

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 31 AUGUST 1972

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. W. H. Lonergan, Flinders) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

PETITION

PROPOSED AMENDMENT, CITY OF BRISBANE ACT

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) presented a petition from 18,085 electors praying that the Parliament of Queensland will take necessary steps in the current session of Parliament to set up a referendum of electors to decide whether or not any alteration is desired in the election of the Brisbane City Council and the Lord Mayor.

Petition read and received.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

REALIGNMENT OF MALENY-LANDBOROUGH ROAD SECTION

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

In view of the concern being expressed by the Maleny Co-operative Dairy Association at the condition of the range section of the Maleny-Landsborough road and the danger to daily milk deliveries during flood times, when will construction commence on the realignment of this road?

Answer:—

“Funds have been provided to enable a start to be made on this work during the present financial year.”

HIRE-DRIVERS' LICENCES

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

For the years 1969-70, 1970-71 and 1971-72 in (i) the metropolitan area, (ii) provincial cities and (iii) the rest of the State—

(1) What was the number of hire-drivers' licences (non-owner) (a) applied for and (b) approved?

(2) What was the number of hire-drivers' licences (owner-driver) (a) applied for and (b) approved?

(3) How many part-time licences were issued?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) and (b)"

—		Applied for	Approved
Metropolitan area	1969-70 ..	1,285	822
	1970-71 ..	1,451	1,074
	1971-72 ..	1,842	1,235
Provincial cities	1969-70 ..	207	169
	1970-71 ..	297	222
	1971-72 ..	204	161
Rest of the State	1969-70 ..	95	90
	1970-71 ..	101	97
	1971-72 ..	143	130

(2) "(a) and (b)" A licence issued to the owner of a cab authorises him to drive that vehicle, consequently, there is no category of hire-driver's licence for owner drivers. The number of cab licences which may be issued in the metropolitan area is limited by Regulation to 1,245. No additional cab licences have been issued in the metropolitan area since 50 licences were submitted for sale in 1964 and subsequently allotted. Whilst no formal applications have been received for cab licences in provincial cities several enquiries were received as to the prospect of licences being issued in some of these cities. The enquirers were advised of the provision of the State Transport Act requiring such applications to be invited by public advertisement. No additional cab licences were issued in any of the provincial cities during the relevant years. The number of new licences applied for and approved in the rest of the State were—

—		1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
Applied for ..	..	11	6	10
Approved ..	..	5	4	6

(3) "Hire-drivers' licences may be issued to authorise the driving of cabs for weekends or during vacations of tertiary educational institutions. The number of these licences issued in the metropolitan area and provincial cities is as under. None were issued in the rest of the State.

—		1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
Metropolitan area	..	157	194	278
Provincial cities ..	..	20	49	28

PROSECUTION SQUAD, POLICE FORCE

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

(1) How many police officers are at present attached to the Prosecution Squad and what are their ranks in each category?

(2) At what centres throughout the State are they operating?

(3) What specialist qualifications are set down for members of this squad?

Answers:—

(1) "5 senior sergeants; 11 sergeants 1/C; 3 sergeants 2/C and 1 constable. The position of Officer in Charge (Inspector of Police) is vacant at present."

(2) "Brisbane, Inala, Wynnum (metropolitan area); Nambour; and Redcliffe."

(3) "Competent to conduct all types of prosecutions which police prosecutors are required to handle, including criminal, quasi-criminal, simple offences, traffic, liquor, betting, gaming and general prosecutions and when required to assist the Coroner at inquests into the causes of deaths or fires."

LOSSES OF MONEY HANDLED BY POLICE FORCE

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

(1) What amounts of money which have been handled by members of the Queensland Police Force have disappeared over the past three years and at what centres?

(2) Of these amounts, how much has been recovered and what amounts are still outstanding?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "Centralized records of a statistical nature are not maintained by the Police Department on this subject. To obtain the information sought would require an examination of records kept throughout the State. I do not propose to take this action."

SEALING OF PLATFORM AND FOOTPATH, AYR RAILWAY STATION

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

Will he give urgent and favourable consideration to having the platform resealed and the footpath levelled and sealed at the Ayr Railway Station?

Answer:—

"The matter will be fully investigated and carefully considered."

APPLICATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL LAND, BURDEKIN IRRIGATION AREA

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

When is it anticipated that some finality will be reached with respect to the applications for additional land which were lodged by land-owners in the Burdekin irrigation area?

Answer:—

"Because of other urgent commitments, it will still be some time before completion of investigation of proposals for possible additional areas for some farms in the Burdekin irrigation area, and possible supply to other farms in the Mona Park area. It is not possible to give a firm estimate of when proposals will be available for submission to the Government, but they can now be given more attention."

PAINTING, HOME HILL POLICE STATION

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

Are plans in hand for the internal and external painting of the Home Hill Police Station? If not, will he give favourable consideration to having the work carried out at the earliest possible date?

Answer:—

"A contract has been let for the internal painting and work will commence on September 11. The police station was painted externally in 1968. Under normal circumstances, repainting is carried out in five-yearly intervals unless the condition of the building requires otherwise. An inspection has been arranged."

HOUSING COMMISSION PENSIONER UNITS, TOWNSVILLE

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

How many (a) single and (b) double units for pensioners are proposed to be erected in Townsville and when is it anticipated that any will be ready for occupancy?

Answer:—

"On January 12 last the Queensland Housing Commission advised the Townsville City Council that it would be prepared to erect 23 aged persons units (14 single age pensioners and nine age pensioner couples) on land which had been occupied by substandard wartime accommodation damaged in cyclone 'Althea'. The commission had been previously paying \$219 per annum for sewerage charges on six family flats on these sites. As the proposed 23 units would accommodate 32 aged persons the commission offered to increase its sewerage payment to \$292 per annum which would be equivalent to the sewerage charges on the same 32 persons accommodated in eight family houses. Although this is a most reasonable offer the council would not agree and requires payment of \$841 per annum for sewerage but would agree to 40 per cent remission from general rates. In effect the council

seeks to upgrade by \$481 its annual revenue from sewerage and general rates on this land solely because of this social service proposal to house aged persons in separate accommodation with individual W.C. pedestals. I considered this to be inequitable and personally approached the council without success. I will again take up with the council in an effort to obtain a reasonable agreement so that the commission may expedite construction of these units."

S.G.I.O. CLAIMS, CYCLONE "ALTHEA"

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

What was the total amount claimed from the S.G.I.O. as a result of storm and tempest damage done by cyclone "Althea" and how much has been paid to the latest date for which figures are readily available?

Answer:—

"The total amount claimed is not recorded as such. However, the estimated total payout is \$4,847,360. Claims paid as at August 25, 1972, amounted to \$3,576,730."

EXPENDITURE ON GREYHOUND RACING FACILITIES, WOOLLOONGABBA

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

(1) How much money has been spent to date on the development of the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club?

(2) How much assistance has the Government given by way of loan money?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The State Government Insurance Office, as a commercial investment, has loaned funds to the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust for greyhound racing facilities, up to a maximum of \$800,000. These facilities are leased by the trust to the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club. Apart from this, no Government assistance has been given by way of loan money for greyhound racing facilities at Woolloongabba."

SUBSIDY FOR VOLUNTARY AIR-SEA RESCUE ORGANISATIONS

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

In view of the outstanding and humane work carried out by the Townsville Flotilla of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association and his statement during the election campaign that a scheme would be implemented for approved voluntary air-

sea rescue organisations by way of a subsidy of 50 cents for each dollar of collections, is the scheme now in operation? If so, to whom should such organisations apply for the subsidy and, if not, when is the scheme likely to be implemented in order to ease the heavy financial burden on these public-spirited citizens?

Answer:—

“Following strong representations by the Member for Townsville, I am examining this matter and details of any assistance will be disclosed in the State Budget.”

SUPPLIES FOR DAIRY PRODUCE BOARD
MILK FACTORY, BANGKOK

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

(1) Is he aware that the very efficient milk factory set up under the auspices of the Australian Dairy Control Board near Bangkok, Thailand, has built up record sales of condensed milk in that area but is being inhibited by the cost of the ingredients from Australia?

(2) Is anything being done in Queensland to contain these particular costs and thus exploit a very valuable and growing outlet for our dairy products?

Answers:—

(1) “I am aware that the Bangkok plant has built up sales of condensed milk. From time to time raw materials are available from other countries, particularly Europe, at subsidised prices. Furthermore the Thai Government is encouraging the use of lower priced vegetable oils as a substitute for butter fats and this is reacting to the disadvantage of Australian exports.”

(2) “The raw materials obtained through the Australian Dairy Produce Board in recent years have come from the southern States because drought has made them unavailable from Queensland.”

TENDERS FOR COAL SUPPLY, PROPOSED
SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND POWER
STATION

Dr. Edwards, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) On what basis will the tenders for the supply of coal for the proposed power station for South-east Queensland be considered?

(2) Will the recent Box Flat Colliery disaster affect these tenders and, if so, what action does he intend to take with reference to these tenders?

Answers:—

(1) “A detailed technical and economic investigation will be carried out to determine how the available coal deposits can

be developed to produce electricity at the lowest delivered cost. Tenders will be considered on that basis.”

(2) “Tenders do not close until 3 p.m. September 1, 1972. At this stage, it is impossible to know if the Box Flat Colliery disaster will affect the final tenders received. It is anticipated that the major West Moreton coal producers will submit tenders.”

WATER SUPPLY, KARUMBA

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

(1) How much has been spent to date to provide water for Karumba?

(2) To maintain the supply, what has been paid for (a) wages, (b) accommodation, (c) replacements, (d) freight and (e) personnel transport?

(3) What is the present situation as regards a suitable water supply for Karumba?

(4) What method is to be used to overcome the present water crisis?

(Originally asked on August 30.)

Answers:—

(1) “Expenditure by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission on providing water to Karumba from an artesian bore, reticulation of the supply through the township and operation, maintenance and repairs to the system amounts to a total of \$231,095 since 1967-68. Water from the bore is not potable but is suitable for ablutions, laundering, septic tanks and gardening. Potable supplies are obtained from a few shallow wells and collection of rain water and surface runoff by individual residents and a local company.”

(2) “Expenditure to operate and maintain the bore water supply system has been as follows:—(a) wages, \$23,500; (b) accommodation, \$7,250; (c) replacements, \$5,283; (d) freight, \$1,745; (e) personnel transport, \$5,911; and (f) other items, \$11,599. Total, \$55,288.”

(3) “The present available supply is as set out in (1) above. No proposals for improvement to this supply system have been approved. An inter-departmental committee convened by the Co-ordinator General's Department has been set up to examine development of the town of Karumba, including water supply, roads, electricity and other aspects. Any further information on this should be sought from the Honourable the Premier.”

(4) “Irrigation Commission staff were sent to Karumba on August 26 to ascertain the cause of recent serious reduction in supply from the artesian bore, and if possible, to improve it. No information is yet available on the situation.”

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MELBOURNE CUP DAY RACE MEETINGS,
ROCKHAMPTON DISTRICT

Mr. HARTWIG: I wish to direct a question to the Treasurer. For a considerable number of years the Wowan and Ridgeland District Race Clubs have held successful race meetings on Melbourne Cup Day. This has been the day of the year for them, both financially and socially. Recently the Rockhampton Jockey Club decided that it would itself hold a meeting on Melbourne Cup Day.

I now ask the Treasurer: Has he the power to intervene in the interests of these clubs? If not, could he allocate another suitable day, preferably a holiday, to each of the clubs in lieu of Melbourne Cup Day?

Sir GORDON CHALK: I am aware of the circumstances as they apply in the Rockhampton district. It is true that certain smaller clubs in that locality have been holding race meetings on Melbourne Cup Day. Racing in the Rockhampton area of Central Queensland is under the control of the Rockhampton Jockey Club, which is responsible for the allocation of dates. I received a request from the Rockhampton Jockey Club for permission to hold a race meeting on Melbourne Cup Day. I do not believe that it is for me, as a Minister of the Crown, to adjudicate on whether this meeting should be held. Consequently, after receiving the request from the Rockhampton Jockey Club, I agreed to it and notified the club accordingly.

The hon. member raises the question of other race days for the two clubs to which he has referred. Again this would be a matter coming under the control of the Rockhampton Jockey Club. I am sure that if the Wowan Club and the Ridgeland Club approached the Rockhampton Jockey Club, some amicable arrangement could be arrived at.

ENDORSEMENT OF PRODUCTS BY C.A.R.P.
MEMBER, MRS. VILMA WARD

Mr. HINZE: I ask the Minister for Justice: Has his attention been drawn to an advertisement on page 28 of the Brisbane "Telegraph" on Wednesday, 30 August, wherein it is advised that McCain Chips have been priced and quality tested by Mrs. Vilma Ward of C.A.R.P.? If so, will he advise what special qualifications Mrs. Ward has that would entitle her to advise people on the price and quality of this or any other product? If she has no such qualifications, will he ensure that the public are protected by making it known to them that she is not so qualified, and will he have inquiries made into allegations that Mrs. Ward is using the members of C.A.R.P. and the organisation itself for her own personal gain?

Mr. KNOX: Mrs. Ward is not known to me, and I presume that I am not known to her. Therefore, I am not in a position to discuss Mrs. Ward's qualifications to make recommendations in the advertisement referred to, which has been brought to my attention.

It does seem to me to be unusual for people who claim to be acting as independent authorities in the community on matters of consumer affairs to see fit to identify themselves with particular products. It would be just as difficult for them to hold their position as independent authorities as it would be for us, as members of Parliament, trying to be impartial and impersonal in our approach to matters of State, if we identified ourselves with particular products.

Mr. B. Wood: Like oil shares.

Mr. KNOX: I do not have any shares in oil companies.

The advocacy of people who claim to be independent authorities to whom the public can go and who specifically recommend products casts considerable doubt upon the bona fides of the organisation to which they belong.

In regard to the last part of the honourable member's question, I shall have the appropriate inquiries made.

USE OF DRUGS BY INMATES, WESTBROOK
TRAINING CENTRE

Mr. DAVIS: I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services: Further to a statement by him in "The Australian" of 15 August 1972 in which he said that two boys who attempted to commit suicide at the Westbrook Training Centre were using drugs, will he inform the House why boys with drug problems are allowed into this centre?

Mr. HERBERT: I think it is fairly obvious that the authorities at Westbrook would not know whether these boys had drug problems until they arrived. They arrived one evening and they left the next day.

Mr. DAVIS: I ask the Minister a further question. What medical tests are undertaken to ascertain whether boys and girls committed to corrective institutions in this State are suffering from drug addiction or other relevant problems?

Mr. HERBERT: This is a Health Department matter, of course. However, inmates are investigated on admission. Obviously they cannot be investigated before they are admitted.

PRE-SCHOOL FACILITIES, WOODRIDGE-
KINGSTON AREA

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: In the introduction of pre-school facilities, will the Woodridge-Kingston area be included?

Sir ALAN FLETCHER: No.

PRE-SCHOOL FACILITIES, INALA AREA

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: Will he advise the House whether pre-school facilities will be introduced in the Inala area?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Tell him "No".

An Honourable Member: Is this facetious?

Sir ALAN FLETCHER: I am not being facetious. The position is that at this stage I am not able to give exact information as to where any of these schools will be located. I told the House yesterday that I will shortly be in a position to make a statement setting out the areas in which it is intended to begin pilot schemes next year.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. In view of the Minister's answer—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order in debating a question.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am merely seeking information. You must hear my point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Very well. Go ahead.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The information I am seeking is whether the Minister's answer to my question—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member knows that he cannot debate a question.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not debating a question; I am seeking information on a question. When I directed my question to the Minister concerning the Woodridge school, he answered, "No."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the honourable member frame another question.

Sir ALAN FLETCHER: I think I can elucidate the position in order to obviate any argument. I understood the honourable member to ask whether I was in a position to advise whether a pre-school class was to be established in a certain area. I replied, "No." That means that I am not in a position to advise whether such classes are to be established in one area or another.

Mr. Knox interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to another point of order. I heard the Minister for Justice say that my bosses were in the gallery. That remark is offensive to me, and I ask for an apology.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Minister for Justice to withdraw that remark, if he made it.

Mr. Knox: If the honourable member finds it offensive for his bosses to be in the gallery, I will certainly withdraw it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, you threatened me with suspension for making a qualified withdrawal. I ask that the same rule now be applied to the Minister for Justice.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the honourable member sit down and be a little patient? I ask the Minister to make an unqualified withdrawal.

Mr. Knox: Certainly.

WARNING LIGHTS, SUGAR-MILL TRAMWAY CROSSINGS

Mr. F. P. MOORE: I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: What responsibility is borne by a sugar-mill in establishing flashing red lights at tramway crossings on the Bruce Highway? As there are 12 permanent main-line tramway crossings on the Bruce Highway in the Tully mill area, and in view of a recent fatality in that area on such a crossing, why does the Main Roads Department accept no responsibility for the cost of installing flashing red lights at these crossings as it would be debatable who first established their permanency?

Mr. CAMM: Most sugar mills get a permit to operate a mill tram-line across a main road, which indicates that the main road has priority so far as the right of way is concerned. Many mills in Queensland have accepted their responsibility to install flashing lights. We realise that they are expensive, but as electricity mains become available to the mills we consider it is their responsibility to install flashing lights.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE OF MINISTERS

Mr. N. F. JONES: I ask the Premier: Will he inform this House how many members of Cabinet have any local government experience?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Admittedly the honourable member for Everton is a new member, but I thought he would know that every member of Cabinet, including me, has a great deal of local government experience.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Dr. EDWARDS (Ipswich) (11.57 a.m.), by leave: The need for me to make this explanation arises from the fact that my integrity has been publicly and privately questioned by a member of the Federal House of Representatives, namely, Mr. W. G. Hayden, M.H.R. for Oxley. That attack on my integrity occurred in a Press statement released by Mr. Hayden in "The Queensland Times" today, 31 August 1972, and also in a telegram, sent at great expense to the taxpayers, which I received this morning from the same gentleman.

My reason for making this explanation is that Mr. Hayden has accused me of having a different public attitude from my private

expression of opinion and has questioned my honesty. He has also stated in the Press release that my speech was written by medical and hospital benefits funds, a statement that I completely and utterly refute.

This statement was made by Mr. Hayden as the result of a speech that I made in this Chamber on Tuesday last during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, in which I outlined the effects that the health scheme put forward by him would have on the whole free hospitalisation system in Queensland.

It is true that I spoke with Mr. Hayden privately following an address that he gave to the Ipswich A.M.A. on 10 August. After that meeting Mr. Hayden asked me what I thought of his address, and I complimented him on the smoothness of his presentation. However, I made it quite clear to him that I did not agree with his proposals or his concepts, and that I was especially concerned with their reference to the cost to the individual Queenslander. As I said, I outlined these objections in the House last Tuesday, and I regret very much Mr. Hayden's accusation as to my honesty and integrity. In view of his actions, I believe that it is necessary for me to advise the House so that there will be no misunderstanding as to my honesty and integrity, my professional standing, and my personal interest in the welfare of every Queenslander.

In the telegram, which, as I said earlier, was sent at great expense to the taxpayers, Mr. Hayden challenged me to a public debate. I readily accept his challenge, on certain conditions of which I shall notify him in due course.

CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. Lickiss,
Mt. Coot-tha, in the chair)

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—
Minister for Local Government and Elec-
tricity) (12.1 p.m.): I ask leave to move
the motion in an amended form.

Question—That leave be granted—put; and
the Committee divided—

In division—

Honourable Members interjecting—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I give notice
to honourable members that if decorum in
the Chamber is not observed during the
count I will deal with the honourable mem-
bers responsible after it has been concluded.

AYES, 44

Ahern	Knox
Aikens	Lane
Alison	Lee
Armstrong	Low
Bird	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	Miller
Camm	Moore, R. E.
Campbell	Müller
Chalk	Murray
Chinchen	Neal
Crawford	Newbery
Edwards	Porter
Fletcher	Rae
Frawley	Row
Gunn	Scott-Young
Hartwig	Small
Herbert	Sullivan
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tomkins
Hewitt, W. D.	Wharton
Hodge	
Hodges	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. W.	Cory
Kaus	Hughes

NOES, 34

Aiken	Jordan
Baldwin	Leese
Blake	Marginson
Bromley	Melloy
Burns	Moore, F. P.
Casey	Newton
D'Arcy	O'Donnell
Dean	Sherrington
Hanlon	Tucker
Hanson	Wallis-Smith
Harris	Wood, B.
Harvey	Wood, P.
Hooper, K. J.	Wright
Houston	Yewdale
Inch	
Jensen	<i>Tellers:</i>
Jones, N. F.	Bousen
Jones, R.	Davis

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the
City of Brisbane Act 1924-1969 in certain
particulars and for other purposes."

My purpose in amending the original motion
was to give Opposition members the oppor-
tunity they endeavoured to deny themselves
of discussing the matter in greater detail.

This Bill has two main purposes—

(a) It provides for the distribution of
the City of Brisbane into 21 electoral wards
for the holding of triennial elections of
the Brisbane City Council and for the city
to be governed by 21 aldermen in lieu of
by a Lord Mayor and 28 aldermen; and

(b) It provides for the Lord Mayor to
be appointed by the aldermen from
amongst their number instead of his being
elected by all the electors of the city.

Under the City of Brisbane Act, as presently
drawn, the City of Brisbane is divided into
28 electoral wards the boundaries of which
follow those of electoral districts comprised
in the metropolitan zone under the Electoral
Districts Act of 1958. Following the recent
redistribution of State electoral boundaries,
33 electoral districts fall wholly or partly
within the City of Brisbane. Of these, 29
electoral districts fall wholly within the city—
except for certain islands at the mouth of the
Brisbane River and off Wynnum—and four
(Pine Rivers, Redlands, Salisbury and

Wolston) fall partly within the city and partly within the areas of adjoining local authorities. In view of these matters, it is necessary that adjustments be made in the boundaries of electoral wards in the city, and provision for this is made in the Bill.

We feel that the responsibilities and workload of a metropolitan member of Parliament are greater than those of an alderman of the Brisbane City Council. Although a metropolitan member represents an electorate in the City of Brisbane, he has to give attention to matters affecting the whole State in addition to matters affecting his electorate, and therefore he should know the State so that he can participate in decisions of the Parliament on State-wide matters. On the other hand, the duties of an alderman of the Brisbane City Council are confined to matters concerning the City of Brisbane only, and accordingly we feel that the present number of aldermen is capable of being reduced. The Bill provides for the reduction that I have already mentioned.

Mr. R. JONES: I rise to a point of order. In the normal course and procedure of debate is it right for the Minister to be reading his speech word for word?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no substance in the point of order.

Mr. Aikens: You fellows always read your speeches.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Bousen: Send him out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Toowoomba South under Standing Order No. 123A. If he persists with interjections—

Mr. P. WOOD: I rise to a point of order. I have made no comment at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I correct my statement; I was referring to the honourable member for Toowoomba North.

Mr. McKECHNIE: At the same time it is felt that the present method of election of the Lord Mayor should be altered to provide for his appointment by the aldermen from amongst their number.

Mr. Marginson: Tell us why.

Mr. McKECHNIE: In due course. Let me add, however, that the Bill does not seek to amend in any way the provisions of the Act relating to the powers and authorities of the Lord Mayor; nor does it provide for the fragmentation of the City of Brisbane into a number of local authority areas. I make that very clear. Moreover, I would like to make it clear that the provisions of the Bill relating to the method of election of the Lord Mayor should not be construed as indicating a change in the method of election of mayors and chairmen of local authorities outside the City of Brisbane. I stress that.

We feel that the Brisbane City Council, by reason of the vastness and complexities of its operations, has no counterpart amongst the other local authorities in the State, and for this reason we feel that the method of selecting the Lord Mayor of the City of Brisbane has to be viewed in a different light from that of electing the mayors and chairmen of other local authorities. Accordingly, it is intended that the present method of election of these mayors and chairmen, as set forth in the Local Government Act, will remain in force unless the Local Government Association of Queensland requests an alteration in such method.

I make it very clear that the city of Brisbane is governed by a separate Act, which acknowledges completely a different type of Government.

As to the proposed change in the method of selection of the Lord Mayor, we feel that the present method of his election by all the electors of the city has the result that members of the council have no voice in the selection of the Lord Mayor. Moreover, the existing system means that the city can be deprived of the services of a potentially efficient alderman by the defeat of an unsuccessful lord-mayoral candidate.

Mr. R. Jones: That is a weak argument.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Under this system honourable members opposite would have lost the Leader of the Opposition—and we do not want to lose him; I want to see him lead the Opposition for many, many years.

Under the new system of appointment of the Lord Mayor by the aldermen from amongst their number, such a candidate will be able to stand for an electoral ward and, if successful, will then be able to offer himself for appointment as Lord Mayor. If he is not appointed his services to the city as an alderman will be retained. If Alderman Harvey had opposed the Lord Mayor he would have been lost to the council. We also feel that giving the aldermen the right to appoint the Lord Mayor from amongst their number will provide them with the voice and power which should be their right if they are efficiently to represent the people of their electoral wards—and that is democracy.

Mr. R. Jones: Who appointed you?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Cairns.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I will now outline to honourable members the principal provisions of the Bill. As I have already mentioned, the Bill seeks to repeal the existing provision of the Act under which the City of Brisbane is governed by a council consisting of a mayor and 28 aldermen and seeks to insert a new provision under which the city will be governed by a council consisting of 21 aldermen. The existing provision dealing with the election of the mayor by all the electors of the city is also proposed to be repealed

and a new section inserted providing that, at the first meeting of the council after the conclusion of every triennial election, the aldermen present shall appoint one of their number to be mayor, who will hold office until the conclusion of the next triennial election.

The Bill provides that if the mayor is not appointed within 21 days of the date appointed for holding the first meeting of the council, the Governor in Council may make the appointment. Provision is made in the Bill for the aldermen, during the life of the council, and after not less than seven days' notice has been given to all the aldermen, including the mayor, to appoint some other person from amongst their number to be mayor. The Bill stipulates that its provisions will not affect the powers and authorities of the present council and it will remain in office until the conclusion of the next triennial election to be held on the last Saturday in March 1973.

If a vacancy in the office of alderman of the present council occurs between the commencement of the proposed new legislation and the next triennial election, the Governor in Council will determine whether the vacancy should be filled. In making such determination, he will have regard to the period between the occurrence of the vacancy and the date of the next triennial election, the practicability of preparing a roll for the special election and the cost of holding such election. If the Governor in Council determines that the vacancy should be filled, a special election will be held in the electoral ward in which the vacancy occurred as constituted prior to the passing of the new Act. If a vacancy in the office of mayor of the present council occurs in the above circumstances, the vice-mayor, *ex officio*, will become the mayor and the aldermen will be required to select from among their number some other person to be vice-mayor.

The Bill provides that the city is to be divided into two zones—a North Brisbane zone comprising 11 electoral wards and a South Brisbane zone comprising 10 electoral wards. The North Brisbane zone will comprise that part of the city lying north of the Brisbane River, and the South Brisbane zone the balance of the city. One alderman is to be returned for each electoral ward. The distribution of the zones into electoral wards is to be completed before the date of the March 1973 triennial election. Provision is made for complete or partial redistributions to be carried out from time to time should the Governor in Council deem this to be necessary in the circumstances, but the number of electoral wards in each of the zones is not to be altered.

For the purpose of carrying out the first distribution of the city into electoral wards, provision is made for the Governor in Council to appoint three electoral commissioners whose duty it will be to carry out such distribution. It will be the duty of the

commissioners to completely distribute the North Brisbane zone into 11 electoral wards and the South Brisbane zone into 10 electoral wards. In terms of the Bill, the first distribution of electoral wards is to be carried out in accordance with a quota to be determined by dividing the total number of electors in each zone as at 18 April 1972 (the closing date for the rolls for the recent State elections) by the number of electoral wards for that zone. The commissioners may, however, adopt a margin of allowance where necessary, but the quota for any ward is not to be departed from to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less. In distributing electoral wards within a zone, the commissioners are to take into account such matters as community of interest, means of communication, physical features, population density, and demographic and developmental trends.

As I have already mentioned, the Bill provides that the Governor in Council may cause a subsequent complete or partial redistribution of electoral wards within a zone to be carried out where he deems it desirable, having regard to an increase in the number of electors in an electoral ward or wards over and above the quota. For the purpose of carrying out such a redistribution, provision is made for the Governor in Council to appoint three electoral commissioners whose duty it will be to carry out the redistribution, but the number of electoral wards within a zone is not to be altered.

Provision is made for the determination of fresh quotas of electors in respect of a redistribution, and for a council in existence prior to the making of the redistribution to remain in office until the conclusion of the triennial election next following the redistribution.

In terms of the Bill, the commissioners are to name each electoral ward distributed or redistributed by them, but no ward is to be given a name which is the name of an electoral district wholly or partially comprised within the city.

On or before a date to be fixed by the Governor in Council, the commissioners are to cause a map or maps to be prepared illustrating the boundaries of the proposed electoral wards, and such map is or such maps are to be placed on public exhibition at the City Hall, and at every police station within a proposed electoral ward, along with a statement showing the proposed names of such wards, the approximate number of electors therein, the quota therefor and the description of the boundaries thereof.

Mr. Burns: Will the people have a right of appeal?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am coming to that now.

The map and statement mentioned will be open to inspection for 21 days from the date fixed by the Governor in Council.

During this period, objections may be lodged against the distribution or redistribution concerned and the commissioners have to consider all objections so lodged.

The Bill requires the commissioners, on or before a date to be fixed by the Governor in Council, to present a report to the Minister upon the distribution or redistribution, setting forth the relevant quota or quotas of electors, the names and boundaries of electoral wards as determined by them and the approximate number of electors in each ward.

The names and boundaries of wards as determined by the commissioners will be forthwith proclaimed by the Governor in Council, by proclamation, and thenceforth will be operative for the purpose of holding triennial elections of the council until a subsequent complete or partial redistribution of wards is made.

The Bill provides that the Principal Electoral Officer is to prepare electoral rolls for use at elections in the several electoral wards, and such rolls will be compiled from the names of persons enrolled as at the preceding 31 December on the State electoral roll or rolls for the electoral district or districts, or parts thereof, comprised within the ward concerned.

The cost of compiling such rolls will be payable by the council. It is felt that it would be more economical for the roll compilation to be carried out by the Principal Electoral Officer than by the council. In this behalf, it is estimated that the cost of compiling and printing the rolls after the first complete distribution of boundaries would be of the order of \$35,000. I am advised that, if this work had to be carried out by the council, the cost would be many times greater.

The Bill retains the existing provision of the Act whereunder the Town Clerk acts as chief returning officer at council elections. A new provision is proposed to be inserted, however, under which the Town Clerk will appoint, in writing, a returning officer for each electoral ward into which the city is divided. Under the present Act, the returning officer for each State electoral district, which comprised an electoral ward, acted as returning officer for that ward at council elections. Since electoral ward boundaries no longer follow State electoral boundaries, it is necessary to make arrangements for the appointment of new returning officers for council elections.

Since Brisbane City Council elections are conducted by means of the machinery of the State Elections Act, it is considered that appointments as returning officers for electoral wards should, as far as possible, be restricted to persons who are currently returning officers for State electoral districts in the city. The Bill accordingly provides that, unless the Minister so approves, a person shall not be appointed returning officer for an electoral ward unless he holds a current

appointment as returning officer for a State electoral district wholly or partially situated in the City of Brisbane.

The existing provisions of the Act dealing with the filling of extraordinary vacancies in the offices of mayor or aldermen, for example, in the event of death, resignation, etc., are proposed to be amended in certain respects. The existing provision whereby the vice-mayor *ex officio* becomes mayor in the event of the occurrence of an extraordinary vacancy in that office is proposed to be removed, and in its stead it is provided that in such a case the council, at a special meeting called for the purpose and held within two weeks of the occurrence of the vacancy, will appoint one of the aldermen to be mayor. If no such appointment is made within the prescribed time, the Governor in Council is empowered to fill the vacancy.

Similarly the Bill provides that where a vacancy occurs in the office of vice-mayor, the council, at a special meeting called for the purpose and held within two weeks of the occurrence of the vacancy, will appoint from amongst the aldermen a person to be vice-mayor. If no such appointment is made within the prescribed period, the Governor in Council may appoint an alderman to be vice-mayor.

The existing provision relating to the filling of an extraordinary vacancy in the office of alderman by the holding of a separate election in the relevant electoral ward is proposed to be retained. As in the present Act, where such vacancy arises within four months of a triennial election no action will be taken to fill it.

A further provision of the Bill validates certain rules made by the council and approved by the Governor in Council relating to the establishment of a superannuation scheme for aldermen of the council and their dependants. Rules made by the council governing the establishment of the scheme were approved by the Governor in Council on 16 October 1969, and these rules were amended by further rules made by the council and approved by the Governor in Council on 29 June 1972. The scheme is based on the provisions of the parliamentary superannuation scheme.

It has been discovered that no action was taken to publish the rules, as approved on 16 October 1969, in the Government Gazette, nor to table them in Parliament as required by section 56 of the City of Brisbane Act. The amending rules approved by the Governor in Council on 29 June 1972 were published in the Gazette of 1 July 1972, and tabled in Parliament on 8 August 1972.

The Solicitor-General has advised that in his opinion the failure to publish and table the original set of rules makes them inoperative, and that legislative action will be necessary to remedy the defect. The Bill remedies this position by ratifying and validating the original set of rules from the date of their approval by the Governor in

Council, and the amending rules from the date of their publication in the Government Gazette.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.29 p.m.): This Bill, I am sure, will go down in history as “McKechnie’s Folly”, because never in my life have I heard such a lot of piffle as I have during the last 20 minutes. The Minister came into the Chamber and told us that he was going to change the whole structure of the Brisbane City Council. He said he was not going to interfere with the Lord Mayor’s power. In fact, he was not going to interfere with anything at all—he was only going to make changes. How those two statements can be reconciled, only time will tell.

Let us look at what has actually happened. Ever since federation there has been a conflict of opinion between the progressive element in the community and the old die-hard Conservatives.

Mr. Porter: That is us.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member and his colleagues are the old die-hard Conservatives; there is no doubt about that.

Let us go back to 1878, when Sir Samuel Griffith, who was recognised in his day as one of the most progressive men in political life in Queensland, brought down in this Legislative Assembly a Bill that allowed for gradual progress in the development of the area of the City of Brisbane. It could be said truthfully, I think, that that was the beginning of the concept of Greater Brisbane.

What happened the next year, when that old die-hard Conservative Sir Thomas McIlwraith became Premier of Queensland? He immediately threw overboard everything that the people of Brisbane hoped for. He was the man who broke down the concept of Greater Brisbane, who laid down by legislation that there would be a central Brisbane area and a multitude of local authorities surrounding it. Sir Thomas McIlwraith and his Government—the same kettle of fish as honourable members opposite today—brought about the fragmentation of Greater Brisbane and allowed stagnation to prevail for many years.

It was not until 1920 that Ted Theodore, a Labor Premier of Queensland, introduced legislation that was the beginning of the system of granting to citizens of a city, town or other local authority area the right to elect a mayor or a chairman, as the case may be.

The Government has said that the Lord Mayor of Brisbane should have an electorate of his own. What better electorate can he have than the whole local authority area and all the people who reside in it? As for the Minister’s suggestion that I would not be here if a similar system applied in the State

Parliament, the fact is that I would be Premier of this State, not Leader of the Opposition. In the recent State election the A.L.P. received more than 50 per cent of the total vote when preferences were counted. There is no doubt about that. The only thing that would worry me would be that, because of the gerrymander of boundaries, I would be stuck with some honourable members opposite.

Let me proceed a little further. In 1923 the Australian Labor Party introduced legislation providing for the Greater Brisbane scheme virtually as we know it today. However, in 1929 there was again a change of Government and the Conservatives took over, and in 1930 Mr. A. E. Moore upset the scheme by introducing legislation providing that the Lord Mayor should be elected by the aldermen. That shows how far back the Government is going now. Mr. Moore also introduced a property franchise. Of course, on this occasion the Government has not been game to go back as far as that.

Mr. Marginson: They would love to.

Mr. HOUSTON: Of course they would.

It is interesting to note that the Minister said, “We are not going to break up Brisbane.” I remember the Premier saying, “We are not going to bring in Sunday drinking in Brisbane”, and then, a few months after an election, the Government brought it in. It must be remembered, too, that although the Government said, “We are not going to provide any more opportunities for gambling”, the T.A.B. was established shortly afterwards. In the light of those events, I do not think anyone could accept the Minister’s statement on this occasion as being factual and binding on the Government. Before the recent election Cabinet said, “There will be no daylight saving in Queensland.” Immediately after the election the Treasurer said publicly, “I want daylight saving. If I had the numbers, we would have daylight saving.” Honourable members heard what the Premier said on that score.

Reverting to what I said earlier, I remind honourable members that the next thing that happened—the people of Brisbane were thankful that it did—was that in 1932 Mr. Forgan Smith, the Labor Premier of the State at the time, introduced amending legislation to bring the Act back to its present form. And when an A.L.P. Government is returned in Queensland, the Act will again be amended to bring it back to that form; make no mistake about that. The amendment now proposed is only a makeshift measure, but I am concerned because the people of Brisbane will suffer in the meantime.

It may be said that it has taken the Liberal and Country Parties a long time to introduce this Bill. The truth is that until recently the Liberals, who want this change

—their desire for the change will later be explained very clearly—did not have the necessary numbers. The Country Party were completely opposed to it, as the Country Party executive has said. They think it is wrong in principle—and I go along with that. When Sir Harold Richter was Minister for Local Government he said, according to a “Sunday Sun” article of 13 August 1972, that he was adamant that the breaking up of Greater Brisbane and the re-establishment of a multi-municipality system was unworkable. He also suggested that the present method of electing aldermen and mayors was all right, and there was no—

Mr. Hinze: He was not the Minister in 1972.

Mr. HOUSTON: He said it in 1962.

Since Sir Harold Richter made that statement, three members of this Chamber, the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha, the honourable member for Toowong and the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt, have taken every opportunity to attack the Brisbane City Council, concentrating on those of the council’s activities that are associated with the granting of permits and land development.

Mr. Chinchin: Have you read the Bennett Report?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, I have. It was in 1967, yet on a recent radio broadcast the Minister told listeners that one of the reasons he was bringing down this Bill—four years later, two council elections later and two State elections later—was the Bennett Report. What a lot of nonsense he talked on that occasion!

A Government Member: One of the reasons.

Mr. HOUSTON: One of the reasons; the other one is that the taxi-drivers told him to do it. Those are his two reasons.

(Clapping from public gallery.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I draw attention to the interruption from the gallery. The business of the Chamber cannot be interrupted under any circumstances. If there is a repetition of what has just happened, I will have to order that the offending stranger be removed from the gallery.

Mr. HOUSTON: There is ample evidence in “Hansard” to show what Government members have said. Of course, the honourable member for Toowong would be the leader in this field. He has frequently disclosed his attitude towards the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Porter: Are you going to get on to land deals?

Mr. HOUSTON: As I said to a reporter yesterday, I will make my own speech in my own time. As the honourable member

is well aware, there is a second reading to the Bill and then the Committee stage. Do not let us worry about little things like that now.

Let us trace history a little further. The honourable member for Carnarvon was appointed as a Minister of the Crown on 16 June of this year. Within one month he made the statement that this great change was to be made. I maintain that it was contemplated before the State election, but Government members did not have the fortitude to come out into the open during the campaign and tell the people of Brisbane what was contemplated. Had they done so, they would have been annihilated in the City of Brisbane.

There is one honourable member in the Chamber who, I believe, has had more experience than anyone else in local authority affairs. When I say that, I exclude my new colleague the honourable member for Stafford, who has not been here very long. We have one honourable member here who has had long experience both as a mayor in a local authority and as a member of Parliament in this Chamber. I refer to the honourable member for Redcliffe. What has he had to say about the Lord Mayor? Let me quote from one of his speeches as recorded in “Hansard”. He said—

“I am prepared to castigate people for things that I believe are wrong, and I think that is the responsibility of every honourable member in this Assembly.”

No-one is denying that fact.

He continued—

“However, I make no bones about the fact that I give credit to Clem Jones for some excellent work he has done. Anybody who has had an opportunity of being associated with him must agree with that.”

Mr. Hinze: When did he say that?

Mr. HOUSTON: During the 1967-68 session.

Mr. Hinze: Why didn’t you read that at the time of the election of Speaker?

Mr. HOUSTON: I did not find it until later. But being an honourable gentleman, I give credit when credit is due.

Mr. Aikens: You “rubbished” him on the election of Speaker. What are you crying about?

Mr. HOUSTON: I know what the honourable member is crying about. He did not vote for Mr. Houghton, anyway; he voted for Bill Lonergan, so there is no need for him to worry.

Now let us examine the real reason for this Bill. As the Minister said, there are several reasons. One of them is vindictiveness against the Lord Mayor because he stood against a mate of the Treasurer in the State election. But that is not the only

reason. As I said at the outset, the Liberal Party—the Conservatives of this State—have always wanted a fragmented local authority in Brisbane, particularly in relation to land development, and on many occasions they have argued against the Brisbane City Council because it has demanded that land developers be responsible for certain things, such as the provision of water supply and sewerage facilities.

Mr. Porter: And it has loaded the total cost onto this generation.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is a matter for debate, too—no doubt during the second-reading stage. However, the point we are debating now is this proposed change. The Minister said quite openly that he believes that 21 aldermen are enough to do the work that has to be done, yet the Prime Minister (Mr. McMahon) has publicly suggested that local government organisations should accept more responsibility. That is what the Prime Minister and the Federal Government want. They want to give aldermen more responsibility.

Local authorities are very close to the people and they should be allowed to handle many more facets of administration. If the Prime Minister gets his way we will need to do more for local authorities, and there will be more work for aldermen to do.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You realise that the Lord Mayor said he could be Lord Mayor of Brisbane and also member for Yeronga—and do it on his head.

Mr. HOUSTON: I do not know about that. All I know is that the Treasurer often speaks when his head is not clear. This might be one of those occasions.

Having mentioned land developers, let me stress that the large developer has the finance to provide such things as road-works, sewerage and channelling. However, the real pressure to break up the council—and this will be the eventual step, because it is what the Government is finally after—is coming from the small family company. I refer to the Mum and Dad company—a company comprising a man and his wife and perhaps a couple of children—that has not enough money to be a big developer but has enough to fleece the public provided it is allowed to obtain a block of land, put a couple of roads into it and sell it at exorbitant prices, making a profit of \$50,000 to \$60,000, as some such companies are doing. These are the people the Government is trying to help. It is trying to help the person who wants to fleece the public, charge them top rates and give them nothing in return. Of course, this is nothing new.

Sir Gordon Chalk: They are Clem Jones's mates.

Mr. HOUSTON: I said the small land developer. The Treasurer knows more of the people concerned than I do—and I know a few of them.

Let us now look at what the public thinks about the Government's activities.

Mr. Porter: When are you going to give us some names?

Mr. HOUSTON: Just be patient. I will give your name its due—and I will take into account your interest in the various activities you are associated with.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Do it now.

Mr. HOUSTON: Don't worry about it. There is a week-end to come yet.

Now let me place on record what some very reputable people have had to say about this legislation. First of all, on 1 August "The Courier-Mail", in an editorial, made it very clear that the proposed change was wrong. Prior to that, on 19 July, this article appeared in that newspaper—

"The Queensland University senior public administration lecturer (Mr. G. H. France) said yesterday the Government seemed to be 'juggling the Brisbane City Council for its own political purposes.'

"He said Brisbane needed a 'strong-mayor' system.

"He accused the Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) and the Local Government Minister (Mr. McKechnie) of 'very low quality argument' in their efforts to justify changes proposed for the Brisbane City Council."

The same argument can be put forward today. With the exception of members of the Liberal and Country Parties, the one person who has come out in support of the legislation is the president of the Property Owners' Association, Mr. Blocksidge.

Mr. Aikens: I've never heard of him.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member should find out whom Mr. Blocksidge supports. Even Mr. Killen criticised the proposal by claiming that it was an exercise in cynicism in Australian politics. He knows full well that this legislation could affect his chances in the forthcoming Federal election. I assure the Federal Government and every Government candidate in the forthcoming election that the City of Brisbane will not forget this betrayal by the Queensland Government. The people of Brisbane were given no opportunity to express their views on this proposal. The introduction of this legislation was not included in the mandate given to the Government by the people—a mandate received as the result of a gerrymander.

Mr. Hinze: Tell us the other side of the story.

Mr. HOUSTON: We did not hear it from the Minister.

Mr. Chinchin: What is wrong with the Bill, anyway?

Mr. HOUSTON: What is the Bill? It is the first stage in the fragmentation of Brisbane. As well, of course, it is an attempt to reduce the number of aldermen. I am sorry that the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt could not hear what the Minister said. He said that aldermen are not required to do as much work as State members. I do not intend going into the pros and cons of that argument, although I believe that a conscientious member does work hard. It is a strange thing that many Government members are able to devote a good deal of their time to the conduct of their own properties and businesses. Perhaps there is some truth in the claim that certain State members are not full-time members. Certainly those on this side of the Chamber are. As to aldermen, they are required to carry out many responsibilities and duties, one of the most important being the need to maintain a close liaison between the public and the local authority.

In 1923, when the original legislation was before Parliament, the salary payable to a State member was fixed at £500 and that of a Brisbane City Council alderman at £400, or, in other words, 80 per cent of a member's salary. Not one argument was advanced by any member of Parliament to the effect that an alderman was not worth the salary that it was proposed he would receive.

Mr. Porter: You should read the debate again.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member for Toowong has not even seen it, let alone studied it. However, at that time aldermen were considered worthy of receiving a salary that was four-fifths of the salary payable to a State member.

The Minister has also told us that he proposes to make the Brisbane River the dividing line. It is not very long since Government members argued in this Chamber that the river should be crossed in the redistribution of State electorates. In fact, the new electorate of Brisbane spans the river. Only a few months ago, Government members contended it was all right to cross the river, whereas today they claim it is wrong to do so. Every time they open their mouths they speak with two tongues. Only a few months ago it was contended in this Chamber that there were not enough electorates in Queensland, and a Bill to establish 78 seats was passed. Immediately after that, Government members fought amongst themselves and returned to Parliament with a compromise proposal to establish 82 seats.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. Parliament did not pass a Bill to provide for 78 seats. The A.L.P. ganged up with the ginger group of the Liberal Party to defeat it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no substance in the point of order.

(Time expired.)

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (12.51 p.m.): This morning we have listened to an interesting debate opened by the Minister for Local Government, who in doing so presented his maiden Bill. It is not often that a Minister has the Chamber filled to capacity when he introduces his first Bill. And I think we should compliment him on the manner in which he did so—objectively and without recourse to political rancour or suggestion. Unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition immediately sallied into the debate, ignored the enormous amount of material that the Minister had put before the Chamber, and proceeded to launch a political attack on the measure.

The first event that we witnessed was a division on amending the title of the Bill to add the words, "and for other purposes". For some days we have heard that members of the Opposition, while speaking on this Bill, wished to debate certain matters that would not normally be permitted according to the rules. Among the reasons for adding the words, "and for other purposes", was one to give members of the Opposition an opportunity to do so. We know from our experience in Parliament that Opposition members frequently desire to raise matters outside the ambit of a Bill and are grateful for such an opportunity. It was for this purpose that the Minister set out to widen the Bill, yet the very people who opposed it were Opposition members.

Mr. NEWTON: I rise to a point of order. We did not oppose the amendment to add the words, "and for other purposes". The Minister sought leave to move the motion in an amended form, but he did not indicate its nature. The Minister for Justice should get his facts straight.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. KNOX: Opposition members should have given the Minister an opportunity to explain the amendment, but instead they tried to gag him.

The Bill before the Committee envisages the alterations outlined by the Minister. They are quite simple proposals. The suggestion that there are sinister reasons behind the alterations is quite without foundation. It has been Liberal Party policy for many years—published and referred to on many occasions publicly—to carefully examine the structure of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Newton interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. KNOX: The opportunity to carry out such an examination does not occur frequently. Some people have asked—indeed, this matter was raised by the Leader of the Opposition today—"Why should it be done now?" It must be done now. The last occasion on which this opportunity arose was in 1959. At that time the Government

considered the alterations now put before the Committee, but it did not implement them. This action is being taken now because there must be a redistribution of the boundaries of the wards of the City of Brisbane. Indeed, it may not recur for some 10 years. This is the time to do it, and it must be done with a degree of urgency because the election for the Brisbane City Council must take place on the last Saturday of March next year. That is why the Bill is before the Committee today.

Mr. Sherrington: Why didn't you do it in 1959?

Mr. KNOX: There were fairly good reasons. No doubt the same sort of reason prompted the A.L.P. not to sack the member for Baroona just before the election, but undoubtedly it will do so before the next election.

I remind honourable members that the structures of local authorities in this State, as in other States of Australia, are creatures of the Legislature of the State. Local government is the responsibility of the State Legislature in each of the States of Australia, and the authorities and powers are delegated, by legislation, to municipalities and shires. This, of course, has been a tradition in this country—as it has been in many other countries—ever since responsible government was established.

The City of Brisbane Act was brought into effect by a Labor Government in this State in 1924. It was completely opposed to the policies of the Opposition of that day, I might say, but was, nevertheless, consistent with the policies of the Government of the day, which was a socialist Government dedicated to running State enterprises. One of the greatest of the State enterprises was to be the City of Brisbane. Brisbane had 20 local governments at that time, and the purpose of amalgamation was to establish a giant enterprise named the City of Brisbane—a corporation which was to run the State enterprises which the socialists established at that time, namely, the butchers' shops, the cannery works and a few others which did not even get off the ground. While we disagreed with the policy, we had to respect the fact that the Government held a mandate from the people to be the Government of the State at that time, and did this in accordance with its published policy. Everybody knew and understood what it was doing, and I hope and trust that the people will understand that we are doing this for exactly the opposite reasons to those of that socialist Government in 1924 for amalgamating an enormous number of local authorities.

The Bill contains no proposal other than what we are now suggesting. The constitution of the council itself will not be changed. We still feel that the Brisbane City Council is worthy of the closest consideration before any changes are made.

Rumours have been rife that the Brisbane City Council wishes to divest itself of the transport authority. At no time when I was Minister for Transport did the council ask to have the transport authority taken from it. Yet, during the last election campaign, A.L.P. aldermen, and indeed candidates, said that the Government should take control of the Brisbane transport authority. If it is indeed the wish and the policy of the Opposition that the Brisbane transport authority should be taken away from the Brisbane City Council, other public utilities which the City Council controls could bear examination in a like manner.

Indeed, the Liberal Party Convention stated quite clearly that the Government should examine the structure of these public utilities and see whether they are being run in the way envisaged, that is, efficiently and to the great benefit of the people of this city. This legislation contains no proposal that this should be done; it was merely a unanimous suggestion of the Liberal Party Convention. It is natural that it should want to do this. Indeed, in 1964 Mr. Slaughter, who was Town Clerk of the Brisbane City Council claimed, in a public statement, that these public utilities should be examined in the light of the Greater Brisbane experiment. I am quite sure that the honourable member for Stafford will remember that, because he attended that conference in 1964.

Mr. Houston: That was seven years ago.

Mr. KNOX: Yes, and nothing was done about examining them.

Great concern was expressed at executive decision-making of the Brisbane City Council and, as a result of pleas to this Parliament, the Bennett report was produced. It indicated quite clearly certain maladministration in the council, some of which had arisen because aldermen were not carrying out their proper function under the constitution of the Brisbane City Council. For too long now aldermen of this council have been message boys of the council and have not been carrying out their duties effectively under the terms of the constitution of the Brisbane City Council.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that if it is known that under this proposal every person who runs for aldermanic honours in this city has a chance of becoming Lord Mayor or vice-mayor of this city, which an alderman cannot at present expect, the calibre of candidates and the way in which aldermen go about their duties in running the largest city in this State—the third largest city in Australia—will be upgraded. That is the purpose of the legislation—to upgrade the standard of the council and to see that aldermen carry out their functions as executives of the city and

not message boys. Indeed, I have considerable confidence that when this legislation comes into effect it will be hailed as the best legislation the Government has introduced.

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

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (2.15 p.m.): I rise to support the Leader of the Opposition in justified opposition to the introduction of the amendments proposed to the City of Brisbane Act. We have heard two Ministers endeavour to assure us and the people of this State that this is merely a simple matter. Against that, the Press, which is one of the Government's main instruments of operation in this State and in 99.9 per cent of cases favours the Government against the Opposition, on this issue is 99.9 per cent unfavourable to the Government's attempt to emasculate, fragment and finally eliminate the greatest social experiment in local government evolution that Australia, if not the Western World, has ever seen.

Mr. Knox: Who wrote your speech this time?

Mr. BALDWIN: If the Minister knew what "caligraphy" means, I would invite him to look at the handwriting in my notes. He does not know what it means, so I shall forget that invitation.

I point out that the unofficial survey conducted by the Press, in which more than 130,000 people expressed their opinions, showed that 75 per cent of the people of Brisbane were opposed to the Government's intention. One would think that that would have been a red-light warning to the Government. It certainly would have been to anyone who was not blinded with greed and anti-social prejudices, and did not see a socialist under his bed each night when he took off his boots.

The official petition of the Australian Labor Party presented to the House this morning, representing the views of over 18,000 people, shows that the proposal is not considered simple, either. I thank the Press for conducting its survey, and I thank all those members and supporters of the Labor Party who gathered signatures for our official petition. The honourable member for South Brisbane alone collected almost 1,000 of them. Other hundreds of signatures collected around Brisbane electorates bespeak the opposition of the people of Greater Brisbane to the so-called "simple" legislation before the Chamber this afternoon.

The Minister for Local Government has, as is usual with anti-democratic Governments, told us almost nothing of why the Bill is being introduced, although that can be guessed quite accurately, nor has he told us how the legislation will be implemented. He expects this Committee and the Queensland public to accept that the proposed changes will have a good effect on the people of Brisbane—after 42 years of successful operation of Greater Brisbane, a Labor experiment in the social evolution of local government

which has become world renowned for its success as a city-State and an example for other countries to follow! City planners and local government authorities come to Brisbane from all over the world. They have heard of the success of Greater Brisbane, and, when they have an opportunity to do so, they come to see it at first hand.

In those 42 years, the council operated for 24 years under non-Labor—thinly disguised Liberal—Lord Mayors, and for almost half of that period with non-Labor majorities. These two sets of figures alone bespeak the success of the principle that Government members want to change for, they say, something better.

If I could be convinced of the sincerity of their philosophies and motives, and that they did not have the personal interest that many of them are known to have in reshaping the council and weakening its strength, I, along with my colleagues here, would not be opposing the introduction of this legislation. In fact, I would then be supporting it. It is clearly because of the whole history of anti-Labor attacks on the advancement of local government principles illustrated in the concept of Greater Brisbane that I cannot bring myself to accept that there is anything but menace for the ordinary workers of Greater Brisbane in the proposed amendments.

Our leader, Mr. Houston, in ably opening the Opposition attack on this iniquitous attempt to set back the clock of local government evolution by a century, outlined the history of hatred and violence that the honourable member for South Coast and his mates have against any effort made to benefit the people of the City of Brisbane.

Mr. Hinze: Who wrote that tripe?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BALDWIN: Tory governments, composed too largely of greedy, narrow, short-range slavers of society, have from time to time played their part in destroying the work of a successful local government evolution after tricking the voters of Queensland to gain office.

Unlike the three earlier occasions mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, on this, the fourth, occasion the Government was forced to accept the existence of Greater Brisbane for its first five terms. In fact, early in its existence as the Government of Queensland, it did, because it suited its purposes, even enlarge the aldermanic work-force of the City of Brisbane up to 28, and at a time when the population of Greater Brisbane was less than 500,000; yet now, when the population is almost 800,000 (60 per cent more), the Minister has the cheek to ask us to accept, on behalf of the more than 63 per cent Labor voters of Greater Brisbane, a 25 per cent reduction in the aldermanic work-force of this city.

That does not surprise me. It is typically in line with the whole philosophy of anti-Labor Governments and the way in which

they look on workers and the work-force—always reduce the work-force, sack, dismiss, make redundant (honourable members opposite can call it any of the fancy names they like)—if they think they can gain kudos.

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

Mr. BALDWIN: If honourable members opposite think they can gain something to line their own pockets, they will go ahead and do it under the guise of all kinds of tricks and the fancy tapestries of illusion that they are renowned for spinning in this Chamber to the people of this State.

Mr. Davis: In other words, they are mugs.

Mr. BALDWIN: They are mugs if they think the people will cop this. They have got away with it only by using snide and cunning tactics and because they did not have the intestinal fortitude to declare their policy on it.

Mr. F. P. Moore: Joh. has always been a somersaulter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I reminded the Committee yesterday about the correct manner of referring to honourable members in this Chamber.

Mr. BALDWIN: Honourable members opposite are proposing this reduction on the grounds that aldermen do not have as much work to do as a State member. That, of course, is irrelevant to the facts as they apply to aldermen and to the growing complexity of human wants in a fast-expanding metropolis. At the same time, the Government has recently, by a gerrymander, increased by more than 12 per cent the number of State seats in approximately the same area. To all who are aware of the facts as formed by 15 years of carefully contrived cunning theft from the people of Brisbane, it is obvious that, under the malicious mis-rule and menace of the Government towards Greater Brisbane, the Government should be increasing, not reducing, the number of aldermen, to try to off-set for the public the ill-effects of their years of neglect.

During the debate on the Appropriation Bill earlier this week, I pointed out to the people of Queensland from the floor of this Chamber that under the Country-Liberal Government Queensland has come to spend 50 per cent below the national average on sewerage, drainage and reticulated water services in this State. I remind honourable members opposite that those figures came from their own Federal Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I do not intend to remind the Committee again without acting.

Mr. BALDWIN: The figures came from the 1971 report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

I say on good grounds that this Government made the people of Greater Brisbane and the Moreton statistical division bear most of the burden of this less-than-average position. This has been brought about by the gradual and, as far as possible, secret reduction in subsidies for City of Brisbane works. As proof of that I have here a list of the reductions in subsidies for works in the City of Brisbane during the last 12 years. For roads the subsidies were reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent in 1969-70; subsidies on bridges and culverts were reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent in 1969-70; and subsidies on drainage and general drainage were reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent in the same year. The 50 per cent subsidy on mosquito eradication ceased entirely after 1960-61 and the City Council was left to bear the burden; subsidies on street improvements were reduced to 15 per cent in the last year; subsidies on acquisition of land were reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent and the same applied to subsidies on concrete water channelling—with contingencies the subsidies were reduced from 20 per cent to 15 per cent; subsidies on sea and river retaining walls were reduced from 25 per cent to 20 per cent at a time when we are supposed to be beautifying and retaining, and keeping tidy and healthy the banks of the Brisbane River; the 20 per cent subsidy on sports fields and playground equipment ceased after 1959-60—that should give the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services something to chew over; the 20 per cent subsidy on acquisition of land ceased in 1958-59; and the 20 per cent subsidy on building ceased in the same year. I have here two pages of reductions.

Through the newspapers over the years snide references have been made to the solvency of the Brisbane City Council. Figures taken from the Auditor-General's report indicate that in the 12 years that the present Brisbane City Council has been in office its indebtedness has only doubled, compared with the more than a trebling of the Government's indebtedness during its term of office. That is a record that the Government does not boast about. It is a Commonwealth-wide record. The Government has the cheek to circulate amongst the people of Queensland unjustified rumours about the insolvency and snide practices of the Brisbane City Council, rumours that it has helped to give credence to because of its callous withdrawal of subsidies. The Government has set the pattern by which it would hope that the City of Brisbane would go bankrupt, so that it could move in, but it has not gone bankrupt because of the ability of the aldermen, the Lord Mayor and the inherent efficiency of the structure of Greater Brisbane. Of course, that is what frightens the Government most of all. After 15 years it has failed to bring this social experiment to ruin.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: We have been the Government that has backed the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. BALDWIN: The withdrawal of subsidies negates the Premier's statement.

Local government in the State of Queensland stands trembling before the onslaughts of the State Government. Reductions in subsidies have applied to the various shires, too. The fantastic part of the whole thing is that more than 69 per cent of local authorities are made up of almost 100 per cent Country Party supporters. They are the basis of the Government's very existence. Without those numbers the Government would not be in office. Those people support the Government, yet in its very greed to supply the means whereby foreign and southern companies can come into this State and rob the people by having the Government supply them with free railways, free ports, free services and all kinds of subsidies and concessions, the Government is acting against the best interests of those who have put it in office.

The Government is like a madman who is setting out to prune a tree; it gets out on the branch with the axe and starts cutting. This Government is cutting itself to its rightful ruin—and the sooner the better. The clamour amongst local government is growing louder. I have ample evidence of that. The North Queensland Local Government Association will be breathing down the Government's neck.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You say we are going to our ruin. You seem to be very concerned about it. Why are you concerned about it?

Mr. BALDWIN: I am not concerned about you. I do not have to be concerned about any multi-millionaire. I am concerned for the ordinary producers of the wealth of this State, not for the takers. You are taking from these local governments and you are doing it by cunning illusion. Your whole aspect of operation is quite clear to anyone who can pull aside the thin tapestry that you place over it. In order to get your popularity in the shires, you put back onto local government more responsibilities in health, education and even in public protection, and it costs them more to carry these out. But this is your way of bringing your men before the public eye in the shires and you blatantly exploit your own local government colleagues and counterparts in order to gain political kudos.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair and not the Premier.

Mr. BALDWIN: Mr. Lickiss, this is your Government so I include you; do not be disappointed.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am only requesting the honourable member to address the Chair.

Mr. BALDWIN: I carry out your request with pleasure.

One of the main reasons for the introduction of this Bill in such disgraceful, unseemly haste is that, after years of frustration and starvation, the city council aldermen, led by the Lord Mayor, sought to storm the bastion of political bastardy that exists in this Parliament. This is why the Government has now brought down this Bill. Its members know that its number is up; the count is down. They will storm it again at the next election and they will win. Honourable members opposite have 2½ short years in which to carry out the purposes put onto them by a small group sitting opposite and their friends sitting outside who, if the Government did not jump to their bidding, would bring it down by their numbers.

We only need 10 to upset the Government, just as we needed only eight under the first redistribution Bill. That eight knew what they were doing. They knew that we would agree with them. That is why they did it. The Government knows that and has it hanging over its head. It has no recourse but to go along with the minority for its own political survival, because, on the very next important matter that comes before this House, these members could leave it without a majority on the floor.

Now let me quickly trace another little bit of political history. In 1947 the Chandler administration introduced in the city council the "green belt" scheme. At that time, Labor was in State Government and refused to ratify the scheme. But it was ratified later on when this Government came in and, as a result, this "green belt" around Brisbane escalated the prices of land. This was done because, in the immediate post-war years, all the peripheral shires were on their knees from financial starvation. They had to get the biggest rate-paying milch cow of them all into their shires quickly—that is, the ordinary working man who has a household allotment. This was the way to do it—to force him through the "green belt" into those shires—and now we have reached a position of equilibrium.

The Government is also trembling because the price of outside land passed that of inside land about three years ago and there is no outflow except through industrial development, freeway take-overs, and so on. But it will not be sufficient to keep these shires solvent at their rate of progress. Worse than that, of course, for those few concerned, is that in 1968-1969 the City of Brisbane put through its new development requirements.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HINZE (South Coast) (2.35 p.m.): I rise to support the Bill so capably introduced by the new Minister for Local Government. I congratulate him on such a forward move so early in his administration of a department in which all Queenslanders are interested. Within one month of being appointed Minister for Local Government, Mr. McKechnie is introducing a Bill that will certainly have far-reaching consequences

throughout Queensland. It should have been introduced during the previous parliamentary session, or even the session before that.

Mr. Sherrington: Why wasn't it?

Mr. HINZE: We have had a lot of business to attend to, and we had to complete that first. Having been given a mandate from the people of Queensland to govern this State, we are going to do exactly that.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HINZE: Give me a bit of a chance, and I will settle with you fellows for sure.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HINZE: In this Chamber there are a number of honourable members who have had some experience in local government. I can see two on the Opposition side, the honourable members for Stafford and Ipswich West. There may be one or two more.

Mr. Sherrington: What about Mr. Marginson?

Mr. HINZE: Yes, there is the honourable member for Wolston.

Mr. Sherrington: And Mr. Dean?

Mr. HINZE: Yes, and the honourable member for Sandgate. That gives a total of four. How many more are there? By contrast, on the Government side there are about 12 members who have had experience in local government. My own experience extends over 15 years, for nine years as chairman of the Albert Shire and six years as a member, so I think I can speak constructively on the Bill.

At the outset, I claim that nobody could contend that the Brisbane City Council is a democratic local authority. Members of the Opposition know that as well as I do.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HINZE: Give Clem Jones Chapter 2, and he runs Brisbane like the Kremlin. You know it, and all of his aldermen know it, too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HINZE: Hasn't he had a picnic? No wonder he is screaming. For the life of me I cannot understand the news media. Twelve months ago they would have cut his throat because they could not get to see him—they could not get anywhere near him—but today, for some strange reason, they are shedding crocodile tears for "poor old Clem". Everybody knows that this Bill is being introduced for the good of the State of Queensland and the City of Brisbane—to ensure that the two prosper and progress.

Mr. Sherrington: What about the taxi-drivers?

Mr. HINZE: If the honourable member does not like taxi-drivers, that is all right. But he kids to them during an election campaign. He uses them to cart his constituents around in order to gain votes. The Australian Labor Party has tried to draw a comparison between the Brisbane City Council and the other 130 local authorities in Queensland. Opposition members know as well as I do that, in Brisbane, politics intrude into local government.

Mr. Sherrington: What about on the Gold Coast?

Mr. HINZE: They do not on the Gold Coast. My colleague the honourable member for Surfers Paradise was elected on his own ability. He did not need a party to push him into local government; he got there on his own efforts. That sort of thing happens in every local authority in Queensland except the Brisbane City Council. Clem Jones does not intend to take a direction from the A.L.P., and the only thing that frightens him is that he cannot get sufficient numbers in his own team to back him. If he does get in, there is no way in the world that he will be prepared to accept a direction.

Mr. Sherrington: Make up your mind. You have already said we are all taking directions.

Mr. HINZE: I didn't say that at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. Bromley: He can't read.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will cease persistent interjections.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for South Brisbane, and I draw his attention to Standing Order No. 123A.

Mr. HINZE: I knew that I would give Opposition members a bit of a stir. They are like Murphy's dog; they can give it but they cannot take it. I have indicated quite clearly that for the last 10 to 15 years the City of Brisbane has not been governed democratically. Now the Government is doing the right thing by altering that situation. I have also said that politics enter into local government in Brisbane but not in other areas.

It is not the intention of the Bill to bring about the fragmentation of the City of Brisbane. As a member of a thoroughly responsible Government, I would not stand aside and permit the fragmentation of the City of Brisbane. I accept that if there are a number of local authorities in an area, it is virtually impossible to get agreement between them. In fact, we should amend the Local Government Act to reduce

the number of local authorities in Queensland by about half. Business is conducted in such a way that amalgamations take place, and the same principle should apply to local government. I am sure that the Minister, being progressive, will soon introduce the necessary amending legislation to reduce the number of local authorities in Queensland.

In this instance the Government should have gone further and set up a parliamentary select committee on local government. In that way, some A.L.P. members would have been satisfied after they had looked at various local authority systems in Australia and overseas. I am sure that some of the services provided by local government today, such as water, electricity, transport and sewerage, could be handed over to authorities specialising in such service facilities. That is the answer to people who ask, "Why reduce the number of aldermen from 28 to 21?" If we were to do what I suggest—I am sure the Minister will give serious thought to this proposal—that would be a very good reason for the reduction in numbers.

I do not believe that we as parliamentarians are doing more work than our counterparts in local government or in the Federal Parliament. It was said earlier in this debate that if we are responsible people, whether we are in local, State or Federal Government, we are all flat out. However, the Brisbane City Council is undertaking far too many responsibilities.

We should seriously consider divorcing from local government some of the things I have referred to, such as transport, electricity, and water supply. I have served on the Contiguous Local Authorities Committee, and I have frequently spoken to representatives of the Brisbane City Council and referred to the necessity to establish a regional planning authority to control water supplies. As every honourable member knows, Brisbane depends on adjoining local authorities, such as the Pine Shire, the Albert Shire and the Moreton Shire, for its water supply. In such circumstances, representatives of the Brisbane City Council must be prepared to sit down and talk with people from those other local authorities. Perhaps a regional planning authority that would divest water supply responsibilities from local government would be a good idea.

It has been said that the area of responsibility of local authorities is growing. Of course it is, and it would be a good idea if the State were to give local authorities still more responsibility. Local authority representatives, after being democratically elected, should not have to go cap in hand to the State Government whenever they want to make a decision. We all have our area of responsibility, be it Federal, State or local. If we give local authorities greater responsibility, they should be relieved of some of the services they are now undertaking.

There have been suggestions that this measure is a personal attack on Clem Jones. No-one can detract in any way from Clem Jones as a citizen who obviously has the City of Brisbane at heart. But for heaven's sake let us be fair and reasonable. It cannot be claimed that all the present development in Brisbane can be attributed to Clem Jones. Look at what has happened as a result of the Wilbur Smith Report. What about the millions of dollars that this Government is pouring into the city?

Opposition members should look at the bridges and road systems being constructed in Brisbane. Where are all the funds coming from? It is about time someone told the people of Brisbane that the Government, in implementing the Wilbur Smith Report, is pouring many more millions of dollars into the city than the city council ever thought of doing. It was only after the Government brought the Wilbur Smith experts to Brisbane that any semblance of action was taken to solve Brisbane's traffic problems.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. HINZE: Some of you people who represent areas within the City of Brisbane seem to think it is your city.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. HINZE: Brisbane is my capital, just as it is the capital of every other member in this Chamber. I am proud of it, too. I want the administration of the City of Brisbane to be such that the city will develop along the lines I desire.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. HINZE: I have as much right as the honourable member or anybody else to say what I think about the City of Brisbane. Some time ago I was speaking about the sand erosion on the beaches at the Gold Coast, and the Leader of the Opposition said, "They are my beaches as much as yours; my constituents bathe there." I am now retaliating and saying that Brisbane is just as much my city as it is his.

Only last week some of us had the privilege and honour of representing Queensland overseas. We saw Tokyo, which is the biggest city in the world, with 12,000,000 people. Would any honourable member suggest that we should adopt the same attitude towards the development of the City of Brisbane? One honourable member mentioned that Brisbane has 800,000 people and that its population is growing rapidly and will soon reach 1,000,000. It will not be too long before it is 1,500,000 or 2,000,000. Sydney has 3,000,000 people and Melbourne has 2,500,000. Do Opposition members suggest that we should continue a system under which 2,000,000 people will be asked to vote for one particular man? How silly can they be? In Queensland we elect the Premier, and in the Federal Parliament the

Government elects the Prime Minister. However, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane is elected by what is called the "strong" mayoral system. The Leader of the Opposition criticised our attitude towards the strong mayoral system of election. How was he elected? Does he not think that he is a strong leader?

An Opposition Member: You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr. HINZE: I do not know what I am talking about? The honourable member certainly knows what I am talking about. Frankly, I believe that he supports the Bill but is not game to support it.

An Opposition Member: Can't you read Bruce Small's writing?

Mr. HINZE: There is one difference between Bruce Small and me on the one hand and the Opposition and Stanaway on the other hand. Stanaway has to prepare something for the 33 of them. Tommy Burns and the member next to him had a lot of trouble reading Stanaway's writing this morning, so he should type it in double-line spacing.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will come back to the issue before the Committee.

Mr. HINZE: Very well, Mr. Lickiss. They are trying to upset me by saying Bruce Small writes my speeches. He would verify that he has never been asked to do that.

Let us be fair and reasonable. We will not have a State within a State. We will not have the situation where we have one group of 1,000,000 people in the City of Brisbane and another group of 1,000,000 people spread throughout the thousands of square miles of Queensland. If there are to be any new States, I want one for the Gold Coast—and won't we have some fun! I have seen enough overseas during the past two weeks to do me. If North Queensland is to be created a new State because it has no Ministers, and a new State is wanted for Brisbane with its own system of election, I also want a new State for the Gold Coast.

I think that my small contribution to this debate has indicated to the Opposition that we have not heard anything yet to prove that we are wrong. The Leader of the Opposition made a very weak attempt to denigrate the submissions of the new Minister for Local Government. He was followed closely by "Big Red Ned" Ted.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Coast will refer to other members in the correct manner.

Mr. HINZE: I refer to my honourable friend and colleague, the honourable member for Redlands. (Laughter.) He does not like that, either. Of course, his contribution was written by Stanaway and, I suppose, capably read. But we have heard nothing yet to indicate to the people of Brisbane and Queensland that the Government is not right in what

it is doing. When the case unfolds and the people of Brisbane see that this is a genuine attempt to do something for Brisbane and Queensland, they will understand it. At this stage they have heard only one side of the argument. After they see the benefits to be derived from this legislation they will pat my "taxi" friend the Minister for Local Government on the back and say, "You have done the right thing. We were crooked on you when you brought the Bill down, but you have done something for Queensland and Brisbane that was urgently needed."

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (2.50 p.m.): First of all we had a shockingly servile exhibition by the Leader of the Opposition, and then an amazing mixture of rhetoric by the honourable member for Redlands. Whilst both of them were speaking they were supinely looking up to the gallery where, of course, the hatchet men of the Trades Hall are ensconced in serried array. Every now and again, of course, they were expecting a cheer from them. They reminded me of kids at a party pandering to their parents, uncles and aunts in the hope of getting birthday presents.

We have heard a lot about the Bill. As a matter of fact, it was brought down as a result of some rather amazing circumstances. We know, of course, that the honourable member for Bulimba is not the real leader of the Labor Party in this Chamber. We know that he is only the "front" man for the honourable member for Lytton, and that he in turn is only the "front" man for Mr. Egerton at the Trades Hall. All these things, of course, have been more or less denied by the Trades Hall faction, but they all came to the surface quite recently when Mr. Egerton, I would say arrogantly and blatantly and with all the impertinence that we have come to expect from him, rushed into Press and said what was going to be debated today during the passage of this Bill.

He also told the people of Brisbane who read the "Telegraph" newspaper that land scandals and land dealings were to be brought up, and that certain prominent Liberal members, in both this and the Federal Parliament, were going to have the finger of scorn and derision, and probably the finger of contumely and obloquy, pointed at them, and that they were going to be branded as men who engaged in malversation. As a matter of fact, I delayed my departure for my beloved Northland till 4 o'clock this afternoon. I know that that will annoy the members of the A.L.P. who come from the North and who cannot leave till Mr. Burns gives them permission to go. I, for my part, can go north, south, east or west at any time my constituents want me to go there.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to address other honourable members in the correct manner.

Mr. AIKENS: Did I transgress, Mr. Lickiss?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will refer to another member as an honourable member. I cannot put it much more clearly than that.

Mr. AIKENS: I was of the opinion that I always did that. I am always meticulously careful to observe the procedures of Parliament, and, if I have offended, I am very sorry.

We did hear, of course, that Mr. Egerton was going to have brought up in this Chamber all the land scandals associated with various State and Federal members. I was wondering when I read those articles in the Press if by some special dispensation of Mr. Speaker Mr. Egerton was going to be allowed into the Chamber to make the charges himself. I do not know whether he did or did not make that approach to Mr. Speaker, but it is obvious that Mr. Egerton is not in the Chamber. He is, however, perched up in the eyrie of the public gallery keeping a very watchful eye on A.L.P. members, and later he will check with the honourable member for Lytton to see if anyone has transgressed the iron-clad rules of the A.L.P.

If there are any land scandals connected with Liberal members of Parliament, either in this Chamber or any other, and if there are any land scandals connected with anybody and they concern the Brisbane City Council, let them be placed before the Committee. As a result of the amending motion which was moved by the Minister when introducing the Bill and which, as the Minister for Justice pointed out, the A.L.P. opposed, these matters can now be debated. A.L.P. members opposed giving the Committee an opportunity to discuss the Bill at full length and in full scope.

If there are any scandals, let us be told about them. Let us have them put before us on the floor of Parliament. I challenge these smearing, finger-pointing members of the A.L.P., the helots and stooges of Mr. Egerton, to do, as Mr. Egerton said they would do—stand up in this Chamber and tell us who is involved in land scandals in connection with the Brisbane City Council.

Although Mr. Egerton would not be wise enough to realise it, I am sure that there are some men on the A.L.P. back benches who are wise enough to realise that charges of graft and corruption and malversation can be a two-edged sword, and that if any charges were laid by some of the helots of Mr. Egerton in this Chamber relative to land scandals with which Liberal members of Parliament, or any other members of Parliament, were associated, it would undoubtedly bring a reaction from members of the Government. Some of them are quite vociferous and they would be able to expound and expose land scandals with which, I understand, Mr. Clem Jones was associated, a man who was a millionaire at 38 years of age and who is now a multi-millionaire.

I do not care very much what happens to this great big rat-ridden, overgrown dump of a city called Brisbane. As far as I am concerned, it can slide into the Brisbane River any day it likes. It would not be missed by the useful people of the back country, because the people of Brisbane have fattened and batted on us for years. Without the people of the back country, Brisbane would still be a collection of bag and bark humpies along the Brisbane River. I reiterate that I do not care what happens to it. But if we are to have an exposé of land scandals connected with the Brisbane City Council, let us have them all. If they are introduced by members of the Australian Labor Party, I think it is the bounden duty of members of the Government or anybody else to tell us of all the land scandals with which any member of the A.L.P. has been concerned.

I listened very carefully to the Minister's introduction of the Bill, and I commend him for the manner in which he introduced it. I do not agree with everything that he outlined. I have been consistent all my life politically, and I still am consistent. I think I am competent to talk on this Bill because in my long and illustrious public career I served for 19 years on local authorities. I was a member of the Cloncurry Shire Council for six years, and for three of those six years I was deputy chairman. I was a member of the Townsville City Council for 13 years, five of them as deputy mayor. Of those 19 years, 12 were as a member of the A.L.P. I was the first man to lead an A.L.P. council into control of the Townsville City Council. There never had been one before; there never has been one since. Therefore, I think I am competent to speak on this Bill from the local government angle.

I think I am also competent to speak on this Bill as a member of Parliament, because this is my 29th consecutive year as a member of this Chamber and my record, of course, has been indelibly engraved on the scroll of time of this Assembly and will never be erased. I know the duties of a member of Parliament, and I know the duties of a member of a local authority. If any man tries to tell me that the duties of a member of a local authority, of a vice mayor, deputy mayor, or acting mayor, as I was, can in any way compare with the duties of a member of Parliament, I say that that man is not right in the head.

It is true, as the Leader of the Opposition said, that some men do not pull their weight. It is true that some men have divided interests. But that is true of aldermen, of councillors, and also of members of Parliament on both sides of the Chamber. When a person is judging these things, he must judge by what is called the average, honest, sincere carrying out of the duties by any particular person. It is necessary to arrive at a really sincere, honest standard. If one takes a really sincere, honest alderman of the Brisbane City Council and a really sincere

back-bench member of this Parliament, I should say that that back-bench member, from whichever side he comes, does 20 times the work done by an alderman of the Brisbane City Council.

Now I come to the election of mayor, and here I disagree with the absence of any amendments to the Local Government Act. I have always disagreed with the action that was taken by the A.L.P. and perpetuated by Country-Liberal Governments. There are two separate Acts of Parliament dealing with local government in this State. There is the City of Brisbane Act, which deals with local government as it applies to Brisbane, and there is the Local Government Act, which deals with local government as it applies in any other area of Queensland. I have always been opposed to that. I think that there should be one local government rule and one local government law for all people in Queensland, whether they are right up in Cape York Peninsula or down in the salubrious Gold Coast-Coolangatta area, more or less ably represented by two members on the Government benches. Why should there be a distinction between citizens of Queensland in the field of local government?

The A.L.P. is responsible for it. I was in the A.L.P. when I was 18 years of age. I have a long and honourable record in the A.L.P., as I have in the trade-union movement. I have suffered because of my loyalty to the A.L.P.; my family and I have been persecuted and victimised because of my loyalty to the A.L.P. I know what I am talking about because I came up the hard way right through the ranks of the A.L.P. I knew all along why the Brisbane City Council was established. In those days I was very interested and prominent in the A.L.P., and I was a confidant of many of the Ministers and others who were responsible for the measure when it was introduced.

It was introduced first of all because in those days we were all unitarianists. We all believed in the one big union; we all believed in the one big Australia; we all believed in the concentration of all power in Canberra; we all believed that State Parliaments and the Senate should be abolished; and we all believed that we should set up throughout Australia, if the Labor Party ever came into power, a system of county councils such as exists in Great Britain and, to a lesser degree, in the United States of America. That is why this Brisbane City Council was set up back in those days. I think 19 separate local authorities in Brisbane were abolished as part and parcel of the ultra-socialist policy of the A.L.P. in those days.

Having been set up, it turned out to be like a lot of other things in which we believed those days. I could refer to many things that I believed in. I used to believe in Government monopolies and goodness knows what, but experience has taught me that whilst these things are all right in theory, they do not work out in practice. When

the Labor Government, having been in office for some time, saw that its conception of the Greater Brisbane Council was not working out as it really thought it should work out, the Government started to have second and third thoughts about it.

In that second or third sphere of thinking the Labor Party tried several methods of electing mayors, and this went on right throughout the State. First of all it had the mayor elected by the aldermen or the shire councillors, as this Bill envisages. Then it found that was not too good because Labor candidates were not being elected as mayors or shire chairmen. So the A.L.P. changed it to a system under which all the candidates went to the poll on one great big ballot-paper, and the man who topped the poll became the shire chairman or the mayor of the city.

After several years of trial the A.L.P. found that that, too, was unsatisfactory as some anti-A.L.P. fellows were topping the poll because of their popularity, or because they could buy votes, or because they could pull the right coat-tails. In other words the A.L.P. thought that the best men, which meant, of course, the A.L.P. men, were not winning enough ballots, so it wiped that out. Then it brought in the system of a separate election for mayor or a separate election for a shire chairman. That is the system that still operates today.

I have never veered from my original line of thought that the election of a mayor or the chairman of a shire should be along the lines of this Bill. The aldermen or the shire councillors should be elected and they should then elect their leader as mayor or chairman of the shire, as this Bill envisages, and as is done in any State Parliament or the Commonwealth Parliament.

Unfortunately the provisions of this Bill are not going to be extended to the people in the back country outside Brisbane who earn the wealth to keep this great big, bloated city going. Why should there be one system of election of the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and another system of election of the mayors and chairmen of shires in the rest of the State? That is one aspect of the Bill to which I am bitterly opposed.

There are many other things I could tell you about the difference between the provisions of the City of Brisbane Act and the provisions of the Local Government Act, but I have not very much time to deal with that. However, I say unhesitatingly that I approve of the provision of this Bill that the aldermen should elect their leader, just as members of the A.L.P. elect the Leader of the Opposition and their shadow Cabinet. We know, of course, that in these elections there are always differences of opinion. There is the interminable argument whether the Premier of the State should select his Cabinet Ministers or whether the Cabinet Ministers should be elected by the caucus. I am still six of one and half a dozen of the other as to which is the better system,

because I know that there are weaknesses in both. The system is that the Premier selects his Cabinet Ministers. I do not agree with that, purely on the basis that it is not as democratic as the system of the Cabinet Ministers and the shadow Ministers of the Opposition being elected by the rank and file of the party.

We know what happens, of course, when shadow Ministers of the A.L.P. are elected by the rank and file of the party. We know what happened quite recently when the A.L.P. shadow Ministers were elected by the rank and file. Certain members, whose names I am not going to mention—a couple of them are in the gallery now and a couple are sitting to my right—went around with their whip and spurs and the result was that three of the best men in the shadow Cabinet of the A.L.P. were thrown into the garbage bin. And have a look at the three who replaced them!

I really believe, too, that there are grave inconsistencies on the part of the Government in the method of voting. I did not hear the Minister say this but I want him to tell us: will the preferential voting system apply to the election of mayors and chairmen of shire councils outside of Brisbane as it applies to the election of members of Parliament outside Brisbane, and if not, why not?

Mr. McKechnie: This Bill will have no application outside.

Mr. AIKENS: That is the trouble. The Leader of the Opposition, the Minister and everyone else can shield behind the fact that there are two separate Bills dealing with local government in Queensland, and consequently there are two separate groups of people in Queensland, namely, those who live in Brisbane under the special provisions of the City of Brisbane Act and those who live in the country under the provisions of the Local Government Act.

I was asked on a television station in Brisbane quite recently whether I thought 21 aldermen for the City of Brisbane was too few or too many, and I said, "It is far too many. Twelve would be enough—more than enough." When we think of the work of aldermen of a big provincial council such as Townsville, Rockhampton, Toowoomba or Ipswich, and realise that usually those men are chairmen of committees, working every day of the week, and then compare their work-load with what the aldermen do in the City of Brisbane, we cannot help but be absolutely amazed, because the Council of the City of Brisbane is run under its Act by a committee. I think it is called the "Co-ordinating Committee". The honourable member for Stafford could put me right on the name of it, but only about four men run the City of Brisbane. They make all the decisions and the rest of the aldermen, whether they belong to the Lord Mayor's party or any other party, do not know what is going

on until they read it in "The Courier-Mail" next morning. And they only read it in "The Courier-Mail" when the Lord Mayor of the city condescends to release it.

I was talking to an A.L.P. alderman in George Street, Brisbane, last year when Clem Jones walked past. I said, "Hello, Clem." He said, "Hello, Tom." This fellow said, "Hello, Clem", and Clem didn't speak. I said, "Is he out of sorts with you?" He said, "He doesn't know me." He didn't, either. I am prepared to bet that of the 23 A.L.P. aldermen on the Brisbane City Council I could select at least six of them and walk them past Clem Jones and he would not know that they were his fellow aldermen on the council. It has been a one-man show throughout, and it is about time it was ended.

Of course, we talk of all the boom that has been occasioned in Brisbane recently and the credit is given to Lord Mayor Clem Jones. That, of course, is a lot of eyewash. The honourable member for South Coast, in his rather whispering baritone which is very difficult for us to hear, told us of the great work that was done by the Main Roads Department. I say—and I challenge contradiction on this—that the man most responsible for the tremendous boom that has taken place in business and various other sectors of Brisbane is the Treasurer.

He has supplied all the money that Clem Jones has asked him for. I can tell the Committee that by doing that sometimes without letting his Liberal colleagues into the know, he fell out with them. He has been backing Clem Jones right throughout, possibly because it is good political business. He knows that if Brisbane booms, the Liberal Party, concentrated as it is in Brisbane, will get the benefit of it on State election polling day and Clem Jones will get the benefit on municipal polling day. But they have had a falling out; so what is going to happen now? Will the Treasurer continue to back Clem Jones with the tremendous amount of finance that he has supplied to him in recent years? I think we are going to see some very interesting events in the next three or four years in regard to the Brisbane City Council.

Dealing with the idea put forward by the honourable member for South Coast—that there should be fragmentation of the duties of the Brisbane City Council—I do not think there should be. I do not think the council should have lost the right to generate electricity. That was given away without a fight, and now, of course, Clem Jones has run the transport authority in Brisbane into a hell of a mess. Having taken away the trams without any reference to the people and replaced them with buses by probably one of the dirtiest little shirt-tail financial deals in the history of this city, he knows now that they are losing a packet of money. He is trying to unload Brisbane's transport system onto the Transport Department and make the unfortunate taxpayers throughout

the State carry it. If that is approved by the Government, the Minister for Transport can count me in the list against him.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (3.10 p.m.): It is with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction that I support this measure, which very clearly is in the best long-term interests of the people of Brisbane and of Queensland as a whole. These proposals have attracted considerable public attention, but I hope to demonstrate that this attention is much more apparent than real.

I certainly want to commend the Minister. He has had a baptism of fire. It is not easy for a Minister, on entering a portfolio, to find that his first operation is a measure that has received a tremendous amount of attention from the Press and other news media. Of course this is a measure on which he sought advice—properly—from his Liberal metropolitan colleagues. That advice was tendered to him, and he accepted a great deal of it. He must have felt very lonely at times; nevertheless he has been resolute in the face of quite unprecedented adversity. The manner in which he has been denigrated by some sections of the Press—the Opposition helps in this—and had references made to his comment on the opinions of taxi-drivers is unwarranted. Down through the years I have heard people in public life refer to taxi-drivers as useful barometers of public opinion. For this to be seized on and have as much made of it as was made of it is a pretty serious reflection on people who should handle the news in a better way.

Indeed, one is constrained to say that the role of the Press and other news media in this matter has, to say the least, been unusual and disturbing. One is led to believe that the days of scrupulous fairness and objectivity in news reporting seem to have gone. The Press has been rabidly partisan in this matter. It has taken up a predetermined position that is totally different from the one it took up 12 months ago, and, having taken up that predetermined position, it has seen to it that every part of its news presentation, every one of its editorials, and every piece of promotion for a straw poll to be taken, has been carefully tailored to conform to that predetermined position.

Typical of the way in which this was done—in my view, as one who was formerly a journalist, quite improperly and almost immorally—was the question that formed part of the poll. It was not only misleading but also wrong in fact. The question asking people to vote either “yes” or “no” read, “The Government proposes that the Lord Mayor will be elected by other aldermen instead of by the people as at present.” What is the fact? Unless a man who is going to be Lord Mayor is first of all elected by the people he will not get into the finals. To make the statement that he is not to be

elected by the people but only by aldermen is totally misleading and thus makes the whole operation completely useless.

What did this massive promotion achieve? What was the majority of votes in favour of leaving the lord-mayoral situation as it is? It was approximately 40,000. How many persons does that number of votes represent? How many thousands of papers were put in by the A.L.P. organisation? How many persons cast the 40,000 votes? Was it 30,000, or 20,000? If it was 20,000, how many of those people are voters in the metropolitan area? Would it be 15,000, 10,000, or 20,000? If it was 20,000, we arrive at the situation in which approximately 2 per cent of the people who have a say in the matter actually bestirred themselves to do what this enormous promotion wanted them to do.

If ever there was a case of a mountain labouring and bringing forth a mouse, this is it. As I say, the massive Press and public attention has been much more apparent than real. All of us have been struck by the fantastic change in the attitude of “The Courier-Mail” in this matter. I will not go through the lashings of material available, but anyone can get cuttings showing the tremendous difference between what was said 12 months and more ago and what is said now. All have been struck by the change to such an extent that, as in a favourite TV show, we reach the stage of saying, “Will the real ‘Courier-Mail’ please stand up?”

What has happened to bring about this change between “The Courier-Mail” attitude under Mr. Bray and its attitude under Mr. Leonard, a change so vast that we now find the A.L.P., in its half-page advertisements, extensively quoting the “capitalist” Press? It is an extraordinary alliance, remembering that the A.L.P. policy is to replace the free Press with a national Press commission.

Recently I saw Mr. Egerton on TV talking about the four-day, 35-hour week operating at Narm Ltd. He said this was simply an arrangement between Narm Ltd. and the union; that it was a “sweetheart” agreement. When the interviewer asked, “What is a ‘sweetheart’ agreement?”, he said, “It is something concluded under which both parties think they are getting a benefit.” I wonder what is the “sweetheart” agreement between the capitalist Press and the A.L.P. What has happened? What factor has been introduced to produce this extraordinary amity, this fantastic partisanship? There must have been something peculiar to change the situation from one where “The Courier-Mail” consistently referred to the “City Hall Clemlin” to one of tremendous support for the same gentleman, in the same City Hall.

It is important to realise that, under the circumstances, the amount of support that honourable members opposite prefer to believe exists just does not exist at all. Those of us who took the trouble to check

the Saturday morning demonstration in King George Square that my Lord Mayor and his cohorts endeavoured to generate found that fewer than 100 people attended. That is in line with the extraordinarily meagre results produced by poll promotion which, if it had had to be paid for, would have cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

There is, of course, some disquiet over this measure. That is inevitable when one is seeking change. Someone rang me and said he was disturbed about it; he was a genuine caller.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for South Brisbane under Standing Order 123A for persistent interjections.

Mr. PORTER: This gentleman was concerned about changing the traditional method of electing the Lord Mayor. I pointed out to him that the tradition was started when a socialist Labor Party telescoped 20 municipalities into one and provided this method of setting up a form of city president, even if we call him a Lord Mayor. I accept that the Government of that day had a right to drastically amend the city situation because, as has been pointed out, it is totally within the ambit of this Parliament, and the Government of the day, to determine how local authorities shall be conducted. That was a major change, but it was not put to the people before an election. There was massive hostility to it but it went ahead. We are contemplating only minor changes. All we intend to do is change the number of wards and their boundaries, and change the machinery by which a Lord Mayor is discovered. We are not getting rid of a Lord Mayor; we are simply changing the machinery. These are minor changes that have been inflated out of all recognition.

What is very properly proposed in this Bill will reduce the number of professional, so-called, aldermen. I say "so-called" because the honourable member for South Coast made the point that Brisbane has no more relationship to a real local authority than has the State of Tasmania. It is not a local authority, and the people who work for it as full-time professional party operators are not aldermen in the sense in which that word is used in other places.

The Bill will also provide a Lord Mayor who, in future, will work as a part of, and not apart from or against, the council. It is quite correct to say that any suggestion that this is reducing anybody's democratic rights is nonsense. What real democracy has operated in the Greater Brisbane area over the past ten years? What remote resemblance has there been between this city-State and true local government? Instead, what we have is something that has been riddled with party politics, improper demands, illegal pressures and extravagant spending. Indeed, we have had the rule of threat and inducement.

If anybody is in any doubt on that point, let him recall the findings of the Bennett Report. The final conclusion reads—

"No one has been so guilty in a criminal sense. However, some things were done in excess of power or improperly or arbitrarily or beyond the bounds of reasonableness, fairness or business morality, or were carried out by a procedure unsupported by law. In these respects I make findings against the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Alderman Jones, the Town Clerk, Mr. J. C. Slaughter, the Greater Brisbane Town Planning Committee as a body, the Planning Advisory Committee as a body and the Registration Board as a body."

So let there be no doubt about what has been operating in this city. For many years we have had our own version of Tammany Hall, and it is amusing to see the Lord Mayor and Mr. Slaughter making pronouncements, and these pronouncements used to suggest, "There is nothing wrong with this system. Here are these experts who say it is wonderful." This, of course—and I do not use this analogy in any derogatory sense; it just came to mind—is akin to asking "The Godfather" what he sees wrong with the Mafia.

When the 20 former municipalities were telescoped in 1925, the Labor Government took no heed of the electorate's reaction or informed the electorate of its intentions in advance. And these were major changes. The changes now proposed are minor and should be considered in the light of doing good for the city. We will reduce the number of aldermen who, as I say, are not really aldermen but, for the most part, are full-time party politicians, and we will ensure having a Lord Mayor who works with his council rather than against it. This is all that the Bill does at this stage.

Mr. Burns: At this stage.

Mr. PORTER: I hope personally that we will go further. But this Bill deals totally with the two matters mentioned, and flows over into no other. My own personal opinions are my own, and I state them frankly. I have stated them down through the years. I hope that more will be done, but that is not what is in this Bill.

Mr. Burns interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Lytton is not in his usual place. He may not interject from other than that place.

Mr. BURNS: I rise to a point of order. I am in my place. This seat was allocated to me. The diagram you have has been changed.

The CHAIRMAN: As long as I know exactly where the honourable member usually sits, all right.

Mr. PORTER: The Minister has said—and it needs to be repeated—that this legislation has no flow-on whatever outside Greater Brisbane. What is proposed here deals with a bloated monstrosity which is not fish, flesh, fowl, good red herring, or certainly a local authority. So there will be no flow-on of these provisions into viable and genuine local authority areas outside Brisbane.

Everybody wants to see democracy return to Brisbane. It has not been here for a long time. Any attempt to equate the role of an alderman in Brisbane with the role of a parliamentarian is rubbish, and denigrates the role of a parliamentarian in this Parliament. Our role is to cover the whole spectrum of social, economic and political affairs. How well we do it is our own affair. But that is our role. The aldermanic role in Brisbane is infinitely less than that. Valuable as local government service is, it is not the same as parliamentary service. In any case, if there is any doubt as to the value of these wardsmen—

Mr. Davis interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Brisbane is persistently interjecting. I draw his attention also to the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. PORTER: I remind the Committee that these gentlemen themselves gave their own assessment of their true worth when a whole flock of them, including the Lord Mayor, sought election to this House at the last State election and were quite confident that they could carry on doing their aldermanic jobs as well as their jobs in this House. As I say, they included the Lord Mayor, too. So let there not be any nonsense about the role of an alderman being as big as that of a parliamentarian—or, as some might suggest, even bigger.

Here is another brief point that I wish to make. It has been suggested that this move is a vendetta against the Lord Mayor because he dared to stand against the Government. He lost. Why should we be worried about his standing? He stood against the honourable member for Yeronga, who defeated him. If there is a vendetta, how will the Bill enable us to prevent the Lord Mayor from becoming Lord Mayor again? He can stand for a ward, and the only persons who can prevent him from becoming Lord Mayor are his A.L.P. aldermen. Is the Opposition saying that the Lord Mayor would not have the support of his aldermen? Are A.L.P. members saying that the Labor aldermen are sick and tired of merely being the sheet-music carriers for the bloke who blows the only trumpet in a one-man band? They may well be right, but that is the only way in which the Lord Mayor could be prevented from becoming Lord Mayor again if he wishes to under the proposed legislation. Let us not have any nonsense of that sort.

Organised opposition to the Bill revolves around the "strong" Lord Mayor. So far as I am concerned, we follow the British system of constitutional Government. We believe that a leader, be he Premier or Prime Minister, should be directly responsible to an electorate, and for a very good reason. We put responsibility, even at the highest level, into a situation in which it can be constantly examined, tested and checked on the same level as that of everybody else. It is the essence of our democratic system that representation on the essential level—where and how we are elected—should be the same for all members. Whether we be humble rank-and-file members or Prime Ministers, on this key level we all have the same responsibility to the same type of electorate. That is fundamental to our system of government and parliamentary democracy.

I believe that this is essential in an area such as Greater Brisbane, which is no longer a local authority but a body handling a budget larger than that of the State of Tasmania. It is essential that equality should apply and that the Lord Mayor should be answerable to an electorate, as are all other representatives including the Prime Minister of this country and the Premiers of the States.

We all know that Brisbane suffers from an inversion problem in its climate. This results from the way the city is placed geographically. We seem, too, to have an inversion problem in politics. I was rather surprised this morning to hear the Leader of the Opposition suggest, merely by innuendo, that some members on this side of the Chamber supported the Bill because they had engaged in improper land dealings with the council, and that in some queer way they were pushing the Bill in order to have those dealings covered up.

I say to the Leader of the Opposition that this sort of thing is beneath him. It is not in keeping with his usual manner, and certainly it is beneath the dignity of his role as a leader. If he knows anything, let him say it. I challenge him—I invite him and even implore him—to say it. My name was mentioned this morning. If the Leader of the Opposition has some facts, let him bring them out. If he does not have any facts and cannot "put up", then I believe he should shut up. It is just not good enough to handle things on this basis, particularly when we all know that the cap fits perfectly on the other side. All these questions of improper land dealings and making vast sums of money from land operations in the Greater Brisbane area reside on the Opposition's side of politics.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HARVEY (Stafford) (3.30 p.m.): In speaking to the motion, I consider that my 21 years' experience in local government, both in administration and in opposition, is of advantage to me in ascertaining the facts

and assessing the capabilities and responsibilities of an alderman of the Brisbane City Council.

The honourable member for Toowoong referred to the State of Tasmania. I remind him that Tasmania, although it has only half the population of the Greater Brisbane area, has over 300 local authority representatives.

I was particularly interested to note also his comment that, although the proposed Bill goes so far, he trusts that the Government will go further later. Taking that into consideration, I must observe that Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland, is in the south-east corner of the State and that over 60 per cent of the State's population resides in this area. Admittedly, not all of them live within the Greater Brisbane area, and many of them commute to Brisbane daily from surrounding areas, but that is one of the many factors and facets to be considered.

I believe that the suggestion that the number of aldermen of the Brisbane City Council should be reduced arises from complete ignorance of the responsibilities of aldermen on the various standing committees. A parliamentarian who does his job properly indeed has a full-time job; likewise, in an organisation such as the Brisbane City Council, which absorbed 19 local authorities and made redundant 205 aldermen, an alderman who does his job ably and well has a full-time job. I can say quite confidently that the majority of aldermen in the Brisbane City Council do their job and do it well.

I point out to the Committee that aldermen do not spend all their time attending council meetings, just as members of this Assembly do not spend all their time in this Chamber. The work done by Parliamentarians outside this Chamber is of considerable importance; the work done by aldermen outside the council chamber is also of importance. The aldermen on the various standing committees of the Brisbane City Council make recommendations to the full council, and I consider that a similar system could profitably be introduced here. On the various standing committees of the Brisbane City Council, aldermen leave their political views and leanings behind them, openly express their opinions, and make honest recommendations to the full council. Probably it would be advantageous to this Parliament if it had more joint constitutional committees making recommendations to Parliament, instead of receiving recommendations direct from Ministers or departmental heads.

I admit that, because of improved methods of transport and communication, distances can be covered in a much shorter time today than they could years ago. In the light of that, possibly the structure of local government in general should be investigated. However, I think that in this instance the cart may have been put before the horse. One honourable member who preceded me in the debate said that a committee should be set

up to consider the administration, finance and statutory authority of local government, and I admit that that probably is necessary. I admit also that in 1940 a Labor Government deemed it necessary to set up a committee to investigate the Greater Brisbane council. As a result of the committee's findings, the A.L.P. did not endorse eight aldermen, and the Stores Board, the Administration Board and the Registration Board, none of which existed previously, were established. These are matters that must be taken into consideration in this debate.

That investigation was carried out in 1940, and honourable members know that in various parts of the world, more recently in England, the United States of America, Germany, and a number of other places, the structure and responsibilities of local government have been reviewed. One must acknowledge that from time to time one must stop and take stock. I consider that the more appropriate way for this legislative authority to tackle the problem would be to set up a committee to review the whole of the constitutional authority of local government, not only in Brisbane but throughout the State as a whole.

Last week I heard one honourable member mention the utilisation of the State's capital assets. All local authorities spend a great deal of public money in developing park and recreation areas. An honourable member opposite mentioned the fact that in schools throughout the State a great deal of money is spent on the provision of facilities that are utilised for only a limited number of hours a day, a limited number of days a week and a limited number of weeks a year. That is the sort of thing that could be reviewed.

Rather than deprive the public of Brisbane of their present representation and rather than reduce the public's voice in the council, which is a most undemocratic move, it would be more appropriate for the Government to appoint a committee of expert professional people to examine the structure of local government in the spheres I have mentioned. And reference was made a fortnight ago in this Chamber to the factors I have just outlined.

The proposal for Greater Brisbane was first mentioned in 1915 by the late T. J. Ryan in his policy speech in Barcaldine. At that time he stated that something would have to be done in regard to local government. Subsequently the cities of Rockhampton, Townsville, Ipswich, Bundaberg, and Toowoomba were established. In 1923 legislation was brought down, but it was very loose, and subsequently in October 1924 the ultimate Act was brought down for the formation of Greater Brisbane, which absorbed 19 local authorities, 205 aldermen or councillors and various boards. There were two cities, six towns, 10 shires, parts of two other shires together with the Water Supply and Sewerage Board, the Tramway

Trust, the Electricity Supply Authority, the Wattlebrae Hospital Board, bridge boards and the like.

When we examine the Local Government Act today and find at page 24, part IV, that every town shall be governed by a council comprising seven, nine or 11 members, we realise that if we were operating under the system which functioned prior to the establishment of Greater Brisbane, when there were 19 local authorities, we would have far more than the 205 aldermen or councillors of those days.

I wish to bring out another point that should be of particular interest to Liberal members representing electorates in the Brisbane area. When we examine the various rating districts throughout Brisbane—and many of them are associated with State electorates—we observe that, of a total area of 240,000 acres, the inner Brisbane area comprising 3,429 acres pays over 26.48 per cent of the general rates of Brisbane. The Yeerongpilly area, a rating district of 45,506 acres, returns only 4.75 per cent of the general rates.

The over-all unimproved valuation of Brisbane today is \$831,000,000, and when we consider the differences in valuations between the inner city area and the outer fringe, we must understand that if any attempt was made to break up Greater Brisbane, the people in the outer fringe would be paying in general rates at least four times the amount they are paying at present. The high valuation of inner-city land—probably in accordance with the Valuer-General's findings—makes it a very highly rated area. In portions of Queen Street the rates per square foot are equivalent to the rates per acre in outer Brisbane. Fortunately, because of the type of development in the inner city, the owners can pass on rates in the price of their goods and commodities, and therefore are in a position to absorb this cost. Others are able to pass it on to people who are visiting this city or people who live outside of the Brisbane area and commute to and from Brisbane daily to carry out their various business or commercial activities.

Having gone through that particular exercise, one observes that in the ten years from 1961 to 1971 the average expenditure by the Brisbane City Council per ratepayer has increased from \$393 per annum to \$649 per annum, whilst the average rate revenue per head of population has only increased from \$15.7 to \$21.7. Those figures show what a commendable job local government is doing with the wherewithal it has at its disposal.

This morning the Minister for Justice, who, like the Treasurer, has been associated with public transport, said he was aware of our State public transport problems. Both gentlemen are also aware of the findings in the Wilbur Smith report. I agree that in many avenues of our structure we should be looking at the proper utilisation of our assets. In Brisbane, council buses and railway

services are running in competition. The railway report tabled in Parliament last year disclosed that the loss in the southern division was about \$10,500,000, which represented something like 32c per passenger-trip. I acknowledge that the Railway Department is doing a good job, but there is a great deal of over-capitalisation.

This was also the case in the conversion from trams to buses. The State Treasurer is aware that the council has financed its deficits within the department over the last couple of years by the use of loan money, which is not a very good exercise. It is a case of not having the assets to meet one's indebtedness, and that can lead to trouble. Nevertheless, it was done with the concurrence of the Government.

These are things we must face up to. We must look at the situation in public transport not only in Brisbane but beyond and into the Redcliffe Peninsula, as well as Caboolture, Ipswich, Beenleigh and other areas—and the sooner we get under way with it the better.

I do not necessarily agree with two of the reports that Mr. Moriarty, when he was Commissioner for Railways, brought down, or the subsequent report of Ford, Bacon & Davis in 1961, recommending that transport should be under contract within the Brisbane area and that the Brisbane City Council should be responsible for all transport within its geographic limits to the extent that it should meet the difference in cost between the actual revenue collected and the operating costs of metropolitan railway passenger services. I do not agree with that. On the other hand, looking at it in a broad sense, we have to realise that the railways operate throughout the State. We are aware of the returns obtained in the Central and Northern divisions and of how they contrast with those in the Southern division.

We also have to look at the electricity industry, because the S.E.A. franchise expires in 1975. One of the most unfortunate situations existing in this State at present is that people in some parts of the State are paying over 16c per unit of electrical energy whilst people in other areas are paying only a portion of a cent. In no way does this encourage decentralisation.

The Greater Brisbane concept was brought in solely to rectify the problem that existed prior to and during 1925 when Brisbane comprised various shires and instrumentalities. Persons on one side of the road were paying 6½d. in the £1 general rate whereas those on the other side of the road were paying in excess of 1s. in the £1. That occurred on the boundary of what were then the Town of Windsor and the Shire of Kedron.

The same situation arose in many other areas. In a book published in 1940 by Mr. R. H. Robertson of the Home Secretary's Department, he pointed out that it was necessary to correct many of the anomalies

that existed in Greater Brisbane at that time and to end a good deal of the overlapping that occurred among authorities. There was a great difference among the attitudes adopted by local authorities. A number of them concentrated on road construction, whereas others concentrated on the erection of community halls. Many problems arose and proved the need for a system of some unification of planning, town planning, water supply, building requirements, and many other facets of local government. I will say that the Government has achieved something in the matter of building requirements by introducing the registration of builders.

As to subsidies, I remind the Government that, according to the Bureau of Census and Statistics, in 1960-61 the total loan authorisation to semi-governmental and governmental authorities throughout Queensland amounted to \$44,000,000, on which a subsidy of \$12,400,000 was payable; whereas in 1969-70, although the authorisation had increased to \$86,000,000, the subsidy payable amounted to an additional \$2,855,000, or approximately \$15,000,000.

I acknowledge the fact that the Commonwealth should pay greater regard to State and local authorities. Like the Victorian Minister for Transport, our Minister for Transport has made strong recommendations to the Commonwealth Government for additional financial assistance for public transport; however, to some extent he has been ignored. The Commonwealth's attitude is in sharp contrast with those adopted in other countries. I refer particularly to America, where Mr. Nixon introduced a Bill that allocated \$3.1 billion towards the capitalisation and operation of transport, whether public or privately owned. As well, subsidies were increased.

If a commission were set up in Queensland to examine the local government structure and finance, I am sure that this Government and this Parliament would be in possession of a much more detailed submission than at present for presentation to the Commonwealth to obtain our rightful financial assistance. The assistance that has been received by both New South Wales and Victoria is much greater than that given to Queensland and is a matter for concern.

In 1924 "Hansard" reported that the Brisbane City Council structure was to be a mayor and 20 aldermen. Their remuneration was nominated as four-fifths of that payable to a State parliamentarian. In addition, the State electoral rolls were to be used for the wards in Brisbane. Earlier today mention was made of the cost of electoral rolls for different elections. I believe that the functions and responsibilities of an alderman in the Brisbane City Council—in an entirely different field—are as important and time consuming as those of a member of this Parliament. They both have a full-time job.

(Time expired.)

Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL (Aspley—Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs) (3.51 p.m.): The honourable member for Stafford is to be complimented on his maiden speech. He gave us an analytical review of local-authority matters generally, but we on this side of the Chamber are somewhat disappointed that he did not bring his unparalleled experience in this field to bear on the objects of the measure we are considering.

This is the first time in 40 years that this Parliament has, by a substantive motion, had an opportunity to examine objectively the machinery under which Brisbane City Council elections are held. I am indeed surprised that the A.L.P., the Press and other news media should not welcome an opportunity to examine legislation after such a lengthy interval.

The Opposition has claimed that we are bent on denigrating Alderman Jones politically. How absurd that is! I have enjoyed a personal acquaintance with Alderman Jones for over a decade, but that does not prevent me from examining this matter in a dispassionate manner. Despite the fact that Alderman Jones was mauled by Mr. Norm Lee in the electorate of Yeronga, I feel sure that those who rejected and humiliated him in that area by the vote he received—it was no better than that of an insignificant Labor candidate three years earlier—would support him for election to the council, as they have over the past decade, if he deigned to contest the Yeronga ward at the next city council elections.

I find it odd that there should be such strenuous objection to this measure, because rumour has it that the Lord Mayor is quite happy that the number of aldermen is to be reduced by this measure. I have also heard that the aldermen in the council are delighted to have the opportunity of electing their leader.

While I bear no animosity or malice towards the Lord Mayor under the present circumstances I am concerned about his lack of accountability—his lack of being answerable to the council that he leads. I am also concerned at the intrusion of party politics into local authority matters. The Liberal Party's policy is not to engage in local authority affairs because we believe this is a field in which a national party should not be involved. But we have no objection to any of our members participating as individuals.

This measure does not specifically concern Alderman Jones, although anyone would think, after hearing honourable members opposite, that the Lord Mayoralty was his personal property. As the honourable member for Toowong has said, we are thinking not of the present but in terms of 10, 15 or 20 years' time. If the Brisbane City Council comprised only independent aldermen, we would take a completely different view of having the Lord Mayor elected by popular vote. But with the intrusion of party politics

into the City Hall and the increasing unaccountability of the Lord Mayor to his party, action along the lines proposed in the Bill is highly desirable.

The Lord Mayor's accountability is in question because of the recent trend of events in the conduct of council matters, particularly the presentation of the new council ordinances which drastically changed many procedures. Because of the concern expressed by many aldermen in his own party, and by other aldermen as well, the Lord Mayor had difficulty in obtaining the acceptance of those ordinances by his Caucus. He met this problem in his usual autocratic manner and by a delightfully simple expedient—not attending Caucus meetings for more than two months.

Mr. Bromley: How do you know that?

Mr. CAMPBELL: The files of "The Courier-Mail" confirm what I am saying. He did not attend Caucus meetings until the party machine cracked the whip and assured for him the necessary numbers to have these ordinances accepted. This having been achieved, the Lord Mayor reappeared on the Caucus scene and presented the ordinances and had the adoption of that very voluminous document immediately carried. Time does not permit of my dealing with the various changes in procedure, but I shall refer to one or two. This matter is of concern not only to knowledgeable people but also to some of his aldermen.

Mr. Sherrington: Did the Government approve the ordinances?

Mr. CAMPBELL: The Government approved the ordinances. At no time has this Government not acceded to ordinances that have been passed by the Brisbane City Council or any other local authority, expressing its policy.

Mr. Bromley: What about Jericho?

Mr. CAMPBELL: I repeat that it is not the policy of this Government—as it might be the policy of a Labor Government—to stand over a local authority in relation to its policy. We have been consistent in this regard.

One matter in the ordinances which caused us a lot of worry was the preparation of the budget. Under the ordinances, the Lord Mayor took unto himself supreme powers in its preparation. This might be quite acceptable if the Lord Mayor was accountable to his aldermen. But as his aldermen know—and I am sure Opposition members know it too—this is not the position.

The ordinances also have the effect of reducing the authority of the members of the Establishment and Co-ordination Committee, which is the civic Cabinet. This, in itself, has further contributed to the reduced efficiency of the council's operation. The aldermen who have the responsibility of being chairmen of these various Brisbane

City Council bodies are not even permitted to make public statements, as the autocratic Lord Mayor has taken even that authority from them.

There are other aspects of council procedure contained in the ordinances that time does not permit me to deal with. Much has been said about the wondrous works of Alderman Jones. I am the first to concede that he has shown imagination and initiative in his administration, and I acknowledge his competence in fields such as planning. However, even in that field the Government has had to have regard to the advice of professional people and bodies, and to amend some of the Lord Mayor's proposed planning procedures.

It appears that Alderman Jones is quite happy to accept credit for things for which in fact he has not been responsible. He certainly has to give plan and site approval for all the fine buildings being erected in this city at the present time, but surely he would be fooling himself, as he has fooled quite a lot of other people, if he believed that this development has resulted from his initiative. During the recent election campaign the Lord Mayor by inference induced people to believe that freeway development, bridge construction and other work being carried out by the State Government resulted from the initiative of the Brisbane City Council. And so I repeat that the Lord Mayor is prepared to take credit for things for which he is not responsible.

Mr. Marginson: Are you suggesting that he had nothing to do with them?

Mr. CAMPBELL: What has the Lord Mayor done for Brisbane that can be compared with what has been done by the Ipswich City Council in the promotion of industry in its area? There is no counterpart set up by the Brisbane City Council of the development bureaus set up by the Ipswich City Council and local authorities in other provincial cities. Perhaps I might take it as a compliment that the Lord Mayor is prepared to let the State Government do this work. We are quite happy to do it. What does the Brisbane City Council do in the promotion of tourism, which should be a matter of No. 1 priority in this city? Has the Lord Mayor established a tourist promotion council, as other local authorities have?

The Government even had to take the generation of electricity from the Brisbane City Council as the Government and the council could see that the capital requirement for future generation to meet the needs of the tremendous development that was taking place was beyond the capacity of the Brisbane City Council. When the Government relieved the council of this responsibility, it did not reduce the council's loan allocations. This is one of the reasons why Brisbane is now served much better than formerly with

sewerage, on which I remind honourable members opposite there is a 40 per cent Government subsidy.

Because of the lack of accountability by the Lord Mayor at the present time, and because of the developments that have taken place in recent years in matters concerning the council, I feel that it is desirable for the Lord Mayor to stand for election as an alderman. Because of its structure, the Brisbane City Council bears no relationship to the normal concept of a local authority.

Because of the great distinction between the Brisbane City Council and other local authorities, and because of the change in the ordinances in recent years, I believe that the Lord Mayor should be brought back to accountability by being required to stand for election in a ward. I have not the slightest doubt that if that were done, the people in the area would vote for him as they have in council elections over the past decade.

The City of Brisbane Act makes the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council unique and far removed from aldermen in any other field by providing for professional aldermen. I concede that an alderman perhaps has functions in his ward complementary to those of a member of Parliament. However, an alderman has no legislative functions as such. Admittedly, he attends committee meetings. But do not members of Parliament have similar obligations? I instance the fact that, before the session ends, members of this Assembly will have to address themselves to about 50 Bills. A member who addresses himself conscientiously to such a legislative programme will be involved in a tremendous amount of research, of which there is no counterpart in the realm of local authorities.

Without being discourteous to my aldermanic counterpart in Aspley, I point out that he has not complained that he finds representing an enrolment of 23,000-plus—I think that is the present enrolment—too onerous. In this instance, the proposed Bill provides for a reduction from that number to between 18,000 and 19,000.

There are other aspects to which one could refer in comparing the role of a member of Parliament with that of an alderman. Suffice it to say that I believe that the proposals contained in the Bill, firstly, to require the Lord Mayor to be elected in a ward and, secondly, to reduce the wards in the Brisbane City area to the number suggested, are not only warranted but will also be accepted by the great majority of people in the City of Brisbane.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (4.9 p.m.): It has been my privilege to be a member of this Assembly for many years. During my long period in this Chamber I have never heard a more unconvincing introduction of legislation than I heard from the Minister this morning. As a matter of fact, it indicated clearly that he had done very little homework indeed.

The Minister was supported by one of the co-architects of the legislation, the honourable member for Toowong (Mr. Porter), who could not give a satisfactory explanation of the work of the Establishment and Co-ordination Committee of the Brisbane City Council. It would not be possible for me, in 20 minutes, to give a full exposition of all the ramifications of the work of the Brisbane City Council. However, for the benefit of the Minister and the honourable member for Toowong, I shall explain very simply the important workings of the Establishment and Co-ordination Committee. I think I have some competence to do that because it was my privilege to serve many years as an alderman on the Brisbane City Council, both in administration and in opposition. Therefore, I have some qualifications to give an exposition about the function of this very important committee. Its name is self-explanatory; it conveys its function. It co-ordinates the workings of all of the committees of the Brisbane City Council. When the Bill becomes operative, it will destroy that very important instrument. I issue a warning to the Minister that he may be making a very heavy rod for his own back because it will increase his responsibilities as a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Why?

Mr. DEAN: If the honourable member listens, I will tell him. Once responsibilities are taken away from the Establishment and Co-ordination Committee and the council, and once the responsibilities of the Lord Mayor are reduced and his image and stature destroyed—remember that he is the chairman of that committee—somebody has to assume responsibility for the city and somebody has to make the decisions. The Minister should be very cautious in any future negotiations with the Brisbane City Council, because he might find those responsibilities placed on his department. I know he does not fear work, but he may have many more headaches than he gets now.

Mr. McKechnie: This legislation should lighten the load on the Minister, as it will give greater responsibility to the aldermen.

Mr. DEAN: From the brief notes that I made during the Minister's introduction, I see that the main purposes of the legislation are to reduce aldermanic representation to 21, to reduce the powers of the Lord Mayor, and to transfer responsibility for the election of the Lord Mayor to that body of 21 aldermen. When the Minister reduces the number of aldermen, I cannot see how he will not have to assume some responsibility for many of the problems that the aldermen are shouldering now.

As I said earlier, I have had experience in local authority affairs but I am not foolish enough to try to draw a comparison between members of Parliament and aldermen. I have never heard such silly arguments. It is a fallacious argument for anybody on the

Government side to suggest that a State member does more work than an alderman. I think I know what is running through the mind of my colleague and neighbour from Redcliffe. He has been both an alderman and a mayor, and he knows as well as I do the amount of work there is in local government. However, I am not saying that it is greater in one sphere or the other. The conscientious alderman works very hard. All the aldermen I have known over the years have been conscientious and worked very hard. It is not fair to make a comparison, as the two types of work are entirely different. Aldermen are required to attend weekly meetings of the health committee, the works committee and the electricity committee. I do not want to give the impression that I believe that either an alderman or a member of Parliament works harder than the other. Each works hard if he does his job properly and, as I said, I have known no alderman during my term as a representative on the Brisbane City Council who has not done his job conscientiously.

The Minister said it is not the intention of the legislation to fragment the Brisbane City Council. I do not know what more is needed, seeing that the Bill proposes to reduce the size of the Brisbane City Council and to take away certain powers to run its own administration.

I must be pardoned if I am failing to give a clear exposition of what I am trying to convey. As a matter of fact, we on this side are still trying to find the real purpose behind the Bill. That is what is worrying me, as well as many other people throughout Brisbane.

Mr. R. E. Moore: It is to put democracy back in the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member should not talk about democracy. If he leads me off on that tangent we will be here all night.

What a job it will be for the three electoral commissioners to decide on 11 wards on the north side of the river and 10 on the south side. What a headache it will be if they are to do it fairly! I have no doubt that, whoever the commissioners may be, they will do as they are instructed to the best of their ability. They will certainly carry out the terms of their commission faithfully. I know some of the proposed commissioners personally, nevertheless that does not mean that—

Mr. Davis interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Wharton): Order! I ask the honourable member for Brisbane to remain silent. He is continually talking.

Mr. DEAN: It does not indicate to me that their decision in finally working out the wards for the City of Brisbane will be fair to the people of Greater Brisbane, who are the ones

I am mainly concerned about. How will this legislation be to the benefit of the 800,000-odd people living within the City of Brisbane?

When I listened to the honourable member for Toowong, who was the principal speaker on the Government side after the Minister, talking about the Press statements, I was astounded. I have searched very diligently through the Press, but I have failed to find any references therein favourable to this legislation. I could not find one. Most important, of course, is the fact that the leaders in the Press are totally opposed to it. I have one here from "The Courier-Mail" of Friday, 21 July. The caption is, "Brisbane is not convinced", and it reads—

"The Government is failing dismally in trying to convince the people of Brisbane that its proposed changes to the City Council electoral systems are valid, worthwhile or necessary."

That is quite clear for anyone to understand. That is good, plain English, and if the Government does not get the message from it, it is pretty dumb. The article is worth pursuing further. It continues—

"The arguments of the Local Government Minister (Mr. McKechnie) for cutting down the number of aldermen from 28 to 21 and for changing the Lord Mayor's election method so far largely have been fallacious."

That is a very good word. In his introduction this morning, the Minister was fallacious so far as the intent of this Bill is concerned and, I feel sure, so far as his own intentions are concerned. I do not think the Minister is the master of this legislation. I know his background and his character too well. I feel he is the instrument being used to put the Bill forward, and I am sorry for him.

Let us not forget also that the people who write these leaders in the Press are not "nongs"; they are the top brass of the newspapers concerned. This one continues—

"How can this be justified? The Government has produced no convincing argument, but continues to talk around the issue."

That is what happened this morning. All that the Minister did was talk around the issue, and it was a very small issue that he presented us with. To continue—

"So far there is no indication that the proposals are in accord with the wishes of the majority of Brisbane people."

That is what concerns me. I listen to the open-line radio session. I believe in the open-line sessions. They give people who are not too lazy to pick up a phone and ring Don Seccombe a chance to express their feelings. I think it is a marvellous thing, and I give full credit to citizens who will take the trouble to do this.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member for Windsor should listen to this session in the morning and hear what some of the people of Brisbane are saying. I point out to him that a cross-section of the community speaks on that programme.

The Press article that I am quoting hits the nail right on the head so far as I am concerned. It goes on to say—

“Folk-lore aside, Mr. McKechnie, taxi-drivers are not ‘a barometer of public opinion.’”

I am not saying this in any derogatory sense, because some of my personal friends drive taxis and on certain subjects they are very knowledgeable.

The article goes on to say—

“It is, to say the least, disquieting to think that a Cabinet Minister would put such store in the off-hand remarks of friendly cabbies.”

The Minister knows as well as I do that when we get into a taxi, whether or not the driver knows we are members of Parliament, they like to talk. Of course, once we ask him to drive us to Parliament House he is aware that we are. Generally, taxi-drivers are friendly people.

Mr. Wallis-Smith: They are like barbers.

Mr. DEAN: Yes; they are very friendly. But it is ridiculous to use their opinion as a basis for this legislation.

Mr. Davis: Do you reckon that since the Minister got a chauffeur he has not been in a taxi-cab?

Mr. DEAN: If I had more time I might be able to enlarge on that comment.

The Press leader to which I have referred continues—

“The Government may be acting in good faith, but until it presents a more rational argument for the proposed changes Brisbane people will believe that its motive is to break the domination of the Lord Mayor (Alderman Jones).”

It appears that the Lord Mayor is the scapegoat for this piece of poor legislation. But, of course, until we have the Bill in our hands it is very hard to pass judgment on it. Often I have said that honourable members should be presented with copies of a Bill before they are asked to comment on it. The system is back to front, and I hope that one day someone has the courage to amend the Standing Orders to allow members to see Bills before they debate them.

Mr. Low: It would save a lot of time.

Mr. DEAN: Of course it would.

The Press leader concludes by saying—

“Clearly the Government should rethink the whole matter.”

It has been suggested outside Parliament that members should be allowed a free vote on this legislation. After all, they are allowed

such a vote on other legislation—except, of course, the Liquor Act Amendment Bills.

Mr. Miller: Why?

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member knows why; the beer barons give their instructions to Government members.

Mr. Miller: We had a free vote. Why didn't you?

Mr. DEAN: I am not talking about the Liquor Act at this stage, and I hope we will not need to talk about it for a long time.

I agree with those people outside Parliament who have said that we should exercise a free vote on this legislation. If we did, we would see the same result as when Mr. Speaker was elected. Of course, we know that Government members are under instruction not to cross the floor of the House.

I wish to quote now from another leader in “The Courier-Mail”. On 1 August that newspaper said—

“The new State Parliament will meet today. It is high time, for there has been no parliamentary government in Queensland for almost eight months.”

That brings to mind the fact that prior to the recent State election no mention was made of this legislation. I cannot see any reason why it was not foreshadowed at that time to give the people of Greater Brisbane an opportunity to express their views.

The article continues—

“These radical changes should not be made unless it is demonstrably clear that the people of Brisbane want them.”

What indication is there that the people of Brisbane want them? We have every indication that they do not. That has been revealed by the very successful mini-poll that was conducted by the Press.

Mr. R. E. Moore: How many papers did you buy?

Mr. DEAN: I voted only once; I can assure the honourable member of that. That poll was a very important one, and I support my leader's comments that it will have repercussions in the forthcoming Federal election. Federal candidates should have done more homework on this fallacious measure. The Minister has completely ignored the Brisbane City Council, even the C.M.O. members in Opposition. It should not be forgotten that C.M.O. aldermen comprise the legitimate Opposition in the council, elected by the people of Brisbane. However, no attention was paid to their views, although some of them have been in office for many years. They are totally opposed to the legislation in its present form.

I have here a headline which says—

“Yesterday the Brisbane City Council unanimously opposed the proposed State Government changes in the city council structure.”

In all my experience with the Greater Brisbane council I have seldom known of a unanimous decision on any subject. There is always some debate or division of opinion, but in this instance unanimous opposition was expressed to these proposals. Surely some consideration should be given to that factor.

Another headline in the Press reads, "Face up to the facts." The honourable member for Toowong said that the Press should be ignored. He ridiculed the Press and said it was not presenting a fair expression of opinion.

The article continues—

"Our new Local Government Minister, Mr. McKechnie, will have to face the facts of life."

I agree entirely with that assertion, and repeat that when this responsibility is taken from the Brisbane City Council aldermen and placed in the Local Government Department, the Minister will have to face more than the facts of life.

The leader continues—

"Furthermore, there is no public mandate for the move to make drastic changes in the Brisbane City Council."

The Leader of the Opposition pointed out quite clearly that the Government has no mandate to do this. It is really dishonest to undertake this action without putting it to the people of Brisbane, as it should have been, before the recent State election. I have no doubt that the measure was framed at that stage. Nobody can convince me, or anyone else, that this Bill was not prepared prior to the last State election.

Mr. Hinze: Ask some of your mates at the Government Printing Office.

Mr. DEAN: The Government Printer performs the last act when he prints the Bill. The damage is done long before it gets to him.

The Press leader continues, "It is unwanted, unnecessary and undemocratic."

Mr. McKechnie: Do you realise that 17 out of the 28 members in the Chamber whose electorates are wholly in Brisbane support this measure?

Mr. DEAN: I ask the Minister, in all fairness, to let us have an open vote in the Chamber on the measure so that we may see what some of those 17 members do.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HOUGHTON (Redcliffe) (4.28 p.m.): I have listened with a great deal of interest to the debate on the measure before us. In my view, in this measure, insanity has taken over democracy.

I listened closely to what the Leader of the Opposition said about the ability and the performance of the Lord Mayor of this city, Alderman Jones. He and I are in entirely different political camps, but, as a

person with some experience in local authority, I believe that he has done a great job for this city, and I will not retract that in any way.

Mr. R. Jones: You are going up in my estimation.

Mr. HOUGHTON: I will forget about that, too.

The people responsible for the situation created today are none other than members of the Government itself.

The whole trouble, simply, is that the Lord Mayor is riding the tiger now, and the Government does not know how to catch him or what to do with him. My experience, with the information I have, leads me to believe that this measure is nothing more than a means to satisfy those known as the ginger group in this Assembly. I make no bones about that. I have heard so much about Press statements concerning who was going to do this and that. Furthermore, I have heard about members of the Country Party being in attendance at meetings. I, as a member of this Government, with many other honourable members who have served in local government, was not invited. Why? Simply because the same group which was responsible for stabbing me in regard to the Speakership—and I am not worried about that—

Mr. Chinchin: Take it on the chin.

Mr. HOUGHTON: I can take it all right.

Mr. R. E. Moore: You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr. HOUGHTON: I know how the honourable member voted. He is getting free drives. He has nothing to worry about. The doctor, after examining me, said "Yes, they certainly stabbed you in the back, but don't worry, they missed your heart and there is no need for a blood transfusion. You will fight again." And I am here to take them on today well and truly.

I say without equivocation, following the decision on the Speakership and the decision on three-corner contests, that unless the Liberal Party—fortunately some excellent people are members of it and may be able to save it—gets rid of the fleas on this "dog", or has a good look at the "dog", there is no way in the world that the coalition Government will survive. I predict that the fall of this Government will take place in the metropolitan area. Every Country Party member in this Chamber who supports this Bill will put a nail in his own coffin.

Why has Brisbane been singled out for this treatment? As a true Australian, I believe in giving everybody a fair go. That is not happening in this case. If it is to be done in Brisbane, why is it not being done in Redcliffe? I state here and now that we do not want it. Unfortunately, the Minister for Local Government and Electricity is the person who has to carry the cross and accept

the responsibility for this situation. He should study what transpires at the Local Government Association conference to be held later this month, because I am firmly of the opinion that many local authorities in this State are not in favour of this proposal. Reference has been made in this Chamber on many occasions to Jack Egerton and Clem Jones. If anything is to be done, it should be done democratically and not by this hole-in-the-corner way.

If the Brisbane City Council has become too big, it is this Government that is responsible. The Lord Mayor has had more runs than Don Bradman ever made. He has had more concessions than anybody else I know, and I have been in local government for a long time. I firmly believe that the Government is responsible for the situation that has been created.

I commend the honourable member for Stafford on the submissions he made, and I am sure that he will agree with me that certain instrumentalities in Brisbane should not be the responsibility of local government. Previously, I have bitterly complained in this Chamber about the Brisbane City Council being charged with the responsibility for building the North Pine Dam when 90 per cent of the water will be used outside the metropolitan area by the Redcliffe City Council, the Pine Rivers Shire Council, etc. Alderman Jones cannot be blamed. He has taken advantage of many situations. He has made the Government look very insecure from time to time. He has taken the kudos when rightly it belonged to the Government. Bear that in mind.

If it becomes necessary, I will support the establishment of a water and sewerage board for South-east Queensland. But I will not go along with the annihilation of a person because he has become a thorn in the side of any political party. After all, that is the situation in which I find myself with the Liberal Party. I could not care less. Nevertheless, I make the prediction that when I want to give up the seat of Redcliffe, it will not be the Liberal Party that will take it from me.

An Honourable Member: How do you know?

Mr. HOUGHTON: I am quite confident. I will back myself now if the honourable member is prepared to put his money where his mouth is. Let there be no worries about that. I have never run away from a fight and I will not run away from this one, or from the Liberal Party. I will not run away from my responsibilities to my ratepayers, or to the Government, either. I have been loyal to the Government, which is unfortunately more than can be said of some of the people who form the coalition. After all, what constitutes this so-called "ginger group"?

Mr. Hinze interjected.

Mr. HOUGHTON: The honourable member was a victim, too, as was my colleague, the honourable member for Landsborough. The Liberal Party says, "We reserve the right to expand." Of course, but why do they not expand right throughout the State? Instead, they stick the knife in the back wherever it suits them. Somebody said the other day, "They are no longer the 'ginger group'. They are known now as the 'castor oil clique'. Castor oil is the best laxative you could ever have." They are led, aided and abetted by "Davy Crockett" from Toowong, the cowboy from Clayfield, and the boundary riders, stirrers and doggers from the metropolitan area. They are the ones who set out to annihilate Clem Jones. So far as I am concerned, they will not annihilate him with my vote; I say that here and now. If something is to be done, let it be done properly.

Much has been said concerning the responsibilities of local government. I agree, but let it be remembered that the responsibilities of local government follow in the wake of Government activity. I think that Alderman Jones has got away with some shocking things from time to time. No other local authority in this State, if those things have ever been tried, has been successful. I also believe that Alderman Jones has been responsible for throwing sand in the eyes of some people.

We can all remember, too, on casting our minds back, the time when the State was endeavouring to get going in the face of all sorts of problems. There was a great "how do you do" over the matter of planning. I firmly believe that the Brisbane City Council set-up was responsible for driving people away from the metropolitan area and from this State. However, I understand that the council now has its own planning committee, and that things are now very much different.

It also has to be remembered, as was pointed out by the honourable member for Sandgate, that the Brisbane City Council has in its ranks members of the C.M.O., and they have responsibilities in that direction, too. I think we must be fair in considering the responsibilities of the local authority.

I have heard all sorts of allegations and accusations about the behaviour of members of this Committee. If any member has any evidence that other members have been engaging in skulduggery in real estate dealings, or receiving concessions from the Brisbane City Council, let him stand up and present it to the Committee. I say here and now that I have received no concessions from the Brisbane City Council. As a matter of fact, I even have a summons in my drawer. I have received the same service from the Brisbane City Council as I have received from my own council. Some people say, "The Brisbane City Council is political." It is no more political than some of the other local authorities throughout the State.

No concessions have been extended to me. I do not want any; I want justice. And I am taking part in this debate to ensure that everybody, including Clem Jones, receives the justice to which he is entitled. I will not be responsible for anybody not getting a fair go. That has always been my attitude, and the name "Houghton" is still good. I pay my 100c in the dollar, and I will continue to do so. It irks me to find that because somebody upsets the ego of a few people, everyone wishes to stab him in the back. As I see it, that is the situation relative to the Brisbane City Council.

I draw the attention of the Committee, and the Premier in particular, to the fact that I received this telegram today—

"On thirtieth August 1972 a combined meeting of Murrumba Pine Rivers and Redcliffe Electorate Councils and Petrie Divisional Council of the Australian Country Party expressed strongly and unanimously its opposition to the proposed legislation on changing the Local Government Act with regards the election of the Lord Mayor in the Brisbane City Council.

. . . Hansford Secretary Murrumba Electoral Council."

The situation is regrettable. The Minister for Local Government and Electricity is the one who has to carry the baby. He appeared on a television programme recently and said—this is not derogatory of him—that he had used taxi-drivers as a barometer of public opinion. I do not blame him for doing that; many people travel in taxis. But why did he not go to Mayne Railway Station and speak to the people who travel on trains, and to the porters, engine drivers and firemen there? Why did he not go to the bus depots and speak to the drivers and the people who collect the fares? They are the people who make up the City of Brisbane; they are the ones who are vitally concerned.

Under Clem Jones, aided and abetted by the support that he has received from the Government—and he has received a great deal of support from it—the city has developed and will continue to develop. He has capitalised on the construction of the expressway and other work carried out by the Government. Good luck to him! But, as I said earlier, I believe that we, as true Australians, should see that everybody gets a fair go, and I hope that the action being taken in this instance will not flow on to other local authorities. If it does, the Minister and the Government will be in real trouble.

Mr. McKechnie: I assure the honourable member that there is no such intent.

Mr. HOUGHTON: I accept the honourable gentleman's assurance. I must confess that it seems to me to be a matter of vital importance. I travel round the country quite a lot from time to time, and I should say that people in other local authority areas are very apprehensive about what might happen.

It still comes back to this question: why treat Brisbane in this manner and treat the rest of Queensland differently? The Country Party has always been castigated for being a sectional organisation. I do not want to become a party to that, because I believe that the Country Party has done a wonderful job in looking after the welfare of the State. The present situation has come about because nobody has been prepared to grab the tiger by the tail. As a result, the Government has run up some dry gullies, but the present awkward situation should not be allowed to continue.

I have told my leader that I cannot support the proposed Bill, and I assure the Committee that I will not be supporting it.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (4.41 p.m.): It is with some regret that I enter the debate, because I did not think that in my first speech in the Parliament of Queensland I would be debating the destruction of democracy in the City of Brisbane. I did not believe that a Government would come before this Assembly with legislation the idea of which is to hit Clem Jones and destroy the value of the ballot box in this city—to k.o. Clem. The reason why you, Mr. Treasurer, are trying to k.o. Clem is that he got stuck into you and caused you some concern. He stopped you from being the Premier of the State. He stopped you from getting enough seats to throw the Premier out of office.

This afternoon I went into the Parliamentary Library and picked up a copy of the latest platform of the Country Party. One of the things we are told about the Country Party today is that it is up to date; that it is modern and has gay liberation ideas when it opens its campaign. When I went to the Parliamentary Library I found that the last platform of the Country Party on display was dated 1949. I looked at the policy speech of Mr. Nicklin in 1957. "Honest Frank", they called him. This is what he said—

"With a view to restoring the prestige and powers of local authorities, we will review the Local Government Acts and eliminate from them all unnecessary and unjustifiable powers of interference by the State Government in local matters."

That is what he said, but what are you doing now?

Mr. Nicklin went on to say that his party proposed to confer with local government before doing anything, and that it would review the disbursement of Federal Aid Roads Grant money. Read the letters from Clem Jones asking for a little bit of help for this city! Mr. Nicklin also said that his party proposed to relieve local authorities of all maintenance charges on the upkeep of gazetted State roads. In my area kiddies are dying on main roads because the Government will not gazette them as main roads.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You want us to pay for them.

Mr. BURNS: You refused to do anything about it.

Sir Gordon Chalk interjected.

Mr. BURNS: You are getting a bit worried now. You are not welsling on the bookies now, and you are not writing in the wrong columns in Townsville.

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Lytton will resume his seat while a point of order is being taken.

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: I know that the honourable member for Lytton is a new member, but it is usual for honourable members to address their remarks to the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no valid point of order. The Chair will be responsible for the conduct of the Committee.

Mr. BURNS: The platform of the Country Party further stated—

"Safeguard Local Authorities against encroachment of the State Government in local matters."

That is the Country Party platform, which is available in the Parliamentary Library. It also said—

"A uniform roll for Federal, State and Local Authority elections."

This morning the Minister said, "We are going to have a Federal roll—that is not our responsibility—and a State roll, and there will be another separate roll for the council, but we won't let the council look after their own rolls; we will do it for them." Because of the way the Government looked after the rolls in the State election, thousands of people all over the State were disfranchised. They were refused a vote. Men and women living in the same house were refused a vote. You can look after the rolls all right!

This legislation is the abortive creation of an illegitimate Government. It was created out of boundaries that were deliberately rigged to destroy the democratic system. In a day and age when people want to participate in government, you are trying to stop them from participating. You are trying to take away from the people of Brisbane their right to elect the man of their choice as their Lord Mayor. This is a day of participation.

"The Courier-Mail" summed it up aptly—"unwanted, unnecessary, undemocratic". It has been your friend and has kept you in power since 1957. It does not like you for what you are doing. It is not a matter of party politics. You are attacking the very foundations of the democracy that keeps the totalitarian system at bay—the very people that you are always screaming about.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

Mr. BURNS: The reason we are free is that we have a democratic system that allows people to change the Government if they want to. If you are to act in this way and refuse the citizen the right to have a say in who shall represent them and who shall be the leaders in their State, you will bring in those systems that you are always crying out about.

To wreck the A.L.P. council and get Clem Jones is your aim in life.

Sir Gordon Chalk interjected.

Mr. BURNS: Thank you for the normal courtesy during a maiden speech!

To help land developers make larger and easier profits seems to be your aim, by weakening the restrictions and conditions imposed by the A.L.P. council in the interests of the home-building public. I do not believe that the Government does not want to destroy Greater Brisbane. I will tell you what we will have when you destroy Greater Brisbane, as the honourable member for Toowong has suggested. In the Melbourne City Council there are 33 councillors, and the Lord Mayor is elected for one term.

Mr. Lane: Unpaid.

Mr. BURNS: One attribute of honourable members opposite is that they are all unpaid so long as they can get a bit of land and make a "quid" out of it on the side.

In Adelaide there are 19 councillors—a Lord Mayor, six aldermen and 12 councillors—two councillors per ward.

Mr. Lane: Unpaid?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURNS: Get into him, Mr. Lickiss.

Mr. R. Jones interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Cairns has referred to another honourable member by using a very disparaging term. I ask him to withdraw it forthwith.

Mr. R. Jones: I withdraw it.

Mr. BURNS: I believe that the results of this legislation will be increased rates for decreased services, reduced protection for citizens against profit-hungry land-sharks, erosion of the present close personal contact between constituents and their elected aldermen, and the destruction of the democratic right of the Brisbane people to elect the Lord Mayor of their choice. To achieve its desires, the Government is prepared to demolish a civic administrative system that is the envy of every other Australian capital city and to sacrifice the best interests of the Brisbane people.

The motives of the Bill are spiteful and malicious. It is conceived by a strange coalition of two political parties that could win only 42 per cent of the Queensland vote

two months ago and 36 per cent of the Brisbane vote. The Government parties cannot beat the Clem Jones council at the ballot-box, so they choose instead to try to clip its wings by the use of their numbers in this House.

Mr. Hinze: That was written by Stanaway.

Mr. BURNS: Here we go again! If the honourable member wants to talk about the people who write speeches, I suggest that he get a copy of the material furnished to the Industrial Court by Government Press officers setting out what they do for the Ministers in this Parliament. I will read it during my Address-in-Reply speech.

The honourable member for South Coast spoke about politics in the city council. Cairns has a Liberal mayor; Mackay a Country Party mayor; Rockhampton a Liberal mayor; Toowoomba a Country Party mayor; and on the Gold Coast there is a Country Party mayor. The Toowoomba Country Party mayor said she stood in the last State election because she was upset about the way this Government was treating local government.

On the Gold Coast there is a Country Party mayor who cannot control his council. It is in complete and direct opposition to him, and he had to use the privilege of this House to attack his fellow aldermen. If you wanted to do something about councils that have got out of hand, you should have done something about the Gold Coast City Council.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind the honourable member that he must address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. BURNS: Yes, Mr. Lickiss.

The real reason for this legislation is evident from a Press cutting of 17 November 1971 reporting statements by Mr. Rae when he was Minister for Local Government. This report, from "The Courier-Mail", is headed, "Councils 'not fair to developers'", and it reads—

"Legislation to protect land developers from the 'hindrance' of countless local authority conditions was long overdue, the Local Government Minister (Mr. Rae) said last night.

"It is a pretty shoddy and sickening state of affairs when local councils can rampantly impose as many conditions on developers as they are apparently doing today," Mr. Rae said.

"Mr. Rae was addressing a meeting of about 50 members of the Institute of Real Estate Development in Brisbane."

I wonder how much money the Institute of Real Estate Development gave to the Government's election campaign.

The article continues—

"Mr. Rae said 'I am horrified to think that councils can go on and on imposing as many conditions as they like on developers.

'It almost is unnerving and frightening to realise that everybody wants to get in on the act—trying to make a quid out of the developer'."

He cried tears of blood.

To continue—

"Mr. Rae said he recognised the developers' handicaps. 'Councils almost seem to get some pleasure out of thrusting conditions on you,' he said.

"I genuinely believe that councils and other appropriate authorities who have a big measure of control over development should be more flexible and tolerant."

Mr. Rae then went on to say that he believed it was high time that "something was written into legislation to preserve the rights of developers". That is what we are doing today—preserving the rights of developers and destroying the rights of citizens. He also disclosed to the meeting that there was "a bit of a revolt" over what was being done to local authorities. Of course there has been a revolt over what has been done to local authorities. A number of Acts have been directed against the city council and designed to rob the citizens of money they have paid out in rates, and, as a result, to increase their rates.

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

Mr. BURNS: One of the Acts that we believe has caused undue hardship was the amendment to the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act. The Institute of Surveyors has pointed out that even in smaller subdivisions the new legislation will cost the property-owner in excess of \$100. If someone wishes to buy six inches of land from his neighbour he is required to advertise, and anyone from anywhere in Brisbane can object. That provision was not implemented with a view to helping the local citizen; instead, it works against him. In the construction of the Turbot Street extension the Commissioner for Railways attempted to force the Brisbane City Council to indemnify the Railway Department against any action for negligence taken by any person who was injured as a result of any negligence on the part of the Railway Department's own staff. The rate-payers were required to accept that responsibility. Of course the Government is working against the interests of the Brisbane City Council, and that is why the Minister said the council is upset about local government legislation.

On 19 July 1972 Mr. Harold Merrin, the acting president of the Brisbane Development Association, said, "If any changes are to be made, there should be more aldermen." Later, on 11 August, he said—

"Any move to break up the City Council structure should be preceded by a thorough study."

Mr. France, the senior public administration lecturer at the University of Queensland, said that the Government seemed to be

juggling the Brisbane City Council for its own political purposes. The leader of the Brisbane Civic Party—the anti-Labor Opposition in the city council—Alderman Rudd, said on 2 August—

“Democracy and not dictatorship should rule. No sound reason has been given for the change.”

Today, in this Chamber, no sound reason has been given for it. Alderman Rudd went on and said that the Greater Brisbane concept has been proven throughout its existence to be sound.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. BURNS: When I went to school I was taught that empty vessels make the most sound. Now that I have heard the honourable member for Windsor, I know that is correct.

Alderman Ord said he could not understand why the Government would want to change something that is working well. He said change should be beneficial, and this is not.

On 22 August the president of the Brisbane Civic Party, Mr. Murphy, said—

“The State Government plans to reduce the number of council wards are a somewhat restricted approach.”

The honourable member for Kurilpa, a former alderman, called on the Government to drop its plan to reduce the number of aldermen, and added—

“I feel the Government is making a big mistake in reducing the number of aldermen to 21 at this stage.”

On 15 August the Country Party's State management committee called for a full-scale inquiry into the Brisbane City Council set-up before any changes were made. On the same date the State president of the Country Party, Mr. R. L. Sparkes, said that the Country Party did not agree with the decision of the joint Government parties to proceed with its council legislation. The joint Government party meeting had decided to proceed with the legislation, and the Premier and the Minister for Mines and Main Roads were reported as having voted against the proposal.

I wish now to quote some comments by Mr. Slaughter, who is a well-respected city administrator and a former Town Clerk. He worked under a number of Lord Mayors, and not all of them were members of the Labor Party. In fact, since Greater Brisbane came into existence there have been non-Labor mayors for 27 years and Labor mayors for 21 years. They were: Alderman Jolly (non-Labor), six years; Alderman Greene (the only Lord Mayor elected by the aldermen, in 1931), three years. (The system of having the mayor elected by the aldermen was tried at that time, but after only one term it was quickly scrapped.) Alderman A. J. Jones (Labor), six years; Sir John Chandler

(non-Labor), 12 years; Alderman Roberts (Labor), three years; Sir Reginald Groom (non-Labor), six years; and Alderman Clem Jones, 12 years.

Mr. Slaughter said—

“Surely the present system is the very essence of democracy. Under the system proposed the city undoubtedly would have had 16 mayors compared with seven democratically elected, and it would have suffered as a result, for it is impossible to properly plan and carry out developmental works of a large scale in a term of three years.

“For the reasons stated, I strongly recommend that the present system be retained.”

Those comments were made by Mr. Slaughter, who was recognised by all aldermen as being impartial. He worked with both Labor and non-Labor councils.

Mr. Killen, a Liberal member of the House of Representatives and former Minister—a great friend and confidant of Mr. Gorton—said—

“The fact that the proposals were announced only six weeks after a State election without reference having been made during the campaign can only be described as one of the most lamentable exercises in cynicism in the history of Australian politics.”

Finally, today the honourable member for Redcliffe showed the courage of his convictions, which is what all of us should be doing. We should be debating this legislation not on a party-political basis but in the best interests of the citizens of Brisbane. It is not for the Government to make the decision; nor is it a decision for six Cabinet Ministers. One of them had a 35 per cent swing against him in his electorate; another was elected on third preferences; and the Minister for Local Government and Electricity, for the first time in five or six years, had to rely on preferences.

Mr. McKechnie: No; it was the second time. The first was on A.L.P. preferences.

Mr. BURNS: Congratulations twice to the people in the Minister's electorate for deciding not to give him an outright majority.

One point raised by Government members was that the Prime Minister is elected by Parliament and the Premier is elected by Parliament, therefore the Lord Mayor should be elected by the council. Isn't that great! But we did not elect the Premier of this State. He was elected by the back-room boys of the majority party. If the Government agrees with what the Minister said about the Premier being elected by the Parliament, it should put the Premier on the floor with Bill Lonergan. The honourable member for Flinders would then be Premier. The Government did not have the necessary numbers on the election of Mr. Speaker, and it would not have the numbers to elect

the Premier. I challenge the Government to do that. Why not have a popular vote if we are talking about democracy? The Liberal Party's story is that it believes in the right of the individual—that the individual should have some say. Let the people all over Queensland elect the Premier. I know where the Premier would end up; he would be back picking peanuts at Kingaroy.

Lord Mayor Jones polled 209,368 votes, or 28,000 more than the Country Party polled throughout Queensland. He did that on his own, and he won in 27 out of 28 wards.

Mr. Hinze interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BURNS: My fat friend from the Gold Coast—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw that remark. It is unparliamentary.

Mr. BURNS: I withdraw the remark.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope it will not happen again, or the honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr. BURNS: I withdraw it.

My friend from the South Coast referred to Yeronga. I know what happened in Yeronga. This is the sort of democracy we get from the Country Party, and it is the sort of democracy that citizens of Brisbane will get. After the first distribution was effected, when this Parliament was in the longest recess in its history, it was decided to change the boundaries again. A very safe Labor area was taken out of the Yeronga seat and given to Archerfield. Then some nice Liberal votes were taken out of Greenslopes—the Minister for Transport will say that his vote was lower than it has been for some time—and given to the member for Yeronga to help him out. The same thing was done to try to get rid of the honourable member for Redlands. I was given some of his Labor voters, which made the Lytton seat a little stronger for me. Clem Jones polled far better than any Government member expected.

Which is more democratic, having the people as a whole electing the mayor or having 11 aldermen electing him? That is what could happen. There will be 21 aldermen in the new council. What will happen if the result in the aldermanic seats is 11 to 10? The Lord Mayor could be elected in Caucus by six votes to five. Thus, to six people he would be the Lord Mayor of their choice. That is what could happen, and he would be the mayor running the city.

Mr. Lane interjected.

Mr. BURNS: He would not be in the gutter spying on the workers going past as a police pimp.

Mr. LANE: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to that remark and ask the honourable member to withdraw it without reservation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to withdraw the remark without reservation.

Mr. BURNS: I withdraw it without reservation.

The trouble with Clem Jones is that he has been too successful for the Government's comfort. He took this sleepy little hollow that the Government created while it was in office and turned it upside down. He has implemented a sewerage scheme and changed markedly the situation as we used to see it portrayed in photographs in "Sunday Truth" showing "humpty-doo" or "little houses" (generally in the back yards of dwellings in Housing Commission areas served by the Government). As I say, he changed Brisbane into a seweraged city. He also tackled the city heart, which was dying as is in most other cities of the world, and brought it back to life.

(Time expired.)

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (5.4 p.m.): I am very pleased to have the opportunity of speaking in this debate today and adding my approval and support to the Bill introduced by the Minister for Local Government to amend the City of Brisbane Act. I believe this is one of the most vital pieces of legislation to be brought before this Parliament for a long time. I believe most sincerely that it is vital to the people of Brisbane and, in particular, to the people of my electorate. I am happy to compliment the Minister on his prompt action in this matter.

So that there may be no misunderstanding, and no risk of my being misquoted, I should like to state clearly, in the simplest possible terms, just why I support this proposal. I believe that, by these amendments, we will succeed in injecting a little democracy into the Brisbane City Council, something it is sadly lacking at the present time.

The proposal, which will require the Lord Mayor of Brisbane to be appointed by the aldermen from among their number is the method by which this could be achieved. It will strengthen the hands of the aldermen who are the elected representatives of the people and, in most cases, close to the people, and give them some say in the administration of this city at a local government level. It will make the Lord Mayor, whoever he may be, answerable to the aldermen on a continuing basis and so provide a sanction over his actions, should it be necessary during the three-year term of office of any council. It will make it possible for the elected aldermen to exercise this sanction at any time on behalf of the citizens in their wards, as is the case in the State Parliament or the Commonwealth Parliament.

Under this proposed system, a Lord Mayor who took action detrimental to the interests of the majority of wards in this city could and would be removed from office. The interests of the citizens, not the personal ego of one man, no matter how capable he may be, are of paramount importance under the City of Brisbane Act.

Mr. Newton: You would make a good police prosecutor. You would be able to read every word, the way you are reading that.

Mr. LANE: The honourable member for Belmont refers to my reading my speech.

Mr. Newton interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I had occasion earlier to warn the honourable member for Belmont. If he continues, I shall have to draw his attention to the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. LANE: If the honourable member for Belmont read a few extracts when making his speeches, they would probably make more sense.

The redress or sanction which could be applied by the aldermen against the Lord Mayor is of a political nature, and necessarily so because, like it or not, the Brisbane City Council has become very political in recent years. I personally am very opposed to politics in local government, but I must face facts. They are there and they play a big part in the administration of this city. So what better way is there of keeping a check on the day-to-day activities of a political Lord Mayor with very wide-ranging powers than to make him answerable to a political group, which is answerable directly to the people in the wards at all times?

These aldermen, who should be engaged in detailed matters of council administration on a full-time basis, are in a better position to make a judgment of the Lord Mayor's actions, in the interests of the citizens in their wards at any given time, than is the average citizen who has not the time to watch things as closely. The principle that a leader of a government—be it local, State or Federal—is made answerable to his fellows is a very well-founded one and has its roots deep in the traditions of British parliamentary democracy, a system which has served us and our fathers before us well for generations. Believing, as I do, in this system, I say in all good faith that, in the interests of the citizens of Brisbane, it should apply to the Brisbane City Council.

I have attempted to explain the major reason why I support what I call the first part of this Bill to amend the City of Brisbane Act, that is, in respect of the lord mayoralty. I should like, in a moment, to expound some of the local circumstances and some matters which have taken place in recent years which called for an amendment of the City of Brisbane Act.

However, before I do so, I should like to make brief mention of a side benefit which will flow from this proposal. It concerns a succeeding or alternative Lord Mayor being available to serve. It would seem to me to be desirable that, within any system of government, an experienced, effective and alternative opponent to the leader of that government should be available to provide the people with a real choice at any time. As the Act is at present contrived, it does not allow, in practical terms, for a sitting Lord Mayor to be opposed by a person with experience in the council. His opponent, in practical terms, must be an outsider with no claim to anything like the experience within the Brisbane City Council of the Lord Mayor. The people therefore have no real choice between experienced opponents, and therefore no real alternative.

On the other hand, under the Bill before the Committee the leader of an opposition team would come from within the ranks of city aldermen, and therefore would have had some experience in city administration. If and when this opposition was defeated at an election, the leader's services would not be lost to the people of Brisbane. This, I believe, is in the interests of Greater Brisbane.

In regard to the second measure in the Bill, which is the reduction of the number of aldermen from the present 28 to 21, this was brought about initially by a recognition of the fact that new boundaries had to be drawn for the coming election, probably in March next year. Because of the great imbalance in the number of voters in wards, a redistribution of boundaries was necessary. Some electorates had as many as 24,000 voters, whereas others were down to 10,000. The Government had a responsibility to take the initiative in this regard.

The City of Brisbane Act is legislation of this Parliament, and is clearly the responsibility of the Local Government Minister. There seems to be a presumption, particularly in the media, that the Brisbane City Council is some sort of sovereign State within a State, with its own written constitution. This is not so. It is a body that exists by virtue of an Act of this Parliament brought down in 1924. It is the right, and in fact the duty, of the Government to amend or repeal it if necessary.

Honourable members may be interested to know that there was an occasion as far back as 1968 when the Minister for Local Government was prompted to comment in one of the Sunday newspapers. He said that the Government had the power to sack the council. He said that the council was rapidly approaching the stage when the Government might have to use this power. That was at a time when the internal politics of the A.L.P. Brisbane City Council were such that there was one continuous squabble in city administration, which was a matter of considerable concern to the citizens and the ratepayers.

Mr. Davis: Who said that?

Mr. LANE: The Minister for Local Government at that time, Sir Harold Richter.

The Government, having decided to carry out its responsibilities in respect of a redistribution, had then to decide the number of aldermen necessary for adequate representation of the people of Brisbane in the Brisbane City Council. A decision was made by the Government, after consultation with Government members, that 21 aldermen could adequately carry out this function, working on the full-time basis for which they are paid. I support this decision.

In coming to this conclusion, the Government no doubt took into consideration, as I did, how aldermen presently occupy their time. It is known that some of the aldermen conduct private businesses such as chemist shops. Some are occupied in the professional field, and some, in the case of A.L.P. aldermen, are in effect part-time organisers for the A.L.P. Some of these men, whose major responsibility seems to be to carry out party work for the Queensland Central Executive of the A.L.P., are at present on the city payroll. At the time of a State or Federal election, or a by-election, they work almost full-time for the A.L.P. organisation at the expense of the ratepayers of Brisbane. The City Hall is a retiring house for ageing trade-union officials and party hacks.

The citizens of Brisbane have been carrying the financial burden of too many aldermen for too long. The Bill will bring a stop to this practice. The parties involved in the local government sphere in this city—the A.L.P. and the Brisbane Civic Party—will now have the opportunity of choosing their best man to work on a full-time basis for the citizens of Brisbane. These will be the men who best deserve to be paid from the city purse. The electors of Brisbane will then, in the best traditions of our democracy, have a choice from those selected candidates. The fact that six sitting aldermen, including the Lord Mayor, could find time to contest the last State election and were prepared, if elected, to hold two jobs is clear evidence of how busy aldermen were at that time.

I now speak of some of the things that were done and said in recent years that attracted the Government's attention to the activities of the Brisbane City Council and suggested that there was an urgent need for changes to be made in the Act in the interests of the people of Brisbane. Looking back over the last few years, two occasions will be remembered on which the Auditor-General commented adversely in his reports to Parliament on the financial dealings of the Brisbane City Council.

The first was in December 1969, when he called for a "top State legal investigation into certain aspects of Brisbane City Council

purchase, sale and leasing of buses". It was revealed at that time that rank-and-file Labor aldermen knew nothing of the deal to purchase these buses, sell them to a bank, and then lease them back again.

The second statement by the Auditor-General was in his report to this Assembly in November 1971. He referred to the "doubtful legal authority for certain financial transactions" and mentioned specifically a tram-track covering contract and the leasing of an air-conditioning plant, both of which had been made without the authority of the aldermen in council. Comment was also made on the Lennons Hotel deal.

These were official observations of a kind that must cause concern in the mind of a responsible government. That is the difference, of course, between honourable members on this side of the Chamber and honourable members opposite. But comments came also from other fields—from the trade unions, from academics, and from the media. For example, in 1969 the State Secretary of the Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Draftsmen's Association, when appearing before the Federal Industrial Commission, said—

"The Brisbane City Council is attempting to act as a colossus and seems to regard itself as being above the law."

In February 1971, at the time of the infamous salary grab by aldermen of the Brisbane City Council led by none other than the vice-mayor, Alderman Walsh—

Mr. Davis interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Brisbane is still engaging in persistent interjections.

Mr. LANE: At that time, the Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council described the action of the aldermen as being "bloody disgusting". The Q.C.E., led by the gentleman who is now the honourable member for Lytton, later blocked that salary rise.

Turning to the academics, I remind the Committee that in February 1969, Professor Gates, addressing a Sydney University seminar on local government, said—

"Brisbane has in its far-flung city administration the machinery to promote efficient metropolitan growth as a whole but lacks the means to humanise the city at the district or neighbourhood level."

Again, in December of that same year, Professor Gates was prompted to say that there was a need for a royal-commission type of investigation into the Brisbane City Council. He said—

"The Brisbane City Council has not succeeded in keeping in touch with the public. It has become painfully obvious that a lot of planning in Brisbane has not been done even in conjunction with the aldermen."

Professor Gates is a very highly respected academic. He is head of the Economics Department of the Queensland University.

Mr. Sherrington: And a member of the Tory party.

Mr. LANE: Anyone who disagrees with anything that the honourable member's party does is immediately branded a Tory.

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I presume that the honourable member for Salisbury expects to be making a contribution to the debate later. I ask him to allow the honourable member for Merthyr to make his contribution now.

Mr. LANE: Of course, Mr. Lickiss, the honourable member for Salisbury likes to inject these little class-war concepts into the debate. People are capitalists, workers, Tories, or members of the proletariat. He would be much happier visiting Peking with the honourable member for Lytton.

Even "The Courier-Mail", which recently has been less than fair to the Government—

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Salisbury under the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. LANE: When Mr. Slaughter was appointed executive adviser to the Brisbane City Council, an editorial in "The Courier-Mail" said—

"If this city is really heading for a 'City Manager' system instead of a theoretical government by elected aldermen will the Lord Mayor please take the people into his confidence.

"The savings in aldermanic salaries might pay for some extra bureaucrats."

So honourable members will see that the first people to criticise the present administration and the lord-mayoral set-up in the Brisbane City Council were not members of the Government but were respected and responsible people in the community, including Fred Whitby.

There are a number of other items that I have not time to mention in this debate. They include the strange city car park deal of 1969, the blatant disregard of the people of The Gap in respect of quarry rezoning, and the Town Plan arrangements and the display and availability of plans and accompanying documents at the time it was brought out by the council. If I had sufficient time I could refer to the treatment of the Town Clerk, Mr. McAulay, and Mr. Hawes, for political reasons; the funny game of musical chairs currently being played in the City Hall because of where Mr. McAulay should sit; the repeated blatant rises in rates; the Anzac Square squabble; the Cathedral Square story; the bus leasing; the Lennons Hotel deal; and, far back, the financing of the Sandgate sewerage scheme. Again, I will not have time to mention the removal of the trams by the Lord Mayor, without any referendum. To cap them all, what about the Bennett Report?

I invite honourable members to refresh their memories on these matters, and I invite people, particularly in the media, to do the same thing. All these things have had a detrimental effect on the people in the wards, and these are the people I am concerned about, particularly in my electorate of Merthyr.

This is a good time to ask how the people of Merthyr have been affected. They pay the highest rates in this city.

Mr. DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. The people of Brisbane pay the highest rates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. LANE: I am doubtful whether the honourable member for Brisbane would know anything about the electorate of Brisbane.

When the 1971 Budget was brought down by the Brisbane City Council, a comparison was taken out by the same "Courier-Mail" which has said some unkind and, I believe, unfair things in recent times. A comparison was made of rates assessed on average properties in three parts of Brisbane. In New Farm, in my electorate, the general rate showed a rise of \$12.31 and in Coorparoo the increase was \$9.04. That shows how much the present administration has worked against the people in my electorate, particularly in the New Farm and Ascot-Hamilton areas by imposing higher rates and charges every time a Budget comes down.

Of course, that is because we happen to have a very hard-working C.M.O. alderman, one who is able to put his finger on the sore points of the present council administration. He is a very experienced alderman who once was vice-mayor of the city and who has been acting mayor for many years. In its financial dealings the council take it out on the people in my electorate. That is why Alderman Harold Crawford receives a substantial vote. Indeed, it is 3 per cent in excess of the votes received by the Lord Mayor in the electorate.

We have pensioners and low-income earners in the electorate of Merthyr. They are affected by having to pay higher rates. The Brisbane City Council, under the present administration, is one of the greatest contributors to the cost-of-living index. A rise in rates means a rise in rents. In my electorate a rise in pedestal tax means a rise in rent. The actions of this council cause ever-increasing anxiety to pensioners and the fixed-income earner, and a reduction in their standard of living.

(Time expired.)

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (5.24 p.m.): Thursday, 31 August 1972, will go down as black Thursday in the history of the City of Brisbane because of the machinations of a minority-elected Government, a Government which was unwanted by the people but which forced its attentions on

the citizens of this State, a Government which is now forcing its odious ideas on the population of the capital city.

I have listened today to speaker after speaker from the Government side, including the Minister, but none has produced one scintilla of evidence to justify the political larceny being perpetrated. It has been quite evident over the weeks since this matter became a bone of contention that the desire to reduce the lord-mayoral powers in this city and the number of aldermanic representatives, sprang solely from the vitriolic hatred felt by Liberal member after Liberal member of this Parliament, aided and abetted by the Country Party members who occupy the Treasury benches.

The behaviour of the Minister's Cabinet colleagues today was quite illuminating. Having allowed him to introduce this measure, they walked out of the Chamber and left him like a shag on a rock for the whole day. It was not until the honourable member for Redcliffe came into this Chamber with his damning statements about the conniving that has gone on in relation to this Bill that we saw the sudden alacrity with which the Premier and senior Ministers returned to the Chamber in case they were needed.

Today we have seen a political attempt not only to destroy the Lord Mayor of Brisbane but to force the unwanted opinions of an unwanted Government on the citizens of this capital city. Over the past few weeks I have followed very closely the whole tenor of events that led up to the introduction of the Bill today and have sought one reason to justify the theft, by what amounts to political larceny on the part of this Government, of the political rights of the citizens of Brisbane who have supported our local government system for so long.

One would have thought that in such a contentious matter as this the Minister introducing the Bill would have come into the Chamber armed to the teeth with every available bit of evidence to justify such a heinous action. But what has been the chain of events today? The speech of the Minister for Local Government proved to be no more than a contemptuous, blatant and fragmentary recitation of what his Government thought was best for the citizens of Brisbane—what his Government thought; not what the experts and others thought—without giving one of those citizens the right or privilege of expressing an opinion.

We have heard about the shady way in which this legislation was conceived in the back rooms of the Government parties, and having been hidden from the people of this city and State at the State election only a few months ago, it has now been introduced.

I listened to the Minister say that this measure would apply only to the authority in Brisbane.

Mr. McKechnie: That is very correct.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It is about the only correct thing the Minister said in his series of statements. Then he went on to say that he would await the decision of the Local Authorities Association in respect of other areas, so, out of his own mouth, came the admission that this proposal was not sought by the Local Authorities Association.

Mr. R. E. Moore: We are the Government and we are going to run it.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Heil Hitler!

It was obvious that this association had not sought the Bill, and it was obvious also that it was not wanted by the public generally, the mass media, the Country Party Executive, Mr. Killen, the C.M.O., or any local government expert at the University of Queensland. This afternoon, by his damning evidence, the honourable member for Redcliffe has shown that he does not want it. In view of those comments, I now challenge the Minister to table in his reply every document containing a request to him or to his Government that influenced him to introduce this measure.

Mr. McKechnie: I assume you believe in democracy. 17 of the 28 members who represent Brisbane electorates in this Parliament support this Bill.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: You say you have 17 of the 28 members—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the honourable member please address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: You know, Mr. Lickiss, that I am one of the most placid members in this Chamber. Through you I say to the Minister that they are 17 members who are in this House illegally, because they got here as a result of a rotten, preferential voting system and a gerrymander.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the honourable member please address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: They are not here at the wish of the people of Brisbane. I ask you to get up in the Chamber and tell us who initiated this move, who approached you, and to produce the evidence that influenced you.

Mr. McKechnie: You don't accept democracy?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: You don't know what democracy means. I am not going to be fobbed off. I am asking you to table your evidence.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I again ask the honourable member to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Are you going to name the so-called corrupt members on this side of the Chamber?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not concerned about the back-yard building activities of the honourable member for Windsor. You have my assurance about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the honourable member for Salisbury like me to remind him again that he should address his remarks to the Chair? I am beginning to lose my patience.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Fair enough, Mr. Lickiss; I am losing mine with those who keep interjecting.

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member addressed his remarks to the Chair, he could get some protection.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I also want to know why the magical figure of 21 wards was chosen. The Minister has not made any attempt to tell us why the number is to be reduced from 28 to 21. I want to know whether the magical figure of 21 was arrived at after a careful study of the work-load of the aldermen. If ever I heard political guff, I heard it this afternoon when Government members tried to denigrate the work of persons who are elected by the majority of electors in this city. I have never heard as much political malarkey and tripe as I heard when Government members tried to compare the work-loads of members of Parliament and aldermen. I want to know how the Minister arrived at this figure. Did he feed all his data into a computer and did it come up with the answer of 21, or was it arrived at on the advice of local authority experts? Or was it simply the figure on the taxi-meter after the journey from Parliament House to Billa Billa? What explanation do you offer this Chamber as to why it should be 21?

Mr. McKechnie: You could not have been listening. You had better read my speech.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Although I followed the progress of this legislation from the dramatic announcement relative to a conversation in the back seat of a taxi till the conclusion of the Minister's speech, I have not noted one scintilla of justification for anything that the Government proposes. The only justification voiced by the Minister when announcing the measure was, "We think". I remind the Committee of "Speedy Gonzales" the other day. The Minister has not been explicit about any of these matters. Even when he said, "We think", he left me in two minds about whether it was he and the Government that thought, or he and the taxi-drivers. I came to the inescapable conclusion that the Minister in his swaddling immaturity has been the hapless victim of determined, ruthless people interested in their own selfish, infamous motives.

When I look back over the history of this controversial subject; I find that previously it was opposed by every Minister for Local

Government and by all the local government staff. There had to be a change to get the legislation through.

The Minister for Justice filibustered when explaining why the legislation was not introduced in 1959. It was not introduced then because Brisbane had a C.M.O. Lord Mayor, Alderman Groom, and the Government could not find anybody stupid enough to carry it through.

I will deal briefly with the many assertions concerning the work-load of parliamentarians made by Government members. I will make a very pertinent, brief comment on this: member after member spoke in derogatory terms of the work-load of aldermen, but we have come back here after an eight-month parliamentary recess. It is sheer audacity on the part of Government members to try to justify the measure in this way after Parliament has been kept muzzled for eight months and the Opposition has been denied the right to raise matters of public interest.

I should now like to refer to the taxi-driver element which has intruded into this debate.

A Government Member: Haven't you any argument at all?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If the Minister wants to consult taxi-drivers—and that is plainly reported in "The Courier-Mail", which Government members have always supported—that is all very well. However, Government members now say that the Press is not telling the truth. They do that when it suits their purpose. But is there any doubt that the Minister was reported in the Press as saying that the taxi-drivers told him so, and that they were a barometer of public opinion? I was astounded when Mr. Sparkes stated vehemently that the Country Party executive would have no part of this legislation.

Mr. McKechnie: Are you trying to point out that I do not take direction, as does the honourable member?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will tell the Minister in a minute what I intend to point out. In "The Courier-Mail" of 4 August, the Minister is reported as saying, "I am not influenced in the slightest by Mr. Sparkes's statement yesterday and as far as I am concerned the legislation is going through." If I were Mr. Sparkes—the senior member of the administrative body of the Country Party in this State—I would take a very dim view of the Minister's placing the opinion of taxi-drivers before mine.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have never taken direction from anybody.

I feel that this Bill is the most contemptuous piece of legislation that has ever been introduced in this Chamber. I wish I had the eloquence to voice the contempt I have for a Government that would pull a trick

such as this on the people of Brisbane. The only way I can attempt to do this is to stir my latent poetic talent, and I dedicate the following poem to the Minister in the hope that it indicates the complete and utter disregard I have for this Bill. I have titled it "Ode to McKechnie", and it goes this way—

"Henry, dear Henry, come home with me now;

The clock in the town hall strikes one.

Your taxi-man's waiting to give you advice,

On just how old Clem should be done.

What matters the fact that the public object,

What matters the Press tans my hide,

The taxi-men tell me that Clem's got to go,

So you've just got to keep them on side.

Though Sparkes and his crew say I'm making a blue,

And say it's a ruddy poor show,

The taxi-men tell me that Clem's got to go

And who am I to say no?

The amendment may stink, and I could be a fink,

But I always can look back with pride,

And with hillbilly logic, the city I wrecked,

And the taxi-men stood by my side.

So Henry, dear Henry, your day's work is done,

You're now firm favourite with Joh.

You'll go down in history as the bloke in the cab,

Who just really couldn't say no."

Mr. R. E. Moore: Give us the chorus.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will sell you a copy for 20c.

Although those words were penned in a spirit of levity, I hope that they convey to the people of this city the great tragedy of a magnificent State and a magnificent city being blighted by the dead hand of the Country Party in collusion with the Liberal Party in this Parliament.

I think everybody will agree that we have seen the City of Brisbane grow over the years, but with all the arguments I have had put to me, or reasons that have been enunciated in support of reducing the number of aldermen, I find it strange indeed, when the city is growing, and must expand, that the Government is sacking half of the people charged with the responsibility of running its council.

I have heard the Liberals with great business acumen say time after time that an efficient business must have efficient management.

Mr. R. E. Moore: That is what we are trying to get.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Then there is no chance you will ever be appointed.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mount Gravatt) (5.44 p.m.): I join with other members on this side of the Chamber in congratulating the Minister on the presentation of his first Bill. His address was clear and explicit. Unfortunately, Opposition members seemed to miss the whole point. The Bill contains only two simple points, which refer to the City of Brisbane Act and not the Local Government Act. This fact should be made quite clear.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the Minister's presentation as "piffle". I would refer to the Leader of the Opposition's speech as "waffle". It was pure "waffle", because he did not come to grips in any way with the Minister's introduction. He went all around it. He grasped and tried hard, but he could not get there. He did not seem to appreciate what the Minister was saying.

Obviously there was considerable confusion in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, and I wondered why. I think I have the answer. I am sure that you will appreciate this, Mr. Lickiss. The Leader of the Opposition had three things to do. He had to try to satisfy the Lord Mayor; he had to try to satisfy the Labor aldermen of the Brisbane City Council; and he had to try to satisfy the Q.C.E. We know he always does that. He had those three bodies to satisfy. The interesting thing is that selection of the Lord Mayor by the aldermen was wanted by the Labor aldermen. The Leader of the Opposition therefore could not do much about that one. On the reduction in the number of aldermen, that is wanted by the Lord Mayor. The Leader of the Opposition therefore could not move into that area.

That leaves the situation as it concerns the Q.C.E. An article in "The Courier-Mail" of 4 May 1968 is headed—

"Q.C.E. Moves on Mayor Power Bid."

This is a report by the City Hall reporter, and it reads—

"The top body of the Australian Labor Party in Queensland has 'suggested' . . . " (that word is in inverted commas because a "suggestion" by the Q.C.E. is a direction)

". . . to Brisbane City Council aldermen that it is opposed to powers being centralised in any Lord Mayor."

This is the Q.C.E. talking, and it is referring not to this specific Lord Mayor but to any Lord Mayor.

The article continues—

"This advice is contained in a circular received by all the City Council aldermen this week from the A.L.P.

"Part of the circular said:

'The Q.C.E. has broadly suggested . . . ' (again, there is that straight direction)

' . . . that it is opposed to powers in the hands of the individual.'

Here is the problem facing the unfortunate Leader of the Opposition in trying to satisfy three bodies. One of the amendments is required by one body and another is required by another body, and the Leader of the Opposition was left to flounder.

Since the speech by the Leader of the Opposition, other Opposition members have been trying hard to grab something. The honourable member for Lytton gave us a historical scrap-book, but nothing of his own. He read little extracts, one after another, concerning what happened many years ago. The honourable member for Salisbury challenged the Minister by asking, "Who wants this change?" I shall tell him who wants it. During my nine years of service in this Parliament, hundreds and hundreds of people have approached me saying, "How do you get democracy back to the city council? We have gone as far as we can and we can go no further." The Local Government Department must be flooded by such approaches. Honourable members opposite must have been in the same situation, with people saying to them in desperation, "I can get nowhere at the City Hall. I can get no sense there, and no justice at all."

When people come to me in desperation and I take up their cases, what happens? I have three or four letters from the Lord Mayor saying, "Please submit this matter through the local alderman." The people seeking help have gone through their aldermen, the Town Clerk, and every department to which they can turn, but nothing happens. Thousands of people want a change of some sort, and what is happening now makes no change apart from having the Lord Mayor elected as the leaders are elected in the State and Federal Governments, and local authorities in other States.

Mr. F. P. Moore interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Mourilyan is persistently interjecting. I hope he will refrain from doing so.

Mr. CHINCHEN: It is interesting to note that the Q.C.E. realises the problem here. They do not want any additional powers placed in the hands of any Lord Mayor. This is the position in which the Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members find themselves. They cannot come right out into the open and say what they want to say because they would be offending the Lord Mayor, the Q.C.E. or Labor aldermen. What a mess they are in! We are helping them out and getting them off the hook.

There is another matter that has given me some concern. In speaking of the Leader of the Opposition and "His Master's Voice", Mr. Egerton, I have said before that when Mr. Egerton sneezes the Leader of the Opposition gets a cold. The great Mr. Egerton has seen fit, on a very high plane, to throw a blanket of doubt over the character of all members of the Liberal Party.

What a shocking situation! What a despicable action! I challenge the Leader of the Opposition, or any other member, to follow up that statement and name the people who are supposed to have had shady dealings in land. I am waiting for that to happen.

Mr. Houston: There is a second-reading stage.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The Leader of the Opposition says, "There is a second reading." He knows, as I know, that in the second-reading debate he must keep within the limits of the Bill, and he will avoid the opportunity of saying it now.

The thing that disturbs me is that there has been one statement by Mr. Egerton and then the Leader of the Opposition, floundering for words, has mentioned three names. People who are not here and who read a Press report in which three names appear may perhaps think that these three persons are involved in some shady land dealings. I want the Committee and the people generally to know that I have never sold a block of land in the City of Brisbane and have never dealt in land. Because he had been challenged, the Leader of the Opposition took this sneaky opportunity of throwing in three names, and I challenge him right now to name the three people who he thinks have had shady dealings in land.

If there is one person who has conflicting interests in this regard, it is the Lord Mayor himself. He is probably one of the biggest landowners in Brisbane. How much he has—

Mr. Houston: He revealed that.

Mr. CHINCHEN: I know that at one stage the Lord Mayor did state publicly what his land holdings were. That was back in about 1964. He probably owns more land now, and he must deal in land to own land. There must be a conflict of interests, because he is the man who makes the decisions relative to land. As I said, he is a landowner, and obviously, therefore, a land dealer. No member on this side of the Chamber is in that position.

Mr. Houston: I was waiting for the challenge, and I will accept it at the second reading. (Government laughter.)

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CHINCHEN: I am addressing you, Mr. Lickiss. I should like you to know that no member on this side of the Chamber is in a position to use the powers of the Planning Committee or any other committee in the Brisbane City Council as the Lord Mayor is.

Mr. Houston: I have been waiting for someone to open out.

Mr. CHINCHEN: It is a very sad occasion when someone in a high position takes an opportunity to throw a blanket of doubt

over all Liberal members of this Assembly. In fact, it is a shocking situation.

When referring to these three people, the Leader of the Opposition did say that they had challenged the Brisbane City Council. That is correct. I have challenged the Brisbane City Council on a number of matters, and that has been in the interests of the people whom I represent. That is the only reason. I have nothing against the Lord Mayor personally; he does not even recognise me.

I shall tell the Committee the last three matters relative to the Brisbane City Council that I have raised in this Chamber. The first was the sale of half of the Mt. Gravatt Showgrounds. Half of the land that was virtually given to the Brisbane City Council for £400—\$800—by a show society has been sold for more than \$1,000,000—open land belonging to the people. I said something about that in this Chamber, and I believe I was right in doing so.

I have also spoken fairly recently in this Chamber about the fencing of open spaces in the city. Again, this is a shocking thing, and I raised it in the interests of the people whom I represent. Throughout my electorate high man-proof fences have been going up round open spaces. I do not agree with that, and I shall continue to express my thoughts in that direction.

In addition, I mentioned that the Brisbane City Council has a number of unofficial policies. They are not written down anywhere and no-one can find them, but they operate. I tell the Committee that if a man living on a rural property has only that property and no other income and the value of the property is \$30,000, Lord Mayor Jones immediately takes him off rural rating and puts him on urban rating.

I have been taking this matter up with the Department of Local Government for a period of 18 or 19 months. Only recently I received three letters about it, one from the Premier, one from the leader of my party and one from the honourable member for Gregory when he was Minister for Local Government. I should like people who are placed in this position to know that all those honourable gentlemen say that if the council does this it is operating outside its legal powers.

I turn now to the Bennett Report. If that report applied to any Minister of the Crown, tradition would demand that he resign. But the Lord Mayor is still there, large as life. (Opposition laughter.)

Honourable members opposite may laugh, but to me it is horrifying that a man such as that should be in charge of public affairs. When the report was published and Mr. Bennett pointed out what was going on, certain steps to try to stop these practices, of which honourable members are aware, were taken in this Chamber. But they still go on. If there is no will to do the right thing, the right thing will never be done.

We cannot cure everything by legislation. Underhand dealings are going on all the time. Nothing is put in writing, but demands are being made and ransom money is being paid continually. This is happening today, and to me it is disgusting and shocking.

I will refer to the Bennett Report, because what was happening then is happening this very day. No-one in a responsible position can do anything about it. Solicitors cannot, nor can architects. Those professional people say, "We can't do anything because it is a vindictive council. If we raise our voices in protest we are out of business." With a council monopoly in this city, everybody must deal with the council. That is where we find ourselves now.

To help overcome the problem, we must have a Lord Mayor elected by the aldermen so that the aldermen become strong aldermen. He would not be a weak Lord Mayor, as the newspapers keep suggesting. He can be a strong Lord Mayor. Melbourne has a strong Lord Mayor, and so has Sydney. We want strong aldermen who are able to express themselves without being told, "You cannot debate any question." We want the position where decisions are not made against the aldermen. We know, of course, that it is very difficult for Labor aldermen, because they are in the position that they can have their heads lopped off when it comes to re-nomination in three years' time, as has happened.

A Government Member: What about Yeronga?

Mr. CHINCHEN: It happened in the Yeronga ward, and it happened to three members in this Chamber. We want the aldermen to select their best man as Lord Mayor.

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Salisbury for the last time.

Mr. CHINCHEN: Mr. Bennett was required to submit findings on 10 major issues. On nine of those issues he found against the council and its officers. He found in all those instances that the applicants had been caused costly delays. That is part of the technique. Mr. Bennett found—

1. Undue hardship and costly delays.
2. Imposition of conditions beyond the power of the council.
3. Prolonged negotiation and a system of hard demand.
4. Unequal justice borne heavily by the small man (paragraph 2047). A preference to developers who have more to offer beyond legal obligation (paragraph 2050), for example, transcript page 2224—gift of \$10,000 involved in a site approval for a shop at Kenmore.

Just imagine \$10,000 to get one's own justice! That is the thought that is most annoying. That incident involved a site approval for a shop at Kenmore.

Mr. Bennett further found—

5. The powers of the Registration Board under ordinance 59 rendered abortive by the planning committee.

6. Decisions made beyond power unlawfully, improperly, or arbitrarily.

7. Refusal to accept the decision of the Minister's delegate.

8. Undue delay in answering correspondence.

With your tolerance, Mr. Lickiss, I should like to quote in full finding (J), paragraph 1097. That paragraph has been explained and outlined by the honourable member for Toowong. It is a very important paragraph because it is the crux of the whole situation. It reads—

“(J) No-one has been so guilty in a criminal sense. However, some things were done in excess of power or improperly or arbitrarily or beyond the bounds of reasonableness, fairness, or business morality, or were carried out by a procedure unsupported by law. In these respects I make findings against the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Alderman Jones), the Town Clerk (Mr. J. C. Slaughter), the Greater Brisbane Town Planning Committee as a body, the Planning Advisory Committee as a body and the Registration Board as a body.”

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

Mr. CHINCHEN: Just prior to the dinner break I enumerated the conclusions reached by Mr. Arnold Bennett, Q.C., in his report on the activities of the Brisbane City Council. I did this because I understand from the people who are in close business contact with the Brisbane City Council that these practices are still being carried on. This, I think, is a great worry to the citizens of Brisbane. Of course, not all citizens are involved; only those who have to approach the city council on land matters, subdivisional matters and rezoning matters come into contact with these problems. As we saw from the résumé of the report, it is the small man who is being hurt.

Mr. Burns: Which small man?

Mr. CHINCHEN: If the honourable member reads the report he will understand what it is all about.

Mr. Burns: interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Lytton has had the opportunity of making a contribution to the debate. I trust he will listen to other honourable members.

Mr. CHINCHEN: The reason why this is happening is that we have a presidential system which is somewhat unique operating in the Brisbane City Council. It is certainly not seen in the other States, nor is it seen in this State Government or the Federal Government. It develops to a situation in

which one person has enormous power. He does not have to answer to the elected aldermen. He is the man who makes the decisions by setting down principles which will be observed by his staff and which, as Mr. Arnold Bennett has pointed out, are in many instances unlawful.

It may be asked why the public has such a high regard for the Lord Mayor. I know this is true, but the sole reason for it is the enormous propaganda machine that is paid for by the ratepayers. He has a weekly TV programme and numerous radio programmes, extensive use of the Press and, of course, the use of large union organisations for campaigning and so on. And so we get this mind-conditioning. I am convinced that one can condition the human mind to anything. When the Lord Mayor keeps saying over a number of years, “I am the greatest,” people start to believe it. Some people have told me, “He gets things done.” I ask, “What has he done in this city?” With the exception of the Turbot Street extension, which was forced on him by the Wilbur Smith Report and is the only thing to which he is contributing, all the other major undertakings have been carried out by private enterprise or the State Government. I know he says, “I have seweraged the city”, and that he compares the percentage of Brisbane seweraged when he came into power with the present percentage, but the greater part of that increased percentage has been performed by subdividers and paid for by purchasers of the land. It makes land very expensive because charges are in excess of the actual cost. No land is zoned as residential land; in every case it has to be rezoned so that terms may be reached. No land comes out on the plan as urban land. It is all “future urban,” and to have it zoned as urban it is necessary to approach the council and then negotiations commence. The amount to be paid is, in many cases, unbelievable. People who have experienced this sort of thing have explained to me what takes place. All citizens of Brisbane do not realise this. They simply watch TV and hear the claim, “I am the greatest.”

(Time expired.)

Mr. MARGINSON (Wolston) (7.19 p.m.): For some weeks now we have been reading in the Press and hearing on the radio and on television that this legislation was going to be brought before Parliament for consideration. Throughout all those weeks I have searched for reasons for it. We have asked why this is going to be done, and I was one who was very hopeful that today the Minister would tell us the reasons. But we are still left in the dark as to the reasons for this proposed change in the structure of the Brisbane City Council.

In my opinion this is a display by the Government, and particularly a section of the Liberal Party, of hatred, jealousy, and vindictiveness towards the Brisbane City Council. There is hatred because of the Government's continued defeats in this local

authority area; jealousy because of the achievements of the Lord Mayor and his Labor council; and, of course, stubbornness and vindictiveness have been themes of this Government ever since it came to power. It is now interfering with a council that has made Brisbane a very progressive city and has provided to the people of Brisbane many amenities that some years ago they never dreamed existed. Because of this, the Government is attempting to put a stop to it.

Since I entered Parliament three years ago I have been astounded by the continual attacks, mainly by back-benchers in the Government, on the Brisbane City Council structure. I am sure I will be forgiven for believing that these personal attacks are born of some pecuniary interest of those members in matters associated with the Brisbane City Council. They have made these attacks because they cannot succeed in their ideas on land development, erection of flats in localities where they might wish them to be constructed, and site approvals that have been refused.

For 18 years I have been an alderman of Ipswich, and, as I have said, for three years I have been a member of this Parliament. I am firmly convinced that local authority work is closer to the people than that of Parliament. I make it quite clear that I said it is closer. The problems confronting the ratepayer are of an individual nature, and are of great importance to him. Today we have been told that the work of an alderman is much less arduous than that of a member of Parliament. Even when I was a part-time alderman and, at the same time, a public servant of the State, I found my aldermanic duties rather tedious, arduous and, at times, tiring. However, I do not for one moment suggest that there is not a tremendous amount of work to be done by a conscientious member of Parliament.

Against the weight of all public opinion, the Minister and the Premier have shown their stubbornness by persisting with the introduction of this Bill. Recently the Premier told us that because so many people of Queensland did not want daylight saving and because some sections of the Press felt we should not have it, he would accept the opinion of the people. When the people of Brisbane particularly, and those of South-east Queensland, showed that they were opposed to these proposed alterations in the structure of the Brisbane City Council and the Premier was approached about it, he made it quite clear that he was not concerned with public opinion. That was because it did not suit him.

The Government is well known for its poor treatment of local authorities. In my maiden speech I referred to local authorities and the financial treatment being meted out to them by the Government. It must be remembered that the Government of Queensland created local authorities, but it has

allowed them to get into their present financial position. There is not a local authority in Queensland that is not crying out for finance. When the Local Government Association appealed to the State Government for financial assistance, it was told to approach the Federal Government because it controlled the purse-strings of the nation. The Federal Government said, "It is not our responsibility. Go to the State Government because it is your creator." That is where the matter rests today. The Queensland Government will not assist local government financially. The Treasurer boasts of the help he has given local government by way of subsidy. I do not deny that subsidy grants have increased, but because of rising costs their value is far less now than it was 10 or 15 years ago. That is the type of treatment handed out to local authorities.

This measure is to apply only to the Brisbane City Council, not to any provincial city, town or shire. Brisbane has been selected for a special attack by the Government. Why have not the Minister and his colleagues suggested that it apply throughout the State? If it is so good, why did the Minister not apply it State-wide? It is obvious to me that the Minister and those associated with him realised that for the next generation there was no hope of getting people of their political colour into the Brisbane City Council as administrators. The Government is hoping that it will be able to do what it did with the State electorates in Brisbane through the redistribution, when it was able to manipulate the seats through an independent tribunal. That is the only way it could be successful. The Government is hoping that with a similar redistribution it may have some chance of success.

I am very sorry that the Minister for Justice is not in the Chamber. In his seven-minute speech before lunch he made it plain that this was only a preliminary approach in dealing with the Brisbane City Council. I think he made a slip when he told us that there would be fragmentation later on. To corroborate his statement, I refer to an article in "The Courier-Mail" of 11 August by Peter Trundle, under this heading—

"The State Government is likely to form a committee to investigate breaking up the Brisbane City Council into a number of local authorities."

It is evident that Mr. Trundle had been given this information.

Another paragraph in the same article reads—

"Government members said yesterday the Bill would be just a preliminary."

That bears out what the Minister for Justice said.

The article continues—

"They said there was wide acceptance among Country Party and Liberal Parliamentarians that a competent body should

be established to investigate the feasibility of splitting Greater Brisbane into smaller councils within two years."

The article contains other paragraphs which have already been proved to be correct, one of which reads—

"The Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) said yesterday the Bill probably would be introduced in the first week after Parliament's Exhibition recess."

What the Minister for Justice said today bears out that what Mr. Trundle said was true with respect to the time of the introduction of this Bill.

One very important feature that struck me, as a member from a provincial city, was the Minister's statement, in trying to establish the reason for the introduction of this Bill, that when a mayor was elected by the whole of the electors of the area, a defeated mayoral candidate would have made a good alderman. That may be true, but would not a defeated mayoral candidate in Ipswich be in the same position? If that is a good reason to change the method of electing a mayor, why is not the same reason applied to the other 128 or 129 local authority areas?

Mr. Porter: The reason has been given to you on a number of occasions. There is only one Brisbane.

An Opposition Member: There is only one principle, too.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind honourable members that there is also only one Chairman.

Mr. MARGINSON: The Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs, in answer to an interjection, said that the Government had approved the ordinances of the Brisbane City Council. It was not the Government's desire and never had been, so he said, to interfere with the ordinances or policies of any council. I seriously and sincerely challenge that statement. I could give him at least 12 instances, during my time as deputy mayor of Ipswich, in which the Government of the day refused to approve certain by-laws and regulations. Yet the Minister stood there and told us that. He does not know. He was brought into the debate to mark time. If he had known the real position with regard to by-laws and ordinances, he would not have made such a silly statement.

The Minister for Local Government, unfortunately for him, has been bulldozed into introducing this Bill. In some respects, I feel sympathetic towards him. There is no doubt that his predecessor would never have introduced such a Bill. He can tell me if I am wrong. Nor would the Minister before him, who held this portfolio for many years and whom I knew very well, have introduced such a Bill. He would have stood up for his beliefs and would not have acted like jelly in this matter.

What are the present Minister's achievements? What has he done over the last few years? I well remember the Minister, because he was the organiser who saved the Premier when four of his rebels were going to behead him. The Minister made certain that he was in with the Premier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Whilst the debate is a far-ranging one, I hope it will at least be kept in some way applicable to the City of Brisbane Act.

Mr. MARGINSON: Would you suggest I have not been making it applicable, Mr. Lickiss? The Bill is "for other purposes" as well.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust that the honourable member is not going to argue with the Chair, because I can assure him that he will not win. To explain the situation further, the motion before the Committee is for the introduction of a Bill to amend the City of Brisbane Act, and for other purposes in relation to that Act. Discussion will be confined within that range.

Mr. MARGINSON: Thank you for taking up my time.

There was a discussion on local government affairs at Dalby with the League of Rights. If I remember correctly, the Minister was one who supported the League of Rights on that occasion at Dalby when they were trying to infiltrate local government affairs. The Minister also assisted to preserve the Premier's life when the man with the toy pistol got into the Parliament House dining room one morning. The Minister will go down in the history of Queensland as the one who introduced this infamous Bill to more or less do away with the Brisbane City Council—a Bill that must be a backward step in the history of local government in Queensland.

Mr. HUGHES (Kurilpa) (7.37 p.m.): The Bill before the Committee is being taken seriously because it deals with a most serious matter. It is one that warrants a great deal of in-depth consideration. Although there are various aspects of the Bill, I do not believe that it goes far enough. I should like it to go further, and I shall explain why.

The proposal requires serious consideration, as the decision to be made on it will be decisive and final. I do not think that there will be any unscrambling of this political egg once it has been cooked by passing through the processes of this Parliament. Adequate and in-depth research is necessary prior to the introduction of a measure such as the one now before us and during its passage through Parliament, because we are dealing with something that is vital and personal in grass-roots domestic matters. After all, the lives and livelihood of all persons in the community hinge on civic administration, and it must be remembered that in dealing with Brisbane we are dealing with about 50 per cent of the population of the State.

What is more important, dealing with such a matter requires an understanding that cannot be gained by surface impressions and personal opinions. Deep and serious research is needed to obtain the understanding necessary to provide the fairness and justice that the people of the City of Brisbane expect from us. Local authority and city administration is the grass-roots level of public administration. I was an alderman of the Brisbane City Council for six years, and I know from that experience that aldermen do a very vital and personal job. They are associated with people and their problems at the civic grass-roots level, and their work is not to be denigrated. I believe that there is honour in all work and there certainly is a great degree of honour and a great degree of personal satisfaction in the job of an alderman if he applies himself sincerely, purposefully and objectively to it. I know many who do apply themselves in that way.

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

Mr. HUGHES: I believe that this proposal deserves much more consideration than has been given to it. The Lord Mayor, the aldermen and the officers of the Brisbane City Council are closer to the people in dealing with everyday, domestic matters. The problems that affect the daily life of the people of this city and the requirements of the city should be given full in-depth consideration.

A great number of people will be affected by this measure because the Brisbane City Council has such wide ramifications. This tremendous socialistic organisation affects the citizens of Brisbane not only in minor domestic matters but also through its transport, sewerage and electricity undertakings and in many other ways. One might say that it is an octopus of city administration. I have often heard the City Hall referred to as "Frustration Castle".

Mr. Houston: How have you heard this place referred to?

Mr. HUGHES: "The Gas Works", particularly when people in the public gallery hear the inane utterances of the honourable members on my right.

At the outset, let me state my opinion regarding the number of aldermen. I do not agree with a number of my colleagues on this point. I believe that there should be 28 aldermen.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: It is obvious from such an interjection that the honourable member is new to this Chamber. Those members who know me know that I speak as my conscience dictates and that no-one dictates to me how I should speak or what I should say. I wonder whether the same can be said of many honourable members on my right. I well remember stating during the

recent election campaign that members of the A.L.P. do not have the right that Liberal members have to speak and vote as their conscience dictates, that they are mere puppets who dance every time the strings are pulled by their masters in the Q.C.E. I am not attacking honourable members opposite personally, but I reiterate that they must bow to the dictates of unelected officials.

Mr. Bousen interjected.

Mr. HUGHES: I feel a little sorry for honourable members opposite, who have not the right that honourable members on this side of the Committee guard so jealously. That is, to make a contribution in a sincere way, according to our own consciences, and as we see fit.

Mr. Tucker: Is that what you told Mr. Justice Hanger the other day?

Mr. HUGHES: The honourable member and I have a pact, so let us keep it nice and friendly. We have enjoyed each other's company in the last three weeks. I will not tell the truth about some people if they do not tell fibs about me.

Let me return now to a consideration of the facts about the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Melloy: I will not tell any stories.

Mr. HUGHES: The honourable member will not hear any from me.

I believe that this is a question of opinion. In good conscience, I think that there should be 28 aldermen. I may not be right; I am not always right. I know that many of my colleagues believe that there should be fewer than 28, and they have good reasons for their belief. Who is to say whether I am right or whether they are right? As I said earlier, there is a defining line between conscience and opinion. This obviously is an instance in which the question is: which is best for the City of Brisbane? That happens to be my opinion, and I have expressed it in other places, but that is not the kernel of what I am getting at.

Although I might think that there should be 28 aldermen, in dealing specifically with the number of aldermen and the election of Lord Mayor I believe that we, as a Government, are missing many of the important issues. As a Government we should not be confining our attention specifically and solely to the number of aldermen and the method of election of the Lord Mayor because there are other wide and big problems. The ramifications of the City of Brisbane are such as to cause those who have made a study of the present situation the gravest concern. That is one of the problems I find myself faced with in disagreeing with my party. I believe that we are not going far enough. We should hasten slowly; we should not move with indecent haste, which I believe has occurred in this instance. I would have been prepared to agree to an extension of the Council's term of office for some period of time to enable

a committee of investigation to inquire to the fullest extent into the ramifications, responsibilities, duties, financing of civil administration and a whole host of other aspects. That would be no small task, and if justice is to be done, it cannot be completed in a few quick meetings lasting a few minutes, followed by a quick decision. It deserves much more than that. The ramifications of the council are such that they not merely warrant but, I think it can be proved, demand the attention of the Government. After all, this Government guarantees the City of Brisbane. It guarantees the Brisbane City Council, and if the council goes bankrupt this Government must pick up the tab. We are not going far enough, we should be looking at the whole subject of civic responsibility and administration. That is one of my gravest concerns about the whole matter.

The council has grown to a tremendously large undertaking that affects daily the lives, considerations, facilities and standards of people. And what a tremendous effect it has on their cost of living! We can cast our minds back to not so very long ago when the biggest factor in the cost-of-living increase was the savage increases in transport charges. Six months before that rates were increased by 30 per cent. Among the biggest factors in the cost-of-living index are the charges imposed by the Brisbane City Council.

We have heard talk about land. I know something about this and I could give a lecture on it if need be. I will not show honourable members my bank accounts, but I do not care what anybody knows about any association I might have with land. It is open, and that is full stop. The council in this city has been the cause of such an escalation in land prices that it has prevented many people from owning their own homes. This is the council that is supposedly the friend of the worker. I could develop that argument greatly, but I will get back more specifically to the items associated with the introduction of the Bill.

Consider the areas in which the Brisbane City Council has a direct responsibility, such as water supply, sewerage, electricity, transport, health, parks, gardens, roads and footpaths. These are all vital to the people. We have about the worst roads in the world—and I have been around the world. I cannot think of too many places which, as a general rule, have worse roads. We can thank the Minister for Mines and Main Roads and this Government for relieving the Brisbane City Council of a task that it was incapable of accepting or irresponsibly would not accept. Either it could not administer efficiently or it callously disregarded the need to provide better roads and more bridges. The council is responsible for cross-river bridges. Who took over this responsibility? Who planned and who paid for the new Victoria Bridge? Who did something about the freeway and overcame

the problem of the clogging of traffic because of the increased number of metal microbes on the roads?

Who did something about all these things at a cost of millions of dollars? The Minister for Main Roads, and he has done a damn good job. If this assistance had not been given, the roads in the City of Brisbane would have been clogged and vehicular traffic brought to a standstill.

When he was an alderman in the council, a man who was sacked by honourable members opposite (Mr. Bennett) wailed, and whinged, and cried to the people of Brisbane, "Don't use the Victoria Bridge. It will fall down. It is unsafe." He conducted a reign of terror by his oratory in the council chamber and belaboured this Government in 1957 because it would not do anything. Of course, at that stage it was a C.M.O. council and the Government at that stage was not prepared to provide the financial wherewithal to replace the old Victoria Bridge. Anyone who had to stop on that bridge in those days bounced up and down like a rubber ball as the bridge shook with the volume of traffic using it.

This Government eventually did something about it. It has been the best godfather imaginable—and I mean that in the best sense. It has been like a godfather handing out its millions, but Clem Jones has taken the credit for it. He is one of the best actors in the business. He can go on TV and sell himself. He has stood on Victoria Bridge with the TV cameras to support a city loan and said, "We are going to build a new bridge here. We are going to remove all those old buildings and do this and that. This is what is happening in your city." He deserves an academy award. But who pays for it? This Government. There are many instances of this.

Building codes and standards of building, town planning and use of land, noise nuisance and pollution, aspects associated with our environment, mosquito eradication, general amenities and all sorts of forms of registration and traffic control—all these matters have to be administered by the council. When we are stuck with a municipal council which should be doing something about them and is not, why should we not investigate it? We have had reports about more powers for Jones and the council. We know that a staggering sum is owed by the council. Not so very long ago it was reported in a municipal newspaper that if the Brisbane City Council were run as a private enterprise we would be headed for the biggest bankruptcy case in our history.

Time will not permit me to deal with many of these subjects, but today our city debt is \$180,172,802 as against \$57,300,000 in 1951. This council which has sabotaged our great transport system—there are only a few buses on a Sunday, giving service that is not worth anything—has a \$17,000,000

debt on that system. I have asked questions of the Minister in this House on this matter. On 8 August I asked him—

“In view of the haste and apparently insufficient consideration given to proposed amendments necessary to provide the machinery, system and manner of the elections of Aldermen and the Lord Mayor of the City of Brisbane, will he consider setting up an all-party committee to investigate and report to Parliament on all these aspects of this matter?”

Of course, this was not done. I believe that an all-party committee should do this. I am not being political in this matter. If we were political, what could we have been expected to do? Had we wanted to draw the teeth of the Lord Mayor, we would not have passed Chapter 2 which gives the Lord Mayor the sole right to prepare a budget, makes him a king or dictator, virtually the sole man running the council. It is a one-man band and this Government allowed him to do it. Had we wanted to draw his teeth in a political sense, that is how we would have attacked him.

I do not agree that there should be 21 aldermen; I think there should be 28. I am open minded about the question of the Lord Mayor's election and as to whether it should be by the people or by the aldermen, but when I was in the council we were screaming for this. We foresaw that there could be a Labor Lord Mayor with a majority of C.M.O. aldermen or vice versa. Members of the Labor Party should remember this. At the Labor Party convention at Rockhampton a few years ago they were worried about the same question, that is, having a Lord Mayor with a hostile council—a majority of aldermen belonging to an opposing party. The Labor Party took this to its Rockhampton convention and wanted to have it carried. Now what is it doing? If only the honourable member for Stafford (Alderman Harvey) could tell us of some of the things that went on there.

Let us not talk with tongue in cheek; let us be honest. I have an open mind on the matter of the election of the Lord Mayor. Perhaps I favour the proposal that the aldermen elect him. However, I believe that there should be an election and a ward system, and it is desirable that the wards be named after persons like Warner, who was the first city surveyor, and others who have made worth-while contributions to the development of Brisbane. I believe that an in-depth study of the council should be made, and because it is in such a financial morass and on a toboggan-slide to bankruptcy the Government should make that study. I cannot find out even by way of a series of questions to Ministers how much interest the council is paying under hire-purchase agreements.

I fear for the city children yet to come that they may be saddled with a huge financial burden. Alderman Jones is embarking on grandiose schemes like car parks and Lennons

simply to satisfy his own ego. I am not opposed to the establishment of the City Square, but I remind the Committee that the car park was to be given to the ratepayers at no cost. But now the project is costing the ratepayers millions of dollars.

The Lord Mayor is suddenly taking a new interest in local government and has taken the place of another alderman on the Local Government Association. Because of this Bill he is taking a keen interest in matters outside the City of Brisbane. To be sure, he has worked and worked damned hard. To give credit where it is due, he has done a good job in sewerage works. However, this is only part of the problem; we are only nibbling at it instead of going to its heart. My opinion is not in support of the Government on this question, but I believe that this is an appropriate time to investigate the Council.

(Time expired.)

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville West) (7.58 p.m.): This afternoon the Leader of the Opposition adverted to a statement made by the Federal member for Moreton, Mr. Jim Killen, and I think it is meet that I should read an extract from that statement before I begin my speech proper.

In “The Courier-Mail” of Friday, 11 August 1972, under the headline “Former Minister deplors State's council ‘cynicism’,” this appears—

“Federal Liberal M.P., Mr. Jim Killen, yesterday described the State Government's proposals to reconstruct the Brisbane City Council as ‘one of the most lamentable exercises in cynicism in the history of Australian politics.’”

I do not think he could have stated the position any harder than that.

The article continues—

“The former Navy Minister said: ‘Even as a Federal Member of Parliament for 17 years, I hope there are occasions when I can speak as a private citizen.’”

“I am astonished by the State Government's moves to change the Brisbane City Council.”

“The fact that the proposals were announced only six weeks after a State election, without reference having been made during the campaign can only be described as one of the most lamentable exercises in cynicism in the history of Australian politics.”

Under the heading “Have a say” this appears—

“Mr. Killen said he held no exalted opinion of the Brisbane City Council, ‘but this decision does not encourage me to have an exalted opinion of the State Government.’”

I would say that in that concluding sentence Mr. Killen expresses the very opinion that many of us in this Chamber hold. Over the past 15 years Queensland has been called a

backward State, a hick State, a cow-cocky State, and a State of disasters. But when it comes to disasters, the greatest disaster in this State is the Premier. National and international journalists have been incredulous of some of the actions taken and statements made by the coalition Government of this State.

Surely the legislation presented to this Chamber today transcends and eclipses all the other queer actions of the Queensland coalition Government. For sheer stupidity it has no peer, and for pure vindictiveness there can be no precedent. It has no basis in logic and, on that ground, it is very acceptable to the Country Party. It is a negation of democracy and, because of that, it is likewise very acceptable to the Liberal Party. It seeks to tear down a well-trying, unique system that is the essence of democracy. I do not believe anybody in the Chamber tonight could argue against that.

This legislation seeks to replace the present well-trying system with a structure that will set Brisbane back 50 years. I am sure that none of us wishes that to happen. Because of the vindictiveness of some people in the Liberal Party—the honourable member for Redcliffe made this very clear—this city will be pushed back 50 years. I am sure that no member of the Opposition wishes that to happen.

I said that Queensland has been called a backward State. That figures, because every step taken by the Government has been a retrograde one. The Government's policy is starkly clear. It is obvious that anything that cannot be changed must be torn down. If the Government cannot win, it sets about tearing the structure down. Anything that shows progress, that is not under the auspices of the coalition Government leadership, must be negated, derided, abused and, finally, smashed.

The philosophy of this hick Government—I use that adjective again because it has been used freely by people from outside who have come to watch the antics of the Government—is this: "We are not here to legislate according to the thinking or the requirements of the people; rather are we here by some divine right—and, of course, a minority of the votes of the people of Queensland—to impose our will on the people of Queensland."

To the Opposition's way of thinking, the Government is surely here to reflect the thinking of the people and to legislate accordingly. The legislation introduced today does not reflect the thinking of the people of Queensland or, in fact, the thinking of the people of Brisbane; but because the Government has the numbers it is prepared to impose its will on the people of Brisbane to satisfy the vindictive attitude of some members of the Liberal Party. If that were not so, how could the overwhelming vote in the public-opinion polls conducted by the local Press be ignored?

Mr. R. E. Moore: I will tell you that later.

Mr. TUCKER: I would not believe the honourable member if he told me.

Newspapers that have previously backed the coalition Government for years and years suddenly shifted ground. Every Government member must have asked himself why. It was simply because the newspapers realised that public opinion was completely against the Government, and they wanted to reflect public opinion. But it has been ignored completely. When the public-opinion polls favoured the Government during the Springbok tour they were freely quoted in this Assembly. I heard many Government members refer to public-opinion polls during the Springbok tour and quote them freely. But when they suddenly swing against the Government we are told that they mean nothing; that they should be ignored and are of no account.

This sinister legislation—and I use that word advisedly—is designed to destroy the Greater Brisbane concept, for only two reasons. The first is political. Every Government member knows that, since the A.L.P. took office in the council, Brisbane has been transformed from virtually a large country town into a thriving, modern metropolis. In the old days it lacked even the normal facilities, but under Lord Mayor Jones it has at last begun to shrug off the adjectives that I used when I started my speech, namely, "hick" town and "cow-cocky" town.

This happened not under the leadership of the Honourable J. Bjelke-Petersen but under the leadership of Lord Mayor Jones and his A.L.P. aldermen. Everywhere there is evidence of progress and planning in health, sewerage, the City Square, transport, roads—whatever sphere is named, Clem Jones and his aldermen have done wonders in the past 10 years or so. The people have appreciated this transformation and have responded each triennium with more and more support for him. In addition, the private sector is progressing and booming. In the past 10 years, \$850,000,000 has been spent on buildings in this city. That demonstrates clearly the complete confidence that exists here.

From the Government's point of view, this is very dangerous and must be stopped at any cost. The Government is interested not in progress but in holding its numbers in Parliament. Therefore, this local government must be destroyed, and today we hear the clank of the dreadful machinery being pushed into this Chamber to destroy the Greater Brisbane concept. This is being done in spite of world authorities who are saying that, to protect our future generations, we must have strong city government. It is significant that all world leaders agree that, for efficiency, we must have greater centralised authority. Yet this is being ignored by this Government.

This "cow-cocky" Government has no concept of what should be done in our great cities. Why would the Government take

notice of world authorities when it has the Honourable H. A. McKechnie sitting in a taxi, with both ears to the ground? Not one Government member could state tonight the basis on which it could be claimed that there should be a change in the system of local government in Brisbane, with its record.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. TUCKER: The honourable member makes a fool of himself every time he opens his mouth.

The second reason for the Bill is a personal one. Many of the leading Liberals closely involved in the introduction of this legislation are land developers.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Name them.

Mr. TUCKER: The honourable member for Yeronga, for one, and the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha, for another. The Treasurer wants them named. He knows them well, and if he wants me to go further I will.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Go on.

Mr. TUCKER: The Treasurer has asked me to name them. These people have clashed with the council because of their own personal interests. Both the Liberal and C.M.O. developers want to make more profit from less investment, and they resent the Brisbane City Council forcing developers to pay for facilities. But these little fellows—I do not suppose they could be called big in any sense of the word—want more profit from less investment. When they are forced to provide facilities, it hurts, and they start to fight the council.

When developers are forced to provide facilities, the purchaser of land is able to pay his share over a long period. That is the fundamental difference between A.L.P. and Liberal philosophy. It follows that the developers are forced to obtain more money to go into land development when facilities have to be provided, and they resent it. The Country Party and Liberal Party attitude is that if things cannot be changed by fair means, foul means or just as legitimate. This is a foul piece of legislation.

What has been clearly overlooked by the architects of this legislation is that once local government is destroyed, decay of the State Government must naturally follow. Someone must do the essential, mundane jobs of local government such as drainage, water supply, sewerage, road construction, grass cutting, and other important activities. Local government is an area in which selected representatives are required to look after the basic local needs of their constituencies. If there is no efficient local government, those responsibilities pass to State representatives. All members present tonight should ponder that situation now that it is sought to destroy local government.

One has come to expect the peculiar logic, or lack of logic, used by Ministers and Government back-benchers. Not so many months ago they argued that there was a need to increase the number of State members. Now the argument is advanced that the number of aldermen should be reduced from 28 to 21, despite the growth of the city, the fact that there will be 1,000,000 people in Brisbane in 1981, and the fact that in 1960 the Government decided that 28 was the appropriate number of aldermen. Building activity and services have increased. How on earth, then, can such an approach be justified today? It cannot be justified by any member present this evening, let alone the Minister.

Every step proposed exposes the complete hypocrisy of the Government and, what is worse, the complete lack of thought and care that should be paramount in importance. In 1925, when the Greater Brisbane concept was established, the council consisted of a mayor and 20 aldermen, each serving 9,000 people. Today there are 28 aldermen, each serving about 27,000 people. In other words, each alderman today represents about three times the number of people represented by an alderman in 1925, and there are only eight additional aldermen. The number of voters represented by each alderman will further increase, too. This legislation will reduce the Brisbane City Council to a state of impotence, which, despite all the dust that has been thrown up, is exactly what the Government wants.

Let us now turn to the election of the mayor by the aldermen and not the people. In the 48 years in which Greater Brisbane has been in existence, there have been non-Labor mayors for 27 years and Labor mayors for 21 years. That demonstrates a well-spread selection by the electorate at large of the men they have wanted as mayors. The office has been fairly well distributed politically. I therefore ask, "Why deprive the people of their right to make the choice?" What more democratic system could there be than one that gives the electors the right to choose their mayor? I ask again, "Is there any violation of democratic rights in allowing the people to make their choice?" There can be only one answer to that. We must look elsewhere to find the real answer to the question of why the present method of election is to be altered.

Analogies have been drawn between Federal, State and local government. There are vast differences between those three forms of government, and the duties and responsibilities of each vary considerably. Local government has its own policies and objectives, and it meets the requirements of its own people. It is a very specialised form of government. Ideas of planning and development are peculiar to the area involved—in this instance they are peculiar to Brisbane, and I say that advisedly—and leadership in these groups is undoubtedly a great asset to the community concerned. I speak

now of Lord Mayor Clem Jones. He has been a great asset to the community concerned.

Over the past 32 years, Sir Reginald Groom was the only Lord Mayor who also served as an alderman, and the city could well be deprived of the services of an outstanding man because of the proposed alteration. Surely the position of the Lord Mayor of Brisbane is infinitely stronger because he is elected by the people, just as the President of the United States of America is elected. It is rather a paradox that the Premier, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, whose party received only 19 per cent of the vote of the people at the last State election, should be preparing to bring about the downfall of a man who received more than 50 per cent of the vote in 27 of the 28 wards of the City of Brisbane. Members of the Government may not like Lord Mayor Clem Jones, but the people of Brisbane obviously like him, and that is what counts. The enemies of Labor know that they cannot defeat at the polls the present incumbent of the Lord Mayor's office. Obviously, they are now seeking other means to defeat him. This is political chicanery of the first order, and it is contained in the proposed legislation.

Another point is that an independent can never become Lord Mayor under the Bill because he does not belong to a party. Apparently the Government has not thought of that. It will operate against the people who do not believe in a political system of local government.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (8.17 p.m.): It is a pity that members of the Opposition have to rely on a tirade of abuse because of their lack of sound argument in the debate that has taken place today. I have listened for over six hours to that tirade and it is obvious that they have not a sound knowledge of the subject.

The honourable member for Townsville West, who has just resumed his seat, says that the Government is deliberately destroying the Greater Brisbane concept. He has been told on a number of occasions today that there are two principles in the Bill; firstly, the number of aldermen is being reduced from 28 to 21; secondly, provision is being made to elect the Lord Mayor from the aldermen. I wish to know—I hope that the next speaker from the Opposition side of the Chamber will tell me—how the Government is destroying the Greater Brisbane concept by these two moves.

Mr. Houston: It is the first step, and you know it.

Mr. MILLER: We are dealing with facts, and I state emphatically that the Bill gives effect to only these two principles.

Mr. Houston: In this Bill, but what about the next one?

Mr. MILLER: Honourable members opposite have deliberately confused the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act in the hope that people who read "Hansard" will become as confused as they are.

I deplore the statement by Mr. Egerton, the President of the Queensland Trades and Labor Council, on 30 August 1971 that "members land deals will be exposed". I deplore also the fact that the Leader of the Opposition has chosen to sit in this Chamber for six hours and, despite continual calls by members on the Government benches for the names of these people, refused to name the Liberals concerned.

Mr. Houston: So what?

Mr. Porter: Well, put up or shut up.

Mr. MILLER: Six hours after the debate began, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition stood up in this Chamber and named two members. Did he make any charges against those two members? No! Did he see fit to accuse the two members in this Chamber?

Mr. Porter: The most contemptible trick in the political book.

Mr. MILLER: If Mr. Egerton, as a member of this community, as the President of the Queensland Trades and Labor Council, or as a member of the Planning Advisory Committee of the Brisbane City Council, knew something that was detrimental to the City of Brisbane—some underhand work going on—he should have announced it at the time. He should not have waited until he wanted to control the voting of certain honourable members in this Chamber. It is to be deplored that we could read in the newspapers, "As a member of the Brisbane City Council Planning and Advisory Committee I have seen what has been going on." He admits to seeing what has been going on, yet he chose to keep quiet until this very moment. Every honourable member should deplore the action of Mr. Egerton.

Mr. Houston: You have a fertile imagination.

Mr. MILLER: Yes, I have a very fertile imagination, but I happen to be a Liberal member who has had this slur made upon him and the honourable gentleman happens to be the Leader of the Opposition who has chosen to allow that slur to remain until this time without making any move to remove it.

Mr. Houston: Who introduced it?

Mr. MILLER: The Leader of the Opposition was challenged by the deputy leader of the Liberal Party first thing this morning to name the members of the Government, but the honourable gentleman chose to allow the slur to remain.

Mr. Houston: I challenged the Government to a referendum. Why don't you carry that out?

Mr. MILLER: What has having a referendum got to do with the slur cast over me and every other Liberal member in this Chamber?

Honourable Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I call the Chamber to order. The honourable member for Ithaca has the floor.

Mr. MILLER: Honourable members opposite and, unfortunately, the newspapers have tried to cloud what the Government is doing by deliberately saying that this is an anti-Clem Jones Bill.

Mr. Bousen: Of course it is.

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member says it is?

Mr. Bousen: Yes.

Mr. MILLER: I should like to remind honourable members that I have the greatest respect for Clem Jones as a businessman. I have no doubt that if he stands at the next city council elections he will be elected.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. MILLER: I am making this speech. If he stands at the next Brisbane City Council elections—

An Honourable Member: If he stands.

Mr. MILLER: I am coming to that. If he stands at the next Brisbane City Council elections, he will be given a safe Labor seat, like all honourable members on the Labor side who are "in" with the Q.C.E. We have seen it in the past. We have seen certain members of the Australian Labor Party get safe Labor seats. I do not blame them. Every political party would do it. Honourable members opposite must agree that Alderman Clem Jones would be given a safe seat. Therefore, he would be re-elected, so where is the problem? I have no doubt that the Government could not keep the Lord Mayor from being re-elected. The people would re-elect him—honourable members opposite admit that the people would re-elect him—so what is the problem? Is he and honourable members opposite frightened that the aldermen would not elect him as Lord Mayor? Is that the danger they see in this Bill? If he is as popular with the aldermen as they claim he is, he has no problem whatever. He will be elected.

Mr. Bousen: Why change the system?

Mr. MILLER: Because we want to give back to the aldermen the power they have lost over the years.

I do not believe that the Lord Mayor will be standing in the Brisbane civic election. I do not think he will; I think we will see him in this Chamber on the opposite side after the next State election. He made it quite clear during the last State election campaign that he wants to be a member of

Parliament, not the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Therefore this is not an anti-Clem Jones Bill, because Clem Jones will not be standing at the next Brisbane City Council election, as honourable members opposite well know.

Mr. Houston: Why are you worried?

Mr. MILLER: We are not worrying. I am trying to point out that this is not an anti-Clem Jones Bill. But we are concerned with the powers that the Lord Mayor has—not Clem Jones but the Lord Mayor.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I ask honourable members to cease interjecting.

Mr. MILLER: Who will be the next A.L.P. candidate for Lord Mayor? If we can take any notice of the word around town at the moment and for the last six months, Jack Egerton, the President of the Trades and Labor Council, is going to be the next lord-mayoral candidate.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. MILLER: Honourable members opposite have gone to a lot of trouble to make out that this is an anti-Clem Jones Bill, but they know very well that he will be in this Chamber after the next election.

Now I wish to quote certain extracts and, like the Leader of the Opposition, I want to go back to 1924, because the Home Secretary in 1924 had some very sound remarks to make. Mr. Stopford had this to say—

"The Mayor will have only those powers which are conferred upon him by the council. That is a very necessary precaution. We do not know who the Mayor might be. We do not want a Brisbane Mussolini."

I do not know if Mr. Stopford was clairvoyant. But I want to ask this question: have we a dictator in the City of Brisbane today? Have we a dictator like Mr. Stopford mentioned in 1924? I point out that the Lord Mayor today has much more power than the Government gave the Lord Mayor in 1924.

We have listened all day to honourable members opposite quoting articles from "The Courier-Mail", the "Sunday Sun" and every other newspaper one could name. I want to read some extracts from the very same newspapers, and we will see what they had to say as to whether or not we have a dictator in the City Hall.

The first, from "The Courier-Mail" of Saturday, 12 October 1968, reads—

"Down at the Clemlin, something stirs. And every Brisbane citizen ought to be concerned at what the Lord Mayor might be concocting this time.

"Alderman Jones wants to create several new, and permanent, top echelon administrative posts at City Hall. Fair enough. This is a big and growing metropolis. It takes a lot of running.

"But let's take a closer look at the envisaged set-up. It's not only the top manpower that would be doubled. Parkinson's well-established dictum on bureaucratic empire-building suggests that before long the number of new staff to handle the newly generated paperwork would proliferate even faster than rabbits. So there's cost to consider.

"However, there's a far more important aspect. It appears that the permanent Executive Adviser (co-equal with the Town Clerk—shades of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Gondoliers!') will have extremely wide authority and responsibility, especially at a policy level and working in tandem with the Lord Mayor.

"So where does this leave the aldermen? It seems they'll need fur parkas. Once aldermen had important jobs. They used to meet in open Council to consider policy and make decisions to be implemented by employees. Under the present regime the Tuesday council meetings are usually rubber-stamp sessions for unreviewed decisions by closed-door meetings of the Lord Mayor and officials or, sometimes, the Labor Caucus.

"If this city really is heading for a 'city manager' system instead of theoretical government by elected aldermen, will the Lord Mayor please take the electors into his confidence? The savings in aldermanic salaries might pay for some of the extra bureaucrats."

What has happened since 1968 to change the point of view of the Press? Since then the Lord Mayor has not lost power but has gained some. So why the change in the editorials of "The Courier-Mail"?

Now I want to quote what the A.L.P. has to say about it. Even the A.L.P. says that there is a dictator in the City Hall. I read from an article that says—

"The State Labor Convention yesterday (at Surfers Paradise) committed a future Labor Government to taking steps to ensure that decisions of the Brisbane City Council Appeal Board were carried out.

"The question was raised during discussion of the convention's industrial committee report.

"Recommendations by the Brisbane Tramways Union Secretary (Mr. W. McCormack) also were being discussed when the Appeal Board issue was raised."

Mr. Burns: When? You might as well read something from 1893.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Unless the honourable member for Lytton has two seats, he is in his incorrect seat now.

Mr. MILLER: I thought the honourable member would know when the convention was held at Surfers Paradise. It was on Friday, 9 February, 1968.

The newspaper report continues—

"Mr. McCormack gave instances of a number of cases in which appeals by members of his union against dismissal had been upheld.

"But the City Council's establishment and co-ordination committee had disregarded the decisions of the board, with the result that the men concerned were 'thrown out into the street.'"

I wonder whether the A.L.P. really thought there was a dictator in the City Hall. I do not think that men should be allowed to be thrown out into the street, and I should like some honourable member opposite to tell me that the Lord Mayor was right in throwing these men out into the street. The A.L.P. did not think it was right and asked the next A.L.P. Government to rectify this problem.

This is another article from "The Courier-Mail" in 1968—

"Brisbane City Council was ignoring legislation put into force by the State Government in December to cure 'ills' pointed out by the Bennett Royal Commission into the council's land and subdivision practices."

That is another instance of a man who has completely ignored the requests made by a State Government. Is he a dictator?

Now let me refer to "Truth" of 8 August 1971, and in that newspaper there appears the daddy of them all. The article is headed "Clem, This One Smells". I do not intend to read the article because I think all honourable members know what I am referring to, namely, the attempted sacking of a man because he had the audacity to hand out C.M.O. how-to-vote cards at a by-election. Is this the action of a man of conscience or of a dictator? He said to his employees in the Brisbane City Council, "You will hand out only Labor how-to-vote cards. If you hand out any others I will sack you."

Mr. Houston: That is his story.

Mr. MILLER: If the Leader of the Opposition knows another story I ask him to tell his next speaker to contradict the statement that appeared in "Truth". There is no doubt that we have a dictator in Brisbane.

Now that we have established the fact that we do have a dictator, we ask: what will happen in the future? We know about the resumption of buildings in Adelaide Street and the method of the resumptions and of tendering for them. We know the way in which one small parcel of eight perches was put up for tender first so that one insurance company only would tender for it. Nobody else wanted eight perches right in the middle of a block. After the insurance company had this block, it was found that no-one else could tender, and, consequently, when the council called for tenders, only one was submitted.

The latest episode in the history of our dictator is taking place at Gumdale. He has written to every person in the area, through a local association, to say that he will not resume the land in Gumdale. He has made it clear—and it is in plain language for anyone to read—that the city council will not resume any land at Gumdale. Because some of the people in the area have been frightened by being told that if they do not sell their land to the city council they will lose financially, they have already sold their land. Can anybody in this Chamber tell me that, when the council has one-third of the area, it will not resume the other two-thirds to carry out the very redevelopment that the Lord Mayor wishes to undertake in that area? He must resume that land, and he knows that very well. Yet he has seen fit to write to the people in the area, through a local association, pointing out that he will not resume any land.

The honourable member for Redlands made the point this morning that he had 18,000 signatures on a petition that he wished to present. I should like to know how many of those 18,000 signatures came from Gumdale.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BROMLEY (South Brisbane) (8.37 p.m.): Never have so many newspaper clippings been used by so many members in so many speeches on such an important matter. Such is the freedom and power of the Press, and so mote it be. The introduction of this amending legislation to change the structure of the Brisbane City Council is without doubt the most retrograde, undemocratic, unprincipled, radical, reactionary, miscalculated, unnecessary, irresponsible, irrational, unpalatable, deceitful, dictatorial, unpopular, unjust, unwanted, extraordinary, vicious, vindictive, cynical, malicious, ruthless, reckless and downright dishonest of any measure introduced by this incompetent apology for a Government since its election to office.

Mr. Hinze interjected.

Mr. BROMLEY: If you can understand those words you are doing very well, but from what I heard about you when you were overseas I do not think you know very much.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will address the Chair, and the honourable member for South Coast will cease interjecting.

Mr. BROMLEY: The Government, by its stupid decision to alter the structure of the Brisbane City Council, will ruin this fine capital city which has been built up under the Greater Brisbane concept, just as it has ruined many local authorities in country areas. I have been to all the shires and attended their meetings. I know their position from what I have been told and from what has been said publicly. They have been ruined. The Government has made them bankrupt, and it is trying to do the same

with Brisbane. It has already made bankrupt the people on the land, those who pay rates to the shires, and it is doing the same with the townships, which are slowly dying.

After those few words of praise I will deal with the principles involved, particularly the proposed changes relating to the election of the Lord Mayor. A major principle is at stake in this proposal. It denies the right of the electors to vote for the lord-mayoral candidate of their choice. This is of immense importance. It takes away the right of those who vote for the Brisbane Civic Party just as much as it takes away the right of those who vote for the Australian Labor Party. Further, if a voter lives in a ward which returns a B.C.P. candidate and the general election is won by the A.L.P., not only that voter but also the whole ward loses the democratic right to vote for the lord-mayoral candidate because, under this legislation, the Lord Mayor will be elected by the aldermen.

Conversely, if an elector resides in a ward that returns an A.L.P. alderman and the general election is won by the Brisbane Civic Party—I understand that is what they call themselves at present; they were the C.M.O., but that organisation was mutilated by Clem Jones—that ward loses its right to vote for the lord-mayoral candidate. Without taking into consideration any other changes, that in itself is justification for the statement by Mr. J. C. Slaughter, C.M.G., A.A.S.A., F.I.M.A., that these proposals are the most backward step in local government history. The Minister should not be foolish enough to think that the majority party of aldermen would elect a Lord Mayor who was a member of a different party, irrespective of that party and his qualifications. They would stick to party politics as they always have done.

Mr. McKechnie: They are entitled to elect whom they like.

Mr. BROMLEY: Of course they are, if this Bill goes through—and it probably will.

Mr. Slaughter wrote an excellent article in "The Courier-Mail" of 2 August 1972. Everything he said was accurate and born of experience. No-one could argue against it.

Mr. Porter: I could.

Mr. BROMLEY: Apart from the honourable member for Toowong, who was "done like a dinner" in his party executive recently. Its members have been trying to get rid of him for some years and they have succeeded at last. No matter how many Liberals leave this Parliament, the honourable member will never make the Cabinet, so he should not make too many interjections.

All honourable members, with the exception of the honourable member for Toowong—

Mr. Burns interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Lytton is a relatively new member in this Assembly. I do not want to take

the appropriate action under Standing Order 123A, but I shall be forced to if he continues to interject in that way.

Mr. BROMLEY: I hope, Mr. Lickiss, that you will allow me that 30 seconds.

Sir Gordon Chalk interjected.

Mr. BROMLEY: I advise the Treasurer to be very quiet. At least he is sober tonight.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will either continue his speech or resume his seat.

Mr. BROMLEY: I shall continue my speech, but I will not be interrupted by the Treasurer. He likes to be nasty and personal and dirty, and if he wants to cop it he will get it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will continue with his speech.

Mr. BROMLEY: I will continue with my speech, but I am not going to "cop" it from that bloke over there.

I propose to quote from "The Courier-Mail", but I shall be brief because there is a lot more that I want to say. Table A in the article prepared by Mr. Slaughter shows that, in Sydney, the area of control of the council is only 5 square miles. The number of local authority members is 20, and the population is 62,000. In Melbourne the area of control of the council is 12 square miles, the number of local authority members is 33, and the population is 75,000. In Adelaide the area of control is 6 square miles and there are 18 local authority members for a population of 16,000. In Perth the area of control is 24 square miles and there are 27 local authority members and 97,000 people. In Hobart the area of control is 30 square miles, and there are 12 local authority members and 52,000 people. In the City of Brisbane, a city that has been built up by a Labor council under Lord Mayor Clem Jones, there are 375 square miles, only 28 aldermen, and a population of 750,000. I think those figures cover the situation very well, and speak for themselves.

Incidentally, Mr. Slaughter was not, and never has been, a taxi-driver. If he had been, the Minister might have sought his opinion on this change. I do not believe that the Minister knew anything about this proposed change prior to the last election. He certainly did not know much about it after the election, and he knows even less about it now. I have already told him that he caught the wrong cab on this occasion and was really taken for a ride. To my way of thinking, his attitude to the people of Brisbane is, "Two to the Valley." The attitude of Brisbane people to him is that he should see a taxidermist. If he does not believe me, let him ask the people. The figures that I have quoted show that there is no comparison between Brisbane and any other capital city.

The Minister, in his ignorance and inexperience, said on a television programme that he was introducing this legislation, including the section relating to the election of the Lord Mayor, in order to keep Brisbane in line with other cities and shires in this State. I heard that, and it was reported in the Press, too.

Mr. McKechnie: You heard wrongly.

Mr. BROMLEY: I did not hear wrongly. I taped it, and I did not hear wrongly.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Bring the tape in.

Mr. BROMLEY: The Minister was challenged in the Press next day on it. I heard the Minister say it, but the Bill is exactly the opposite. I almost feel sorry for the Minister for Local Government, and the Treasurer for that matter, as they are both completely under the thumb of the Premier. As a matter of fact, I have with me a cutting from "The Courier-Mail" of 21 July 1972 which refers to the Minister's remarks on the television programme that I watched. As a result of that interview, a "Courier-Mail" reporter interviewed several people, including Mr. Keith Eason, a taxi-driver. This reminds me of what I said a while ago about whom the Minister should see. Mr. Eason said—

"But passengers always do ask taxi-drivers questions. I could fill a book about some of the things they tell me. Pregnant women telling you details of all their troubles—you name it."

If the Minister had been pregnant he would have been telling taxi-drivers of his troubles.

When one reads and hears things such as these, it is no wonder that the people of Brisbane and those throughout the State are suspicious of the bona fides of the Minister and the Government. The announcement of the legislation was delayed until after the recent State election.

Mr. McKechnie: Who announced it?

Mr. BROMLEY: You announced it, like a babe in the woods.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No, he didn't.

Mr. McKechnie: You check it and see.

Mr. BROMLEY: It was not announced before the election.

Mr. McKechnie: You see who announced it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will address the Chair.

Mr. BROMLEY: It was not announced before the election, Mr. Lickiss. They cannot try to get out of it that way. It is no wonder that the people, the Press and the other news media are suspicious of the Government's actions, and that the whole of the Queensland executive of the Country Party opposed the move. Of course, some

members of the Liberal Party opposed it, too, but one cannot say that all members of the Liberal Party in this Chamber are opposed to the Bill. We have heard a bit of "guff" from some of them today challenging the Opposition to name people. They will be named at the appropriate time, and the companies with which they are mixed up and about which we have some information will also be named.

Mr. Ahern: An idle threat.

Mr. BROMLEY: It is not an idle threat.

Mr. Miller: Well, name them.

Mr. BROMLEY: We will name them at the appropriate time.

Mr. Miller: You have no guts.

Mr. BROMLEY: Organisations such as Glenrobi and others. We will name them.

Some honourable members opposite are very much in favour of the Bill; make no mistake about that. On 8 September 1964 the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha made a speech in this Chamber in the Address-in-Reply debate. In it he denigrated the Brisbane City Council and voiced his hatred of the existing set-up. No doubt he did that for reasons of his own, and these reasons will be made known at the appropriate time. The honourable member ordered copies of his speech and distributed them in his electorate. I have here a copy dated 8 September 1964. Let me refresh the memories of those who may not remember, and perhaps even the memory of the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha.

The honourable member dealt with two subjects in his speech—planning, and the structure of the Brisbane City Council. The copy of the speech that he disseminated to his electors and to progress associations and other bodies—I intend to quote from it—said—

“. . . There is a need for local government to recognise the particular needs and desires of people living in a particular place and to allow people with local knowledge to govern that area, provided it is not wholly against the public interest so to do.”

Perhaps that could be classified as a suspicious statement—“. . . people with local knowledge to govern that area, provided it is not wholly against the public interest so to do”.

Later he said—

“I also believe that all of this can be best achieved by breaking Greater Brisbane up into a series of local authorities with common interests and common desires, and with local councils . . .”

Mr. Davis: Who said that?

Mr. BROMLEY: The honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha.

Mr. K. W. Hooper: He is entitled to that opinion.

Mr. BROMLEY: I am not denying that, but this is back in 1964. The Committee has already heard the honourable member for Redcliffe, a former mayor of that city, speak about the so-called “ginger” group in this Chamber, the Liberals who I believe instigated this scheme. Whether it was a horse deal with the Government, I do not know.

The honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha further said on that occasion—

“I also believe that all of this can be best achieved by breaking Greater Brisbane up into a series of local authorities with common interests and common desires, and with local councils which are sympathetic and understand the local problems rather than by concentrating a huge variety of problems in which those of specific areas are of little consequence because of the size of the over-all authority.

“What I am here advocating is the breaking up of Greater Brisbane to give more personal attention to the requirements of the people of this city.”

I ask you, Mr. Lickiss,—

Sir Gordon Chalk: Don't be so facetious.

Mr. BROMLEY: I will bet that the Treasurer could not spell that word.

What better personal attention could we give to the people of the metropolitan area—the people who require so much personal attention—than by allowing the present number of aldermen to remain as it is or increasing it, as it should be? I do not want to go into the Government's argument of, “We had not enough members of Parliament so we increased the number by four.” We opposed that proposal, by the way. What better way would there be to provide that personal attention?

In his speech, the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha referred to the various boards and then said—

“Referring to the former part of my speech where I dealt with the dangers involved in a system of unification, we can ill afford to ignore the wishes of the people of our State and our cities.”

(Time expired.)

Mr. R. E. MOORE (Windsor) (8.58 p.m.): I congratulate the Minister on his presentation of the Bill, and I commend him for his fortitude when he was being attacked early in the piece, at a time when the proposal was in its embryonic stage and when, in effect, no firm conclusions had been arrived at. By some unfortunate set of circumstances the Press had received a leak about the proposal. Of course the news media today do not want to get the news after it happens; they prefer to have it before it happens so that they can speculate, which makes for more interesting reading. The Minister presented the Bill well, and he is going to be an asset to Cabinet.

We have heard a lot of talk about Press statements and the straw poll conducted by the “Telegraph” and “The Courier-Mail”.

We all know the results of that poll. Actually there was no issue involved at all. When the amending liquor legislation was coming before Parliament, I received 300 letters objecting to Sunday drinking. On this proposal I have received only three letters, so if it is an issue, no-one has told me about it.

Some of my Trades Hall friends said to me, "We are going to do you in this poll. We are going to spend \$2,000 on newspapers." I imagine that to get the best value for their money they would have bought \$2,000 worth of "Telegraph" newspapers. They would not have bought copies of "The Courier-Mail" because they would have to pay 7c for each copy. I should like to know the number of poll entries that were cut from "Telegraph" newspapers. I am satisfied that they bought 40,000 newspapers to fake a poll. I am not going to say that there was not a small amount of faking on the other side. A.L.P. supporters were prepared to put in 40,000 entries to bring about a certain state of affairs. The Lord Mayor was appealing over the air, "Come on people. Rally, boys, rally." He said, "Put these forms in because I need them badly to protect my political hide." We saw the result, but it was not worth the paper it was written on. It does not indicate the feeling of the people. What we are attempting to bring about is a desirable state of affairs.

These people bought copies of the "Telegraph", and almost all the scrutineers were members of the Trades Hall or of the A.L.P. No members from this side of the Chamber were allowed to scrutinise on this occasion.

An Honourable Member: Do you think it was rigged?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I do not know whether it was rigged or not, and it is only on hearsay that I make these statements, but, from the leaks I have received in the past that have proved to be very accurate, I dare say that time will prove this one to be the same.

Before I get to the Bill itself, I should like to inform the Committee that I indicated to the Press that I intend to challenge the Leader of the Opposition, his Deputy Leader or any honourable member on that side of the Chamber who knows of any corrupt dealings in land or any other matter by any member on this side, to come forward now and say it. We have heard the challenge from Jack Egerton, from Alderman Burton and others but no-one has come forward. By way of interjection, the Leader of the Opposition said that he intends to raise this at the second-reading stage. He knows full well that he will not be able to raise it in the second reading, but there are still one or two members on that side who can raise this issue when they speak. Then Egerton said, "Oh well, the only reason it won't be raised is if the Government moves the gag."

How long are honourable members opposite going to wait till we move the gag? I dare say that in an hour or so, in view of the amount of tedious repetition that has gone on from the other side, the gag will be moved. They will then say, "We did not get the opportunity to name the rogues on the other side of the Chamber." They have the opportunity now, so if they find any rogues let them name them. I have thrown out the challenge. If honourable members opposite have anything on me, let them say so. One honourable member who has just spoken said to me, "I will get hold of some information from the Railway Department on you and I'll send you off next day." I said, "Send me, brother," but he could not find any information because there is none. That is how weak he is.

Mr. Tucker: We would not be able to name all the rogues on that side of the Chamber in 20 minutes.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I do not mind that interjection because I know it is said in fun, but if Labor Party members are worth their salt and have an ounce of intestinal fortitude, let them do it now. That is all I have to say on that matter and it is finished as far as I am concerned.

This is just a simple little Bill. All it does is reduce the number of aldermen to 21 and change the method of election of Lord Mayor. We have heard a lot of heated discussion about what was going to happen. The Leader of the Opposition spoke today but his speech turned out to be a damp squib. He did not have a thing to say worth listening to. As soon as he sat down I said to my colleagues who were sitting near me, "Well boys, don't worry: it is a fizzer. They have nothing." And they had nothing. The day and half the night have passed and we have had six hours of nothing. They have not made a case because they have no case to make.

Mr. Jensen: Did Porter write that speech?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: If the honourable member for Toowong had written my speech, it would be presented better than I am presenting it now.

Many statements have been made about the good job being done by the present Brisbane City Council. I ask: What good job has it done? Certainly I will give reasonable marks for its sewerage works.

Mr. Lee: It gets a subsidy of 40 per cent.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I realise that, and that job could not have been done if the previous C.M.O. council had not laid trunk mains so that all the Labor council had to do was hook up the reticulation. Be that as it may, this council has been a lucky one.

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

Mr. R. E. MOORE: The only reason why the council got into office was the Federal Government's Budget of 1961 and the credit

squeeze that followed. The Budget caused a certain amount of unemployment and proved to be unpopular. At that time a C.M.O. council was in office, and, even though it had no connection with the Liberal Party, it was classed as being anti-Labor. Because of the Federal issue it was booted out by the electors. The A.L.P. took over the reins of office with a good majority. As a result of the 1961 Budget, and probably because the Federal Government was returned with a majority of only one, Sir Robert Menzies (then Mr. Menzies) apologised to the people and said, "Perhaps Ian Wood was right. I can see now that the methods that we adopted were too severe. To overcome the unemployment I will inject money into the States for use in labour-intensive areas." It was his proposal that the various local authorities should obtain this revenue. Of course, the Brisbane City Council got most of it.

Because of the number of investors who had their fingers burned in speculative investment, the council's loans, being gilt-edged, were over-subscribed. Money flowed in both from the Federal Government and the over-subscription of the loan programme, which made the Lord Mayor seem like a world-beater. Under those circumstances, anyone in his position could not have failed to impress the public. I am not going to say he is not a smart fellow. He capitalised on the opportunities offered, and he has used the ratepayers' money, to the tune of almost \$100,000 a year, on his various public relations campaigns. He appears on television and tells the people what a good job he is doing. He says things like, "You can see, ladies and gentlemen, what a lovely city this is and how Brisbane is progressing. Look at our lovely freeways." They are paid for by the taxpayers, of course, and the ratepayers are the same people. Then he goes on to praise the work, and the people believe that he is responsible for it. All the world believes that he has constructed the freeways, when in fact they are the result of good work done by the present Government. The Council was fortunate and, simply because of the over-all, healthy economy maintained by a good Federal Government and State Government with a benevolent State Treasurer, it has gone from strength to strength.

As the honourable member for Yeronga interjected, from the State Government the council receives a subsidy of 40 per cent for sewerage works and 33 per cent for other works. As I have said, I give full marks to the Lord Mayor for the sewerage work that he has undertaken; but he has not done anything else. At the present time each day 40,000,000 gallons of raw sillage and sewage pour into the Brisbane river. As the Lord Mayor has sufficient money to buy every second building in town and can then afford to knock them down to erect monuments to himself we could well have a proper sewage treatment plant so that the effluent could be

discharged into the river only after treatment in settlement tanks, when it would have a suitable B.O.D. There has been absolutely wasteful expenditure. Indebtedness of the city council has risen out of all proportion.

There has been talk about a referendum being held on this measure. When the Lord Mayor scrapped the Brisbane tramway system there was a great hue and cry, but he said a referendum was not necessary. There is no better form of transport than a steel wheel on a steel track. The trams did not cause pollution and a paper could be read comfortably in this ideal form of transport. We always knew where the trams were going, but the Lord Mayor threw them out one day and the next day sent men with oxy torches to cut down the overhead wires. He said, "It is too late; it is a fait accompli; the wires are down." Many people said, "Clem gets the job done." It is true that he got that job done by doing away with a perfect tramway system. He even scrapped the trolley buses that were providing a good service and then said, "We will have a diesel bus service." But five minutes after that, this man, riding roughshod, with the aldermen having no say, sold the buses and leased them back. What a system to institute! The only area in which a hiring arrangement can be of any benefit is a profit-making concern when the hiring is deductible for taxation purposes.

There has been some talk about a strong-mayor system, but no-one has referred to the weak aldermanic system that flows from it. The Lord Mayor is very happy about having only 21 aldermen, and he has said so here, there and everywhere. The aldermen are very happy about having some control over the Lord Mayor, because he is not the only man in the council with brains. Every alderman can contribute something, but at present, with the Lord Mayor running top dog, the aldermen have no say. The proposal will bring an ounce of democracy back to the city council.

I dare say that if the Lord Mayor stands for a ward he will be elected and, if he is popular with his aldermen, he will be re-elected as Lord Mayor. He will then be a chairman among his equals, as he should be. When the Government parties meet in the joint party room, the Premier is not the Premier, but is a chairman among his equals. He may have his own views, but he obeys the majority decision. We are only asking the Lord Mayor to do what the Premier and Prime Minister do.

It has been said that this is vindictive legislation directed at the Lord Mayor, but that is not so; it has been Liberal policy for 20 years. I was at the Teachers' Building in Elizabeth Street when the suggestion was put forward 20 years ago. We hear about the Queensland system being unique. I agree that it is unique, with one City Hall for 650,000 people, without one civic centre. We have a city-State, with its presidential

system, with its backward-looking monumental buildings, with parks on the roof of every car park, with trees trying to grow in pots. But where are the royal palms that were to be returned to the City Hall? They have died. The council said, "We will return them," but, of course, that was impossible. "Never mind," it said, "We will plant a seed and everything will be all right."

According to "Hansard" in 1924, Mr. Stopford said, "I don't want to have a Mussolini in this State," Mr. A. E. Moore, who was in Opposition at the time, said, "You are going the right way to get one." And now in 1972 we have one.

There has been talk about a city-State. That is Labor's policy. Its policy is to abolish State Parliament and to have city-States or big local authorities, similar to those which operate in Great Britain, where the local authority controls child welfare, police, housing, health services, children's services—

Mr. Porter: Even education.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is true.

It has been openly stated in this Chamber that that is Labor's policy. When Labor introduced this system originally, it intended to have State milk runs, State bakers, State butchers' shops and State fisheries. They all went broke. What was left was a half-baked concept. It was a socialist idea, but, by the same token, I do not find much complaint in the amalgamation of the original local authorities into Greater Brisbane because it did away with conflicting councils with different ideas.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane) (9.17 p.m.): I am very proud, as the member for Brisbane, to enter the debate because my electorate is the centre of the administration of the Brisbane City Council.

I should like to speak on a couple of points raised by the honourable member for Windsor. He thanked the Minister for introducing this Bill. He should, because my information is that in the party room he seconded the motion, which was moved by his good friend, the honourable member for Merthyr.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: As I have said before, we have many informants from that side of the House who tell us a good deal about what is going on.

The honourable member for Windsor—in jest, I imagine—made a ridiculous remark about the A.L.P. buying a number of copies of the Brisbane "Telegraph".

Mr. Ahern: Did he say "Telegraph"?

Mr. DAVIS: Yes, and he said something about the sum of money. I saw the honourable member for Merthyr and his friend the honourable member for Windsor at Eagle Farm on Exhibition Wednesday picking them up off the ground.

Mr. LANE: I rise to a point of order. I take exception to that remark. It is not true, and I ask the honourable member to withdraw it without qualification.

Mr. DAVIS: I withdraw it. It was not at Eagle Farm; it was at the Exhibition.

Mr. LANE: I rise to a point of order. Once again I find the honourable member's remark offensive and ask that he withdraw it without qualification.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Brisbane will accept the denial of the honourable member for Merthyr.

Mr. DAVIS: Fair enough. I will accept his denial. He must be too lousy to—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The point will not be debated.

Mr. DAVIS: The honourable member for Windsor does not seem to be proud of the City Square. I am very proud of it. It is one of the most glamorous squares in Australia.

Mr. Lane interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: I would like the honourable member to listen to some of these remarks.

I am proud to have been associated with the provision of the City Square right from the outset. It was a wonderful project, undertaken by a wonderful Lord Mayor.

The honourable member for Windsor seemed to be attacking Clem Jones and the Labor council over the removal of the trams. What was the recommendation of the Wilbur Smith Report, which was obtained by the Government? It was to remove the trams. What about putting things in their true perspective? Removal of the trams was a recommendation of the Wilbur Smith Report, which was obtained by the Government. As usual, the council is left like a shag on a rock because of the attitude of the Government.

When it comes to making charges, I say to honourable members opposite, "Don't be too impatient. The Bill has a long way to go yet. It has to pass through the second-reading stage. A couple of names mentioned here and there are just a little appetiser till the main course comes. So just wait."

It was amusing to listen to the Minister talking about appointing another three stooges to form a redistribution commission for council wards, when only seven months ago—

Mr. McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. On behalf of the three men, who are as yet unknown, I ask the honourable member to withdraw the insult that he has just offered.

Mr. Sherrington: How can you insult somebody who is unknown? Don't be ridiculous.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIS: Let it not be forgotten that my electorate was the key electorate in that redistribution. It took in the two Labor areas of South Brisbane and Brisbane. That redistribution came out seven months ago, and what has been done since? It is said that under the Bill there will be only 21 wards, 11 on the north side of the city and 10 on the south side. Seven months ago the redistribution commission cut into two Labor areas, but now the idea has been changed and the river, which is a natural boundary, is to divide the wards on the north and south sides of the city. How "fair dinkum" can you get? As a matter of fact, I cannot get into one section of my electorate at Kangaroo Point without going through the electorate of Merthyr.

Mr. Lane interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Merthyr that persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr. DAVIS: Because of the submissions of the honourable member for Merthyr to the redistribution commission, a section of the electorate from Ann Street was taken off. Let us not hear what the honourable member for Merthyr would do about it. The commissioners will have to deal with the two defined areas, one on each side of the river.

Possibly the Government will again appoint the same three stooges who played into the hands of the Government in the last redistribution.

Mr. McKechnie: When the redistribution was announced, the A.L.P. welcomed it, believing they could win the election on the new boundaries.

Mr. DAVIS: I say to the Minister that the rumours going round at present are that the ward boundaries are already drawn. I am quite sure that the Minister would be able to tell the Committee the names and boundaries of the wards now. The Minister will put them up to the three stooges. They will put their imprimatur on them, and away we go again. And they say it is to be a fair and just redistribution!

I say to the Minister: Will you make the proceedings of this redistribution commission public so that political parties and other interested people—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust that the honourable member will direct his questions to the Minister through the Chair.

Mr. DAVIS: I ask the Minister if he will make these hearings public.

Mr. Porter: Why should he?

Mr. DAVIS: Why shouldn't he? When it comes to anything of any moment, the great superdemocrat from Toowong never comes forward with anything democratic. This should be a public hearing, and I ask the Minister if he will be "in it". Will he

make this a public hearing? Of course he will not. There will be exactly the same sort of subterfuge as was lined up for the last redistribution.

Mr. McKechnie: Will you give evidence?

Mr. DAVIS: I will, if it is made public. It will have to be public. There will be the usual Country-Liberal, Tory-type of secrecy and stealth. We know what the Government is like.

I am not interested in the proposed Bill solely as a parliamentarian. I am also a ratepayer of this city—and I am quite happy about that.

Sir Gordon Chalk interjected.

Mr. DAVIS: You are not, Chalk, so what are you talking about?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will refer to other members in the correct way.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Don't you live in your electorate?

Mr. DAVIS: Of course I do. I do not believe that the Minister for Local Government is qualified to introduce the Bill. To be perfectly truthful, I think he would need a Refidex to find Queen Street.

I also resent the Minister's statement that aldermen do less work than State parliamentarians. Five aldermen live in my new electorate, and I know them quite well. The Minister's statement is another furphy. How would he know what work an alderman does? He would not have a clue. It would be a straight-out guess on his part, unless he had the Special Branch making a check with one bundy clock on an alderman and another on a member of the State House.

Mr. Lane interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVIS: The Minister might have members of the Special Branch checking on an alderman to see how much work he did. If he did, he would give them a time card so that they could punch the bundy clock each day. We know how the Government works.

The Opposition is aware of the Minister's taxi-driver caper, too. I was a taxi-driver years ago, and if someone as gullible as the Minister got into my cab I would tell him anything.

Mr. Lane: You wouldn't get a licence.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Merthyr under the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. DAVIS: If anyone as gullible as the Minister asked me questions, I would see that he got the answers he was looking for. Knowing the Minister for Local Government as I do, I can guarantee that he would not get out of his imported chauffeur-driven limousine to travel in taxis very often.

I think it should be pointed out that there are many reasons for the introduction of the Bill. Let us get the true reasons. The first reason was that Clem Jones and a number of Labor aldermen had the audacity to contest seats at the recent State election—and that was the principal reason. The honourable member for Yeronga spent more than \$20,000 in defeating Clem Jones. He has never denied it, and I challenge him now to deny it. The honourable member for Salisbury mentioned that point in this Chamber recently. The honourable member did not take a point of order; he accepted it.

Let me turn now to some of the other seats in which aldermen stood against State members. The honourable member for Mansfield, Mr. Kaus, lost a lot of weight when Alderman Lynch led him on the primary vote. So did the Minister for Transport in the seat of Nundah when Alderman Brusasco ran him close there. The pattern is similar right through.

Over the years, Government members have been worried about aldermen having ward boundaries coinciding with those of the State seats. In the recent redistribution, as I have mentioned before, MacGregor was taken out of the Mt. Gravatt electorate to save the honourable member for Mansfield. In the electorates of Aspley, Ashgrove, Chatsworth, Greenslopes, Kurilpa, Nundah and Wavell the wards were held by Labor aldermen. The Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services should not grin so much, because he was a bit sick when a young fellow of 21, standing for the first time, ran him to a close decision in Sherwood. That is what Government members are so concerned about. They do not like the present organisation. They want to unload them irrespective of whether they are C.M.O. or A.L.P., because members of both parties are a threat.

Somebody is asking what this has to do with the Bill. Naturally it has a lot to do with the Bill. It is the reason why the Government wants to introduce it. I hope that the honourable member for Mansfield will refute some of the statements that have been made today.

Reference has been made to the great glories of some other councils. The honourable member for Toowong, or some other of the ginger group, spoke about the Lord Mayor of Melbourne. He does the job voluntarily—with an allowance of about \$25,000 a year! That is not real bad chicken-feed. I would not mind doing it myself for an allowance of \$25,000 a year. I have a relative living on the outskirts of Melbourne. There was no sealed road or kerbing outside his residence and the local authority said to him, "We are going to kerb and channel the road. It will cost you \$700. If you do not have the money we will lend it to you at 6 per cent."

I should like to place on record some of the differences between the Brisbane City Council administration and the local authority

experience of the Minister for Local Government. The difference between the Greater Brisbane area and the Waggamba Shire is illustrated by the following figures:—

	Brisbane	Waggamba
Area (square miles) ..	375	5,340
Population	706,000	2,930
Dwellings	201,319	898
Roads sealed (miles) ..	2,013	167
Premises with sewerage ..	85 per cent.	Nil

Honourable members can see the great difference between those two local authorities.

Mr. McKechnie: That is childish.

Mr. DAVIS: It is not childish; it is a fact. The Minister had 10 years' experience in local authority affairs and then he gets this job as Minister for Local Government. Now he proposes to reconstruct our city. I am interested as a ratepayer of the Brisbane City Council, not merely as a member of Parliament in this State Legislature.

What is being done is spleen, particularly on the part of the Deputy Premier, firstly because the Lord Mayor had the audacity to contest the seat against his friend in Yeronga, secondly because some aldermen had the cheek to run against some of his Liberal friends, and thirdly because he was denied the Premiership as a result of the huge A.L.P. vote in the Brisbane central area.

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (9.34 p.m.): This debate—if one could refer to some of the utterances in the Chamber today as debate—has been in progress for 7½ hours, during which time 22 speakers have exercised their right to speak in support of the legislation as proposed by the Government, to attempt to criticise it, or to try to drag a red herring across the trail concerning issues which are of vital importance to the City of Brisbane.

Over the past two or three hours we have heard what one might describe as tedious repetition of the charge that the Government is bringing down this legislation for the specific purpose of removing the present Lord Mayor from the high office that he holds in this city. Nothing could be further from the truth. If we analyse the legislation as it has been presented, we will find that there is equal opportunity—in fact, I believe there is greater opportunity—for the Lord Mayor to continue in that office.

We have also heard during this debate a number of charges against the Government. We have read in the Press recently the statement by Mr. Egerton and others that this debate would present an opportunity for the Opposition to cast aspersions on members of the Liberal Party because of their land dealings.

Mr. Baldwin: That was a red herring.

Sir GORDON CHALK: It was a red herring, and I now have an admission that it was.

First of all, being fully confident of what might occur and because, as the Bill was first drawn up, it would not have given an opportunity for such an issue to be raised, this morning we deliberately amended it so that the Opposition could discuss other matters of importance. The Opposition first of all made a determined effort to prevent that because they had no charges to lay against the Government.

Having been defeated on that particular issue, Opposition members have had seven hours till now to make any charges or utterances against members of the Liberal Party, or, for that matter, of the Government parties. What have we heard? Only the insinuation cast by the honourable member for Townsville North when he named Mr. Lee and Mr. Lickiss. As both those gentlemen are members of my political party, let me make the position quite clear. I have had discussions with both of them, and I can say that Mr. Lee's last land dealings were back in 1963, and virtually the same situation applies in relation to Mr. Lickiss.

On the other hand, let me ask this question: What is the position in regard to land dealings by the Lord Mayor? Is anyone in the Opposition prepared to come forward and give us some indication of the Lord Mayor's land dealings? We have here a statement by the Lord Mayor himself, made in 1962. It is a coincidence that today "The Courier-Mail" is upholding the virtues of this gentleman, because it was "The Courier-Mail" that undertook the research in relation to the Lord Mayor in 1962. It was also "The Courier-Mail" that provided much of the information that was published in that year, when the Lord Mayor himself was amongst the biggest land dealers in this State. The Lord Mayor's utterances were published in the Press. This report reads—

"The Lord Mayor today said he had no secrets on his property holdings. They have always been and still are available for scrutiny."

I do not intend to cast any aspersions on the Lord Mayor in relation to those dealings. Those are his entitlements and his rights. Equally, however, they are the entitlements and the rights of any member of Parliament, whether he sits on this or the other side of the Chamber. If I wished to, I could refer to one or two land dealings by the honourable member for Lytton. However, I do not propose to do so. What I want to do is make it quite clear that if it is right and proper for Mr. Egerton or anyone else to make charges against members of the Liberal Party, it is equally right that similar allegations should be made against certain members of the Labor Party.

Over recent weeks the Lord Mayor has shown very keen interest in local government. Up till then he had not shown any interest at all in local authorities in Queensland except the Brisbane City Council. I do not blame him for that; that is his business.

But suddenly, because of circumstances, the Lord Mayor indicates that he will attend the Local Government Association conference and discuss certain issues. On previous occasions he attended this conference only to welcome delegates and arranged for someone else to represent the City of Brisbane. However, on this occasion, because of recent occurrences, he has set out to gain this type of publicity.

Having referred to those points, I shall now deal with the Bill. Over recent months we have heard all sorts of versions of the Government's intentions and the reasons for them. The Press and the television channels have given a good deal of publicity to the proposals contained in this measure. Most of the material has been prepared by ghost writers with no real knowledge of the Government's decision on this matter. The provisions of the Bill coincide entirely with what the Government parties have said over recent weeks. It is a simple Bill, and it is introduced only for the purpose of allowing the elected aldermanic representatives on the Brisbane City Council to elect their leader.

The other two main features of the Bill relate to the redistribution of boundaries and to the election ultimately of 21 aldermen in the City of Brisbane.

Mr. Houston: Why 21?

Sir GORDON CHALK: The number is a simple one. It is so simple that the Leader of the Opposition cannot work it out. If he considers the population of Brisbane and its voting strength, he will find the basis on which the number was arrived at.

There is one other issue to which the Opposition has not referred, even though it was explained quite clearly this morning by the Minister. The Bill also proposes to tidy up superannuation benefits payable to aldermen.

The news media set out to create confusion in the minds of the people. I have spent 26 years in politics and I know the basis on which the news media work. I do not deny them the right to work in that way. They have attempted during the period that this issue has been under discussion to create hysteria among the people with the idea of driving them to one conclusion. It is terribly interesting to look back five years at what "The Courier-Mail" in particular was saying about the Lord Mayor and the Bennett Report that was produced in Parliament following an extensive inquiry. At present the television medium is looking for stars, and there is no greater TV star than the Lord Mayor. I have heard him repeatedly go before the people of Queensland in an attempt to convince them that this is something awful, something bad.

Mr. Hinze: Who has been paying for this?

Sir GORDON CHALK: The Brisbane City Council, the ratepayers and you and I. That is the position exactly.

The news media and the TV stations set out to promote the Lord Mayor, and not because of any love for him. Let there be no mistake about that. They did not support him because they loved him; they did so because they believed there was dissention and because they believed they could get an uprising among the people to carry out their policy, which they very much misjudged at the time this proposal was first discussed.

There is no doubt in my mind that "The Courier-Mail", after deciding on this policy, woke up too late. Consequently, it had to proceed with an attempt to change the situation. We then had a somewhat unprecedented attempt to whip up a decision by what was described as a voluntary poll. I do not think anyone in Queensland had any delusions about it. What did it do? Firstly, it sold more and more papers and many of them were taken by the A.L.P. to a certain room where the voting slips could be cut out in order to swell the number of votes. In this city of some 600,000 persons the result was a vote cast by some 50,000. Do honourable members believe, in all sincerity, that that is a true indication of the views and wishes of the people?

As Leader of the Liberal Party I point out that till today I have received 26 letters of protest about this legislation, as against 416 letters of protest against daylight saving.

Mr. Marginson: Did you reply to them?

Sir GORDON CHALK: I have replied to every letter.

My point is that it is an indication that this is not the issue that the Press would have us believe. All that is to happen under this legislation is that the number of aldermen is to be reduced. That is being done in an effort to protect the people against the misuse of power by the Lord Mayor, irrespective of who he may be. It is not a matter of a Bill aimed at Jones in particular. Let us face the fact. The Bill will apply whether there is a Jones or no Jones.

Anyone who is fair will not deny that in recent years there has been a tendency for more and more power to be taken by the Lord Mayor.

Mr. Houston: You gave it to him.

Sir GORDON CHALK: It is true that we gave it to him.

Mr. Houston: Under Chapter 2.

Sir GORDON CHALK: Yes, under Chapter 2, because I believe it is the responsibility of an elected council to make its regulations and by-laws, and I do not believe that the Government should interfere in this issue. Under Chapter 2 we gave the Lord Mayor the authority that the elected council asked us to place in his hands. We did not stop it, but we have come to the conclusion that it is the responsibility of the council itself to stop it. No-one can convince me tonight that the council can stop the Lord

Mayor from doing certain things. We all know the circumstances relating to Mr. McAulay and Mr. Hawes. The Lord Mayor and Mr. Hawes have not spoken to each other for the past 18 months. Mr. McAulay was locked out of his office. This is the type of administration at the head of affairs in the council. The Lord Mayor has not accepted the resignation of the honourable member for Stafford as chairman of the Transport Committee, which was put in a month ago.

Mr. Houston interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has had his opportunity to make a contribution to this debate, and he will have a further opportunity at a later stage in the progress of this Bill. I hope he will afford the Treasurer the right to make his speech.

Mr. Houston: I ask the Treasurer to speak up. I cannot hear him.

Sir GORDON CHALK: I am determined to speak over the interjections of some of the honourable member's friends on that side of the Chamber.

Many other honourable members and I have had stacks of complaints about the rights of individuals being trampled to the ground by the growing autocracy in the Brisbane City Council. Pressures have been applied to individuals. All honourable members know the findings in the Bennett Report. They were referred to tonight by the honourable member for Windsor, and time does not permit my repeating them in full. It was stated clearly by Mr. Bennett, after an extensive inquiry, that the Lord Mayor was in fact running this city.

Reference has been made to some of the Lord Mayor's achievements. I regard him as a shrewd businessman. He has certain ability and certain capability. On the other hand, the development of this city has not been the sole achievement of the Lord Mayor. It has been brought about generally because of the policy of this Government.

Reference was made to sewerage. In the past 10 years, this Government has provided \$16,000,000 to the Brisbane City Council, completely free, for the extension of sewerage. This Government has provided over \$50,000,000 for roadwork in the City of Brisbane. We have provided \$14,000,000 in the past 12 months for the construction of freeways within the city. We are providing \$22,000,000 for the acquisition of properties for the new freeway under consideration. That is what has been done by this Government, but I do not deny the Lord Mayor the right to associate himself with them.

On the other hand, the Lord Mayor has walked roughshod over many people. Problems have arisen in relation to the Anzac Square proposal, his lend-lease proposal at undisclosed interest charges, the purchase of Lennons Hotel, in which this Government had to save him and the good name of

Queensland, the property resumptions of the council in the areas under his control, and, in the past 12 months, the cases in which the council's cheques were held up for periods of from one to three months, because of lack of funds.

(Time expired.)

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

“That the question be now put.”

The CHAIRMAN: The question is—

Mr. Marginson interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Wolston that while I am on my feet he must not interject.

Mr. Hinze interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That applies to the honourable member for South Coast, too.

Question—That the question be now put (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's motion)—put; and the Committee divided—

In division—

Honourable Members interjecting—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already indicated that I will take action after the division if any member continues to behave in a disorderly manner.

AYES, 41

Ahern	Kaus
Alison	Knox
Armstrong	Lee
Bird	Low
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie
Camm	Miller
Campbell	Moore, R. E.
Chalk	Müller
Chinchen	Murray
Cory	Neal
Crawford	Porter
Edwards	Rae
Frawley	Row
Gunn	Scott-Young
Hartwig	Small
Herbert	Sullivan
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tomkins
Hewitt, W. D.	Wharton
Hinze	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hodges	Lane
Hooper, K. W.	Newbery

NOES, 33

Aiken	Jordan
Baldwin	Leese
Blake	Marginson
Bousen	Melloy
Bromley	Newton
Burns	O'Donnell
D'Arcy	Sherrington
Davis	Tucker
Dean	Wallis-Smith
Hanlon	Wood, B.
Hanson	Wood, P.
Harris	Wright
Harvey	Yewdale
Hooper, K. J.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Houston	Jones, N. F.
Inch	Moore, F. P.
Jensen	
Jones, R.	

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion (Mr. McKechnie) be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

Ahern	Kaus
Alison	Knox
Armstrong	Lee
Bird	Low
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie
Camm	Miller
Campbell	Moore, R. E.
Chalk	Müller
Chinchen	Murray
Cory	Neal
Crawford	Porter
Edwards	Rae
Frawley	Row
Gunn	Scott-Young
Hartwig	Small
Herbert	Sullivan
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tomkins
Hewitt, W. D.	Wharton
Hinze	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hodges	Lane
Hooper, K. W.	Newbery

NOES, 33

Aiken	Jones, R.
Baldwin	Jordan
Blake	Leese
Bousen	Marginson
Bromley	Melloy
Burns	Newton
D'Arcy	O'Donnell
Davis	Sherrington
Dean	Tucker
Hanlon	Wallis-Smith
Hanson	Wood, B.
Harris	Wood, P.
Harvey	Wright
Hooper, K. J.	Yewdale
Houston	<i>Tellers:</i>
Inch	Jones, N. F.
Jensen	Moore, F. P.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

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

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity): I move—

“That the second reading of the Bill be made an order of the day for tomorrow.”

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42

Ahern	Lee
Alison	Lickiss
Armstrong	Low
Bird	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	Miller
Camm	Moore, R. E.
Campbell	Müller
Chalk	Murray
Chinchen	Neal
Crawford	Newbery
Edwards	Porter
Frawley	Rae
Gunn	Row
Hartwig	Scott-Young
Herbert	Small
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Sullivan
Hewitt, W. D.	Tomkins
Hinze	Wharton
Hodges	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. W.	Cory
Knox	Kaus
Lane	

NOES, 32

Aiken	Jones, R.
Baldwin	Jordan
Blake	Leese
Bousen	Marginson
Bromley	Melloy
Burns	Moore, F. P.
D'Arcy	Newton
Dean	Sherrington
Hanlon	Tucker
Hanson	Wallis-Smith
Harris	Wood, P.
Harvey	Wright
Hooper, K. J.	Yewdale
Houston	
Inch	<i>Tellers:</i>
Jensen	Davis
Jones, N. F.	Wood, B.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.
