerals for export, and there could be a kick-back in employment. Australian producers have to compete with suppliers in other parts of the world and there is very keen competition on international markets. In my opinion, Governments must play a more positive role in ensuring that finances are husbanded and that any money made available for exploration is spent wisely.

It is possible that in future years, because of the State's huge coal deposits and the likely transfer of iron pellets from Western Australia, a steel industry could be established in Queensland. I hope that possibility becomes a reality, although the present depressed world market for base metals does not make such a scheme probable in the near future. Many feasibility studies will have to be carried out and many years of organisation undertaken before a steel industry can be established here, but I trust that the Government senses the possibility and that eventually something will be done in that direction. I hope, of course, that a Labor Government will enable a steel industry to be set up in Queensland.

As I say, there is at present a considerable over-supply of base metals; the steel-manufacturing industry has a capacity greater than it needs at present. In some countries people are stockpiling considerable quantities of base metals that have come from the minerals extracted from the soil of this State. Because of that, it may be necessary to rethink the Mining Act at a later stage and provide for relaxation of certain conditions now applying particularly to smaller companies that are engaged in the expensive task of extracting ores from the earth.

On behalf of the Opposition, I indicate that, although honourable members on this side of the Chamber wish to have a closer look at the Bill when it is printed, I cannot see anything fundamentally wrong with the proposals now before the Committee.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton South) (11.4 p.m.): Although I support the amendments

proposed by the Minister, I wish to voice my concern about some aspects of the mining industry in Queensland.

It has often been said that, although the Japanese may not have won the war, they have certainly won the peace, and I believe that I speak for many Queenslanders when I express some disapproval of the Government's policy for the mining industry in this State. In my opinion, there are great dangers in allowing the mineral wealth of the State to be tied up in leases and controlled by overseas companies in which Australian equity is very small—in fact, in many instances there is none. There are too many restrictions on Australian interests. I had instances of this even within my own family. Members of my family found mineral deposits and took out authorities to prospect, but because mining leases were held by big companies they could do nothing about the deposits. That has happened in many parts of Queensland. People in Central Queensland came to see me because they had the same difficulty. They have prospected and found deposits, but can do nothing about them because of the leases held by overseas interests.

It is all very well to say that because of their tremendous investment those companies must have some safeguard for the future. But Queensland, too, has a future. We have seen what happens if companies are allowed to tie up various products. We should be very careful about what is happening in this State. I should like the Minister to tell us the acreage of Queensland presently held by foreign interests. I am speaking only of the mining industry.

In order to hold their leases, the mining companies have to test them or work them. Allegations have been made that all that the company does is to put a pick in the ground and turn a sod, and in that way it claims to have met its obligations. That has been stated on so many occasions that I feel that there must be some truth in it.

Queensland is gaining only a pittance from the mining industry. Reference has been made in the Chamber to the payment of something like \$5,000,000 in royalties. Although the Minister may talk about the employment that has been provided by mining, we must remember the tremendous costs to the Government of providing railway lines, ports and various other facilities for mining interests. Mining has helped Central Queensland, but many parts of Central Queensland have gained nothing from the mining ventures in that area.

We have the growth of places like Blackwater, Moura and Gladstone, but I am very pessimistic about what would happen if, overnight, the companies decided they would no longer use Central Queensland coal. Who would suffer? It is the people of Queensland who have outlaid the money to supply the railway lines and other facilities. It is the Queensland Government that has provided

the Housing Commission homes in those areas. On behalf of the people, it is the Queensland Government that has spent the money. The overseas companies could say tomorrow, "We don't want your coal." Because of some supposed industrial problem they could say that they no longer intend to mine our coal. With the entry of China into the United Nations, we do not know what is going to happen to our mineral industries. Although the mineral wealth of China is unknown, it has been suggested that it is fantastic. What is going to happen if Japan enters into an economic arrangement with China so that Australia no longer plays an important part in her overseas trade? It is very detrimental to Queensland's future to tie ourselves down with overseas investors.

It is often said that colonisation ended in the 19th century. I believe that we are seeing a new type of colonialism—the type propagated by countries like America and Japan. It is time those companies put something back into the State. It is all very well to say that they are providing employment, but how long do their activities last, and who really benefits from them? It is all very well to say that they are opening up new areas and that in their own right they are decentralisers, but the wealth should be put back into the State. I concur with the honourable member for Port Curtis when he says, "Let us develop our products. Let us exploit our mineral wealth from the mining stage to the end product."

What Queensland needs is a steel industry. We have the requirements. Very shortly, with the power station being built near Gladstone, we will have the necessary power. We have the iron ore and the coal, so we can well ask why the issue has not been forced.

The Minister stated when he was in Central Queensland that one day we would have a steel industry. But we should not be waiting; it is time to act now.

In countries like Germany, Japan and America, industries that move into an area are restricted and told what to do by the Government. I have been told by people who have been to America that companies do not just start up anywhere they like. Even American companies are limited by Government restrictions as to what type of industry they can start up. An outside company has no chance of starting up in America. Overseas industries or enterprises that want to set up in Japan have to give a certain amount of equity to the Japanese Government, and even then they are restricted in the type of product they can produce.

This situation also exists in Germany and most other European countries, but, unfortunately, it does not apply in Australia and certainly not in Queensland. As a Parliament representative of the people of Queensland, it is time we looked at this aspect and kept in mind two goals: First of all, greater Queensland equity, and, secondly, control of

production of our mineral wealth to the end product—take it to the very final nth degree. And in this respect I say that a steel industry is required.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (11.10 p.m.): My colleagues who have already spoken have indicated that there will be no serious objection to the machinery amendments to the Mining Act proposed in the Bill. If there has been any misconception on the subject of companies having to operate for 18 years, we agree that this point should be put beyond question so that no confusion will exist either in the mind of the Government or of the mining companies concerned. Because of this, as the Opposition has already indicated, it sees no serious objection to the proposed amendments.

As this session of Parliament is coming to an end, which is being effectively hastened by the application of the gag, my main purpose in rising to speak is that I feel that I should take the opportunity to place in the annals of the Queensland Parliament information that came to me quite unexpectedly from the British Museum of Natural History, indicating that because that body regards the area of the Endeavour River where Cook's "Endeavour" was beached as of great historical value because of its close association with the taxonomic botany carried out by Dr. Solander and Joseph Banks and the importance of their classification of the various items of flora in that area, it has taken what must be deemed to be a most unusual step in lodging an objection to the application for a mining lease in the Cooktown area by a company known as the Keith Alfred Lindsay Hollands Co. I regard this as so important that, as I say, I think it should be included in the annals of this Parliament.

This is the letter that I received from the director of the Museum—

"We have just heard in London that an application to mine sand on the North Shore of the Endeavour River has been made by the Keith Alfred Lindsay Hollands Company. This has caused us in the Museum, where the collections and drawings made by Captain Cook and the scientists of the 'Endeavour' are still in good keeping, great concern, and we have made an objection to the Acting Mining Warden, Court-House, Cooktown, in the terms of the attached Statement. It has been suggested by our Chairman of Trustees that you ought to know of this situation. I may add that I have already sent similar papers to the Premier of Queensland, the Minister for Environment, Aborigines and the Arts at Canberra, and the Duke of Edinburgh as President of the Australian Conservation Foundation."

I believe that this situation, in which we see an objection being lodged by a very responsible body on the other side of the world, merits something other than dismissal by this

Parliament, and I want to have recorded in "Hansard" one of the facets of their objection. It is as follows:—

"There can be no doubt that such an operation (that is, the mining for silica sands) is likely to cause irreparable damage to an area of great historic and scientific interest and which will be bitterly regretted later, not only by scientists, but also by tourist visitors to Cooktown.

"The objections to this operation are so strong that only grave national interest should override them."

Nobody can deny that the British Museum of Natural History is a very responsible body. It says that this information has been given to the Premier, and because he is in possession of these facts I believe that he should have interceded in the hearing at Cooktown.

The museum's objection continues—

"Whereas the site of Cooktown on the south side of the Endeavour River has been profoundly altered in consequence of 19th century gold-mining boom, the hitherto economically valueless and not easily accessible north shore has remained virtually the same as it was in Captain Cook's time, which is true of very few other places in the world visited on the voyage of the 'Endeavour'."

Of all the areas visited by Captain Cook on his world-wide voyages, the museum claims that the north shore is possibly the only place that remains in the same state as it was in 1770.

The objection also says—

"It is thus historically unique for Australia and should be made a legally protected area to be preserved as it is for posterity with the minimum of human interference."

After explaining in some detail the various discoveries that Dr. Solander and Sir Joseph Banks made when the "Endeavour" was damaged and they were given the opportunity, while in that part of Australia for a long period, to undertake the first classification of Australian plants in this area, the objection goes on—

"Having the 'Endeavour's' boats available, they were able to explore the north shore almost as easily as the south shore, which was a different topography and vegetation. Mining development will inevitably damage the character of the area, and the long-term loss to Australia will be irreparable."

These are very significant statements, made by a responsible organisation. As I said in my Press release on this matter, surely we, as Queenslanders and Australians, should not have to be reminded by people half-way round the world of our obligations not only to preserve areas such as this but also to ensure that they remain in their undisturbed state, as seen by Captain Cook and his crew.

A very pertinent point I want to make is that the basis of the objection by the British Museum of Natural History is this—

"As late as 1970, under the auspices of the Royal Society of London and the Australian Academy of Science, Dr. W. T. Stearn of the British Museum (Natural History), London, and Dr. Stanley Blake of the Queensland Herbarium, Brisbane, together with Mr. Correll from the James Cook University, Townsville, made a special expedition to the Cooktown area for the specific purpose of studying and collecting the plants of this area, first made known to science from here through Cook's voyage and later King's voyage.

"The floristic richness and hitherto unappreciated high scientific importance of the north shore then became apparent.

"They were so impressed by the special taxonomically historic character of this area that they made plans to prepare a report advocating its legal protection as an area of national importance, to form a Captain Cook Memorial National Park appropriately commemorating the Cook Bicentenary, but as there seemed, until now, no immediate threat, this has not yet been completed. The area will reward yet further investigation."

On the facts that I have outlined, this British Museum has seen fit to take the almost unprecedented step of lodging an objection in the Cooktown Mining Warden's Court to the application to mine this area.

The submissions made by the British Museum include, from the original report of the botanic discoveries of Cook and Solander, an almost fantastic list of indigenous flora found and classified by these people during their stay in the Cooktown area. This extract, which I have in my hand, was taken from the first records of the voyage of discovery of the "Endeavour".

Lest it be said that we do this merely to hinder mining in some shape or form, as is the wont and custom of those who would oppose anyone who raises his voice in an endeavour to preserve some of our environment so that future generations might enjoy and witness this area as it was back in the days of the early landing on our shores, let me point out that, of all the areas in this State which have become a bone of contention between the mining interests and the conservation movement generally, no area has a greater historical significance than that referred to by the British Museum of Natural History in London. Far from merely wanting to take up the challenge because it happens to involve mining, I point out that this area constitutes one of the most historic national monuments in the State, and we should be protecting it.

Mr. R. Jones: Who is the applicant?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The Keith Alfred Lindsay Hollands Co.

We should preserve this area as a national monument because of its close association with the discovery of this country, and also because of its great botanical significance. As areas in the North that will be developed for tourism will welcome such an outstanding area as a tourist attraction, we should be doing everything in our power to ensure that it is not raped or devastated in the name of progress.

Many countries base their concept of tourism on outstanding physical and geographical features. What could be more important to Queensland than the preservation of an area such as this as a national monument? We would be able to boast that, of all the areas visited by Captain Cook in his voyage of discovery, Queensland has the only remaining area of historical significance that is relatively undisturbed and in virtually the same state as when he viewed it.

As I indicated earlier, this organisation wrote to only four people. They are the Premier, the Federal Minister for Environment, the Duke of Edinburgh and me.

Mr. Wright: You are in very good company.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That would be so, although not all the way.

In all seriousness, I ask the Premier what he intends to do in this matter. We will be downgraded internationally if we allow this area to be mined. The Premier, immediately he received this information, should have made it known to the people of Queensland. He should have ensured that this area was jealously safeguarded if for no other reason than to show that we are proud of our natural history. He should have immediately interceded in the Mining Warden's Court.

As he was remiss in doing that, I now lay it on the line that the Premier and the Government should not grant this lease because to do so would be literally trampling on the history of Queensland. I claim that if the Premier allows an area such as this to be mined at a time when there is universal clamour to preserve our environment to the utmost, when we stand in the midst of an almost mercenary community, and when there is a demand by many people in all walks of life that society is entitled to the preservation of the environment, he will be paying scant regard to the history of the State and will be acting contrary to the wishes of the people of this State.

(Time expired.)

Mr. O'DONNELL (Barcoo) (11.30 p.m.): I do not wish to delay the Committee, but I think the success of a recent venture in the mining industry in my electorate is worth placing on record. I am very pleased to be able to say that Blair Athol Coal Proprietary, which is the operative name for C.R.A.'s activities in Central Queensland based at

Blair Athol, has been most successful in shipping 24,000 tons of steaming coal to Italy. This is its second successful venture. Some time ago it succeeded in sending 30,000 tons to South-east Asia. It may seem strange to some members that this has been successfully accomplished. Those who know the history of Blair Athol will recall that years ago an attempt was made to export steaming coal, but it was found to be very combustible. C.R.A., or Blair Athol Coal Proprietary, whichever name one chooses to use, has successfully overcome the problem of combustibility with steaming coal.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: Was this a trial shipment?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Yes.

As honourable members know—and this is my second point—the marketing of steaming coal is a very chancy business for the simple reason that steam engines have gone out of service the world over. Apparently, however, there is still a market in Europe for it. I hope that this company will go on to greater success, and that there will be an increasing demand overseas for steaming coal. There is a tremendous quantity of it in the Blair Athol area, but the demand for it in this State, and the rest of the Commonwealth, is so slight that it has virtually no value at all.

Over the years honourable members have heard me speak of companies that have gone to Blair Athol with stories of how they were going to exploit these coal deposits. They were merely playing a confidence trick; they were simply making overseas tours with the State playing host to them. Those developments were very disappointing indeed.

I raise two points. The first is that there is a possibility of obtaining a market for steaming coal overseas. The second is that it has been proved that coal from Blair Athol will carry. I congratulate those responsible for this successful venture. It will be recalled that there was industrial trouble in the coal-mining industry some time ago. I am not referring to the present trouble. On the occasion to which I am referring, the coal miners at Blair Athol who were preparing that shipment asked that they be allowed to stay out of the dispute in order to complete preparation of that overseas shipment. Their attitude was highly commendable, as were their contributions to the all-round success of this venture.

I hope that there will be even more success in disposing of this tremendous seam of steaming coal which till recently appeared likely to remain in the ground unless a method was devised of blending it with the coking coals that are so abundant in the central areas of the State.

Hon. R. E. CAMM (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads) (11.35 p.m.), in reply: I commend the honourable member

for Port Curtis for sticking rigidly to the provisions of the Bill and commenting on the proposed amendments to rectify anomalies in the Act.

The honourable member for Rockhampton South, in his tirade of criticism of what is being done in the mining industry, made very plain the attitude that kept foreign capital out of this State for 40 years and brought stagnation in investment in Queensland while A.L.P. Governments were in power. He criticised the Government for selling the State's coal, whereas the honourable member for Barcoo praised the Government for creating markets for the coal in his electorate. I suggest to the honourable member for Rockhampton South that he should take a leaf out of his colleague's book and praise the Government for creating overseas markets for Queensland coal and for the prosperity it has brought to Central Queensland.

The honourable member mentioned foreign companies having obtained authorities to prospect in some areas and then done nothing—not even turned a sod—thus preventing other people from engaging in mining exploration and development. The honourable member for Burke mentioned the same matter during the debate on the Mines and Main Roads Estimates and itemised companies that were not meeting their obligations. I think I should answer these accusations now so that my reply will be recorded in "Hansard".

The honourable member for Burke spoke about Authority to Prospect No. 444M. This was granted to Queensland Mines Ltd. for two years from 1 September 1967 over an area of 272 square miles in the Westmoreland locality. Additional areas of 84 square miles and 33 square miles were subsequently approved, with increases in expenditure commitments, the total area held being 389 square miles. That authority to prospect was extended for one year from 1 September 1969, and further extended for two years from 1 September 1970. Authority to Prospect No. 444M was surrendered as from 8 October 1971, and Authority to Prospect No. 996M was granted to Queensland Mines Ltd. for three years from that date over a reduced area of 103 square miles in the Westmoreland locality. So the area has been reduced in accordance with the terms of the original authority to prospect.

The expenditure requirement for Authority to Prospect No. 444M for four years to 31 August 1971 was \$1,900,000. Expenditure to and including the quarter ended 30 June 1971 was \$2,259,151. Details of expenditure for the quarter ended 30 September 1971 are still to be furnished by the company. That answers the honourable member's accusation that the company was not carrying out exploration work.

Authority to Prospect No. 510M was granted to Granville Developments Pty. Ltd. over three areas aggregating 630 $\frac{5}{16}$ ths

square miles in the Nicholson River and Westmoreland localities for two years from 1 August 1968. This authority to prospect was surrendered on 27 June 1969, and \$1,000 of the deposit held in respect of the authority was forfeited as penalty for failure to prospect the lands continuously as required by clause 9 of the authority to prospect document and for failure to furnish three-monthly reports within the time required by clause 11 of the authority to prospect. That indicates, I think, that the department polices these authorities to prospect rather rigidly and cancels them very quickly if the companies do not fulfil their obligations.

Westmoreland Minerals Ltd. held Authority to Prospect No. 658M over three areas aggregating 633 $\frac{7}{16}$ ths square miles in the Nicholson River and Westmoreland localities. That authority to prospect was granted for two years from 1 July 1969 and was surrendered on 12 March 1971.

With reference to the United States Steel Corporation, it seems that the authority to prospect in question was No. 556M. That authority to prospect was granted to United States Steel International (New York) Inc. over an area of 257 $\frac{5}{16}$ ths square miles in the Westmoreland locality for two years as from 1 December 1968. The area was reduced to 97 $\frac{7}{16}$ ths square miles as from 1 December 1969, and the authority to prospect expired on 30 November 1970. An amount of \$500 of the deposit held was forfeited as penalty for failure to comply with the work and expenditure requirements of clause 9 of the authority to prospect. Therefore, none of the authorities to prospect that were criticised by the honourable member for Burke is in existence. Those companies that did not comply with the working conditions had part of their deposits forfeited.

The honourable member for Salisbury dealt with conservation, which, naturally, he had the right to do because even though that subject is not mentioned in the Bill the motion includes the words "and for other purposes". Let me now say something that I have repeated time and time again in this Chamber. Where land has stood for 200 years with no effort being made on the part of anyone to have it declared a national park or have it reserved for any purpose whatsoever, the right is there for any person or company to apply to the mining warden for a mineral lease. The law provides that any person or company has the right to be heard by the warden. The honourable member suggested that the Minister for Mines or the Premier should adopt a dictatorial attitude, flout the laws of this State, and go to the warden and say—

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. The Minister is deliberately distorting what I said. I urged the Premier to intervene. I did not ask him to flout the law at all. The Minister knows that what he said is untruthful, and I ask for a withdrawal.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order! I ask the Minister to withdraw the remark.

Mr. **CAMM**: The Premier does not intervene until the recommendation—

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order!

Mr. **CAMM**: I accept the honourable member's explanation.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order! The honourable member for Salisbury has asked for a withdrawal and I ask the Minister to withdraw the remark.

Mr. **CAMM**: All right, I withdraw it. The honourable member said that the Premier should intervene in the Warden's Court and say, "This should not be granted as a mining lease." That is what the honourable member said, and that is what I indicated in my reply. The Premier does not intervene, and nor do I, in a Warden's Court hearing. If an authority to prospect is applied for, I have the right to take the matter to Cabinet and have it endorsed. Cabinet then has the right to say "Yea" or "Nay" to the granting of the authority. Every applicant has the right to a fair hearing in a Warden's Court. When the warden makes his recommendations to me as Minister, I can take them to Cabinet and say, "Will we adopt the recommendations?" Because of some legal technicality or, for some other reason, we can, and sometimes do, override the recommendations of the warden. The case is thoroughly examined by me when I receive the warden's recommendations, and my recommendations may be taken to Cabinet for consideration.

Both sides have a fair hearing at a Warden's Court. We do not adopt a dictatorial attitude. Because I, or the Premier, might feel that a certain piece of land should not be disturbed, we do not intercede and say to the warden "This application for a mining lease should be refused."

I was very pleased to hear the commendation of the honourable member for Barcoo. It is not many years since he chided me because on one visit to Blair Athol I tried to instil into the minds of the people there a feeling of confidence that the Blair Athol field would prosper through the export of coal. As one who had something to do with the development and the finalisation of that deal, I was pleased to receive his congratulations.

Motion (Mr. Camm) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Camm, read a first time.

BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Houghton, Redcliffe, in the chair)

Hon. A. M. **HODGES** (Gympie—Minister for Works and Housing) (11.45 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to provide for the registration of builders and for other purposes."

The primary objective of the Bill is the regulation of the building industry so as to protect the community against inefficient and unscrupulous operators within the industry. As an integral part of the means by which the objective is realised, the Bill will ensure a general improvement in the standard of building construction. The most significant and fundamental feature of the Bill is the creation of a class of person known as a "registered builder" and the Bill provides that, subject to certain exemptions, no person other than a registered builder may carry out building construction to a value of more than \$4,000 at any one time. "Building construction" is a defined term and means, "the construction of a building and building alterations, additions and the like which involve structural work".

By using this terminology the Bill applies not only to new buildings, but also to work involving alterations and additions to the walls and structural parts of buildings. This is its most important feature.

The most noteworthy exemption from this provision is an owner-builder, who may carry out building construction for his own home to any value provided that, if the cost is above \$4,000, he may not sell it or offer it for sale for two years after completion unless he has obtained a certificate from a competent authority that the building construction has been soundly carried out, or, failing this, unless he first obtains the board's permission. Without this proviso, the owner-builder exemption could, of course, be readily exploited to circumvent the intent of the Bill.

Buildings for agricultural purposes or constructed on land used or to be used primarily for agricultural purposes are also exempted, and the necessity for registration does not apply to the Crown, Crown instrumentalities or local authorities (including the Brisbane City Council).

There is also a general power of exemption, which the board may give, subject to the Minister's approval, in respect of any provision of the Bill. This is intended to apply, primarily, in those remote areas where it may be impossible to obtain the services of a registered builder.

Persons working as employees or sub-contractors of a registered builder are exempted from the necessity for registration, the object being to ensure that in all building work coming within the scope of the Bill, there is one person ultimately and directly

responsible for compliance with it. Provided this objective is attained, there is no further restriction on any person in the normal course of his business or employment. It is not intended, nor is it considered desirable, to require registration in respect of individual trades. Where trade work as such involves a health or safety factor—for example, plumbing, drainage, electrical installations—this aspect is taken care of by other legislation or regulation.

An essential feature of the Bill is the prescription of qualifications for registration as a builder. Basically, these are to be obtained by examination and practical experience as prescribed or approved by the board, and it is expected that, after a transition period of five years, this will be the normal way of qualifying for registration.

However, formal qualifications are required by only two other States and it is not desired to close the door against builders from other States who do not possess such qualifications but may, none the less, be competent to trade as builders. The board may register such people if it considers them suitable.

In order to avoid disruption to the industry by immediate insistence upon formal qualifications, the Bill provides for admission to registration of practising builders and building supervisors on the basis of proved specific performance during the 10-year period ending on the date of commencement of the Act.

Additionally, such persons who have not at that time achieved that performance are given five years to do so, either as building supervisors or as builders of individual undertakings not exceeding \$4,000 in individual value. The criterion of specific performance is five years of experience in a supervisory or higher capacity on building construction to an average annual aggregate of \$25,000. These transitional arrangements will ensure that the main purpose of the Act will be served from the date of its commencement, without depriving any genuine, competent builder or supervisor of a means of livelihood.

Naturally, the Bill is not confined to individuals. Bodies corporate and firms may also be registered, the requirements being that the body itself is of good and sufficient standing and that there is one person (a director, member of the board of management, partner or employee) responsible for building construction operations who is himself a registered builder.

The Act will be administered by the Minister for Works and Housing and its provisions implemented by a Board of Registration having the following constitution—

- (i) A representative of the Government, who shall be chairman;
- (ii) A registered builder nominated by the Australian Institute of Building (Queensland Branch), provided that for the initial appointment this member shall

be a builder who must, in order to retain his appointment, become registered within 12 months;

(iii) A registered architect nominated by the Australian Institute of Building (Queensland Branch);

(iv) A person nominated by the Minister to represent the workers engaged in the building trade; and

(v) A person nominated by the Minister to represent building societies, co-operative housing societies and other similar bodies, not being Crown instrumentalities.

The board will be a body corporate, may sue and be sued in its own name and may, with the Minister's approval, hold and dispose of property. As constituted, the board represents as many legitimate interests as possible without making it unduly large or subject to domination by any one group. It is not envisaged that the chairman or any member will be occupied full time in his duties under the Act. The Bill provides for the appointment of a registrar and other employees as may be required for its administration.

The functions of the board are to determine courses of training, practical experience and examinations required for registration; to keep a register of builders; to issue or cancel certificates of registration; to cancel or suspend the registration of any person; to annul any such cancellation or registration; to take proceedings for offences under the Act; and generally to carry out the provisions of the Act.

The Board may cancel or suspend the registration of a builder for one or more of several reasons, as set out in section 23 of the Act. Apart from those matters relating to his registration and the qualifications therefor, a builder may lose his registration if he is convicted of an indictable offence which renders him unfit to practise as a builder; for negligent or incompetent performance or fraudulent conduct of or in relation to any building work; if he has been convicted of an offence under the Act; or if he becomes bankrupt, enters into liquidation or the like.

Before ordering the cancellation or suspension of any registration, the board must hold an inquiry and give the person concerned due notice and an opportunity to show cause why the board should not so order. Further, any person whose registration has been cancelled or suspended will have one month within which to appeal to a Magistrates Court against the order. The court's decision is final and binding and not subject to appeal.

The board's powers in this context provide the most effective means of control of the operations of registered builders, without which the Act would not fulfil its objective. The powers of the board in this regard are restricted to a reasonable level by the right of appeal. A similar right of appeal also applies to the refusal of the board

to grant an application for registration except where the reason for refusal is failure to pass a prescribed or approved examination. The authority to cancel or suspend the registration of a builder is additional to the authority to take proceedings for offences, which I shall deal with next.

Considering, in the first instance, offences by persons other than registered builders, the Bill provides that a person who is not a registered builder shall not in any way hold himself out to be so; nor shall he carry out, offer to carry out, enter into any contract or engagement to carry out, or be entitled to recover any fee under any contract or engagement to carry out, any building construction unless the value thereof does not exceed \$4,000 or the said person is exempted under the requirements of the Bill as to registration. Failure to comply with any of these provisions is an offence, punishable by a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

In the same context, an owner-builder who fails to comply with the provisions or conditions relating to his exemption commits an offence subject to the foregoing penalty.

Any person who, in order to obtain a building permit from the Brisbane City Council or a local authority, makes a false statement or declaration on any relevant matter falling within the scope of the Act also commits an offence, the penalty being a maximum fine of \$500 or six months' imprisonment.

In this context, the Act provides that it shall be unlawful for any local authority (including the Brisbane City Council) to issue a permit for building construction to a person who is not a registered builder unless the fee or charge in respect thereof does not exceed \$4,000, or the person is an exempted statutory authority or has obtained exemption otherwise (which would be in writing), or the person lodges a statutory declaration stating, in effect, that he is exempt as an owner-builder.

Since the onus of proof is on the applicant, all that the local authority has to do is to examine the fee or charge, identify the applicant as an exempted statutory authority (from his application), or require a written exemption from the board, or the said statutory declaration, as appropriate.

With these minor precautionary measures, it should be a simple matter to prevent most breaches of the Act in this connection from arising. For obvious reasons, failure of the local authority to comply with these provisions does not constitute an offence and is not subject to a penalty.

Coming now to offences by registered builders, the most important single aspect is that of unsatisfactory work—and this applies also to builders who, but for the general exemption provision, would be required to be registered builders. The Board may order any such builder to remedy faulty building work of any kind. The

builder may appeal to a Magistrates Court, but if the court does not set the order aside the builder must comply with the order as originally made or as varied by the court. Failure to so comply constitutes an offence, with a maximum penalty of \$2,000.

As a logical corollary to this provision—and others—the Act also permits any member of the board or any person authorised by the chairman in writing to enter at any time upon any land or premises where building work is being carried out and make any inspection or inquiry necessary for the purposes of the Act. Any person who restricts, obstructs, impedes or delays any such member or person in performing those duties commits an offence, with a maximum penalty of \$400.

The Act also requires local authorities (including the Brisbane City Council) to permit any member or any authorised officer of the board to enter its premises during working hours and inspect such documents as are relevant to the board's functions. These powers—the right to require rectification of faulty work and the right of entry and inspection—are necessary for the effective operation of the Act. It is significant that similar provisions were written into the Western Australian Act in 1970. Although that Act operated satisfactorily without such provisions for many years, recent developments within the industry have now compelled their introduction. The experience of another State with an Act of a similar nature is, of course, too valuable to be ignored. Other offences are dealt with by way of specific or general penalty, according to their nature.

Generally, it can be said that, in all cases, the object has been to make the punishment fit the crime, and to apply appropriately heavier penalties to those offences which strike at the roots of the Act or which involve fraudulent intent. The latter cases are the only instances which involve the alternative penalty of imprisonment.

The foregoing remarks constitute a summary of those provisions of the Bill which are fundamental in concept and principle. Other provisions, which are necessary for the translation of principle into practice, are administrative in nature and consequently follow a common pattern. These deal with such matters as the power of the board to hold inquiries, the machinery for taking proceedings for offences, financial provisions, the making of regulations and the like. It is not proposed to take up the time of the Committee by going into any detail on these matters, except to answer any questions which may be asked.

Summing up, it has been shown that, with the effluxion of time, the building industry has developed in size and complexity to an extent which makes it impossible to control the unsatisfactory elements within it without legislation. The legislation now proposed will provide that control without

favour or discrimination. It will not adversely affect the honest and efficient builder. In fact, it will benefit him and consequently his clients. It will not deprive any person of the right to build his own home, but it will safeguard others against any ill effects which may arise from his exercise of that right. It will materially assist in improving the standard of building construction and the over-all conduct of the building industry.

I commend the motion to honourable members.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 12 midnight.