

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 1972

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with the Trades Hall boss, Jack Egerton, who has been named "The Red Ox", and who has made scurrilous innuendoes in the Brisbane Press relating to Liberal Party members and land subdivisions.

I wish to inform this House that the last subdivision land purchased by me was in 1963, prior to my entry into Parliament in June 1964. I shall list, for the information of the House, my activities in this field. Between 1960 and 1963 my family company subdivided land at Boondall, Zillmere, Aspley and Mt. Gravatt. The last subdivision of this land was completed in 1965, and sold.

In 1962 I successfully fought the Jones council in the court over what the judge described as illegal demands beyond the council's power of subdivision. I had no more intention of being "done" by Clem Jones in 1962 than I had of being "done" by him in the 1972 State election in Yeronga.

TUESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 1972

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

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

NOMINATION OF MR. W. D. HEWITT

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to inform the House that the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Lickiss, is at present overseas and will be attending the 18th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Malawi as the Queensland delegate. I nominate Mr. W. D. Hewitt, Temporary Chairman, to act in the office of Chairman of Committees during the absence of Mr. Lickiss.

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Forestry Act 1959-1971.

Orders in Council under—

Water Act 1926-1968.

Forestry Act 1959-1971.

Regulation under the Apprenticeship Act 1964-1971.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LEE (Yeronga) (11.4 a.m.), by leave: On Thursday night last, during one of my few absences from the Chamber, the honourable member for Townsville West mentioned my name in connection with land subdivisions. That in itself does not worry me, as I do not regard the business of subdividing as a crime in the community. Reputable people are engaged in this pursuit, even members on the other side of the House. However, I am making this statement because of the very close association of the honourable member for Townsville West

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

M.C. DEVELOPMENT COMPANY PTY. LTD.
AND MANHATTAN HOTEL PTY. LTD.

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

What are the names of the directors and shareholders of M.C. Development Co. Pty. Ltd. and Manhattan Hotel Pty. Ltd.?

Answer:—

"In relation to M.C. Development Company Pty. Ltd., the records filed in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs indicate that—(a) The directors are:—Frank Scarborough, High Street, Lutwyche; and Edward Francis Young, 78 Adelaide Street, Clayfield. (b) The shareholders are:—Manhattan Hotel Pty. Ltd., Stanley Street, South Brisbane (51 subscriber shares); and John D. smond Currie, 25 Bede Street, Balmoral Heights (51 subscriber shares). In relation to Manhattan Hotel Pty. Ltd. records filed in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs indicate that—(a) The directors are—Frank Scarborough, 26 High Street, Lutwyche; and Daniel Sarsfield O'Brien, 97 McLennan Street, Woolloowin. (b) The shareholders are:—Patrick Joseph Mullins, 43 Raby Street, Coorparoo (1 ordinary share); Thelma Elizabeth Kelly, 34 Cecil Street, Bardon (1 ordinary share); Frank Scarborough, 26 High Street, Lutwyche (304,000 ordinary shares); and Daniel Sarsfield O'Brien, 97 McLennan Street, Woolloowin (7,000 ordinary shares)."

PRIVATE COACHING COLLEGES

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

(1) Is he aware that various people in various places are conducting what they are pleased to call "coaching colleges"

and advertising the chimerical advantages of these institutions to inveigle pupils and students into taking lessons at large fees from the self-appointed "principals"?

(2) If so, how many of these "coaching colleges" are operating and is any check made to guarantee the competence of the "principals" and to assess the value of or damage done by these colleges?

(3) Is any standard of accommodation and teaching facilities required by his Department and, if so, what are the details?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "While I am aware that 'coaching colleges' exist in various places, the number of these is unknown to me. They are not 'approved secondary schools' in that they do not offer the full range of courses and educational experiences required of approved schools. Any student up to and including the age of 15 is not considered as complying with the compulsory attendance clauses of the Education Act if he attends such a college. Approved schools must meet acceptable standards in respect of grounds and accommodation, teaching equipment and facilities, range of courses offered as well as the academic and professional qualifications, teaching ability and experience of the staff. However, since coaching colleges do not come under my authority, but are operated as independent enterprises, they are not subject to inspection by my Department."

INCREASED SUBSIDY TO Q.A.T.B. CENTRES

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

As it was stated during his recent election policy speech that subsidies to Q.A.T.B. branches would be increased from 50 cents to 75 cents in the dollar, when will the increased subsidy commence and will it be retrospective to the commencement of the 1972-73 financial year?

Answer:—

"Details will be disclosed when the Budget is introduced."

BABY TALCUM POWDER AND COT DEATHS

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the news item on August 30 that an epidemic of 21 baby cot deaths in France is suspected to have been caused by the use of a baby talcum powder containing a certain well-known antiseptic ingredient?

(2) Will he have investigations made in order to ascertain whether numerous unexplained and seemingly unsolvable baby cot deaths here could be attributed to a similar cause?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Pathologists from the State Laboratory of Microbiology and Pathology carry out an investigation of every cot death in the metropolitan area. Their investigations indicate that hexachlorophene, the substance referred to in the article, has not been involved in any of these deaths."

SMOKE NUISANCE, ROTHMELL HAIG MINE AND BOX FLAT MINE, IPSWICH

Mrs. Jordan, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Mines,—

(1) Relative to my recent inquiry to him regarding complaints from and the great concern of residents in the vicinity of the abandoned Rothmell Haig Mine, off Francis Street, North Ipswich, because of smoke constantly issuing from the mine and from burning slag heaps, has he yet made any investigations into this matter?

(2) In view of the recent tragic explosion at the Box Flat Mine and also as smoke greatly affects several asthma and bronchitis sufferers who live in the area, will he take urgent action to ascertain if any danger exists and, if so, will he take steps to alleviate such danger and/or health hazard?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. Inspections and investigations have been made by Inspectors of Coal Mines."

(2) "All known positions of shaft entrances have been examined and found sealed and safe. The Inspectorate is not aware of any dangerous condition relative to subsidence or open shafts in the area. It is believed the existing fires are in dumps of seam discard and have been caused and aggravated by bush fires and dumping by residents of rubbish, which includes flammable materials, on the coal stone heaps. If it is considered that the smoke is a health hazard, the matter should be taken up with the local authority, which will have power to deal with the situation under its by-laws."

SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE BOATS

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

(1) Why are hire-boats not required to carry the same amount of safety equipment as privately-owned boats?

(2) Will he give a detailed list of the safety equipment required to be carried by hire-boats and privately-owned boats respectively?

(3) Are all boats, irrespective of size, required to carry safety equipment?

Answers:—

(1) "Hire boats are regularly inspected and are provided with some equipment, together with internal fixed buoyancy. Also hire boats operate in restricted limits. It was considered more important to prescribe equipment for private vessels, which is the area in which most mishaps were occurring, before amending the regulations in respect of hire boats. Amendments to the relevant Regulations are now being prepared which will prescribe exactly the same equipment for hire boats as for private boats in the same length group."

(2) "Hire boats are required to carry an anchor and line, a pair of oars, a bailer, a fire extinguisher or other medium for quenching fire, and fixed internal buoyancy. A private boat of equivalent length is required to carry an anchor and line, a pair of oars or paddles not less than four feet in length, two buckets instead of the bailer, and is not required to be fitted with internal buoyancy, except all open boats coming into service after January 1, 1973, will be required to be so fitted. The private boat is also required to carry a life jacket or buoyancy vest for each person, a waterproof torch or lamp, and a signalling mirror. These additional items will be prescribed for hire boats in the amendments now being prepared."

(3) "Yes, except that the regulations prescribe that the Marine Board may exempt any pleasure boat or class of pleasure boat from compliance with any of the requirements where in the opinion of the board, such requirements are unreasonable or impracticable. Several applications for exemption have been received and dealt with by the board."

AUSTRALIAN WOOD MINES PTY. LTD.

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

(1) Is a firm named Australian Wood Mines Pty. Ltd. established in Queensland? If so, is it a wholly-owned Australian industry or does it represent overseas interest?

(2) If the company is registered in this or any other State, who are the owners and directors?

Answers:—

(1) "Australian Wood Mines Pty. Limited was incorporated in Queensland on November 24, 1970. Records filed in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs indicate the following shareholding:—Geoffrey William Norreys Fynes-Clinton, 14 Florence Street, Ascot (One Subscriber's Share); Neville John MacPherson, 16 Aragon Street, Indooroopilly (One Subscriber's Share); and Emil Herbert Peter Abeles, 45 Macquarie Street, Sydney (One Ordinary Share)."

(2) "Documents filed in the office do not indicate if the company is registered in any other State. The directors are—Raymond George Hamilton, Suite 134, Macquarie Chambers, 183 Macquarie Street, Sydney, N.S.W.; and Emil Herbert Peter Abeles, 45 Macquarie Street, Sydney, N.S.W."

WOOD-CHIP INDUSTRY, CAIRNS AREA

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

Is a wood-chip industry being established in the Cairns region? If so, (a) what is the name of the firm involved, (b) have any feasibility studies been undertaken, (c) how far has the scheme advanced and (d) what damage will this industry do to the rain forests in the area?

Answer:—

(a to d) "I assume that the Honourable Member is referring to the investigation into the feasibility of establishing a wood-chip industry based on Cairns which is being carried out by Australian Wood Resources Pty. Ltd. For more specific details on this project I would suggest the Honourable Member might direct his Question to my colleague, the Minister for Lands, who is responsible for matters concerning the Forestry Department."

DEFAULTS IN REPAYMENT OF GOVERNMENT-GUARANTEED LOANS

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

(1) With regard to loans or advances from the Commonwealth Development Bank or other banks to clients and/or companies guaranteed by the Queensland Government, how many have either been not honoured or not repaid in full in the time given for repayments?

(2) If any advances have not been met in the specified time, how many firms have failed to meet their commitments and for what amounts, what are the names of the firms involved and what are the reasons for their failure to meet their repayments?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "Three industries have failed to meet their commitments in respect of Government Guarantees issued on their behalf under the provisions of the *Industrial Development Act 1963-1970*. No loss was sustained on the realisation of the assets of one of these companies—Collingwood Engineering Pty. Ltd. A loss of \$4,910 was incurred following the abandonment by Mrs. K. Pawlowska of her crocodile farming project at Karumba. The venture ceased operations mainly due to a sequence of climatic and managerial setbacks. The third case was the closure

of a sawmill at Cunnamulla operated by H. R. and H. F. Grey. The anticipated demand for timber from this small country sawmill did not eventuate. Realisation of the assets of the partnership is proceeding and it is anticipated that the loss, if any, to the Crown will be small indeed."

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMMES AND
RECURRENT EXPENDITURE, UNIVER-
SITIES AND COLLEGES OF ADVANCED
EDUCATION

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

(1) With reference to capital works programmes for universities and colleges of advanced education for the 1973-75 triennium, what are the full details of approved projects for each university and college and what is the cost of each project?

(2) What are the details of capital works projects submitted for the triennium by universities and colleges for which finance will not be available?

(3) What are the details of Commonwealth grants to each of the universities and colleges for recurrent expenditure for each year of the triennium?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "The approved capital programs in total and in detail as to projects together with annual recurrent programs for each University and College of Advanced Education for the 1973-75 triennium will be included in Commonwealth legislation yet to be introduced into the Federal Parliament. It would be improper for me to speculate as to the contents of this forthcoming Commonwealth legislation. However, the sums recommended by the two Commissions in full detail as to college, year and project are included in the reports of the two Commissions which are available in the Parliamentary Library."

COMPENSATION FOR INJURIES, MR. R. E.
PLANT

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

(1) In relation to certain injuries caused to Ronald Edward Plant of Toowoomba, a union organiser for the Federated Liquor Trades Union, as a result of an incident on September 2, 1971, why has he failed to reply to the union solicitors' letters dated April 20, 1972, other than by a formal acknowledgment?

(2) Why was a clear undertaking to pay the claim, which was given to the union secretary and its solicitors by a senior officer of the S.G.I.O., Brisbane, not fulfilled?

(3) Why has a decision on this matter not been given despite the lapse of almost 12 months since the accident?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "The incident referred to by the Honourable Member is the subject of a District Court hearing. The matter is therefore *sub judice*."

CONSTRUCTION OF WEIRS ON HAUGHTON
RIVER

Dr. Scott-Young, pursuant to notice, asked
The Treasurer,—

(1) What is the nature of the objections raised to the proposed construction of weirs on the Haughton River by the owners of Invicta Mill and what is the reason for the Government's decision to scrap this desirable scheme and supplant it with another that will suit only the Invicta Mill?

(2) In view of the need to prevent a recurrence of the disastrous effects of the recent droughts, will he assure the House that finance will be made available for the weirs in the 1972-73 Budget?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "As a result of recent inquiries, I have ascertained that there is no intention to scrap the scheme. However, the original proposal is now being re-examined in the light of certain legal advice tendered to the Irrigation Department. No doubt the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs will make a statement in due course."

COMPLAINTS TO CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BUREAU

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

(1) How many complaints were referred to the Consumer Affairs Bureau for investigation in the year ended June 30, 1972?

(2) What was the nature of the complaints and what course of action was taken to rectify them?

(3) Have there been any convictions for false advertising or false representation and, if so, who were the persons or firms convicted?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The information sought by the Honourable Member is contained in the Annual Report on the activities of the Consumer Affairs Bureau for the year ending June 30, 1972 which will be presented soon to Parliament."

(3) "No."

REPAIR OF VANS AND CARRIAGES, IPSWICH
RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

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

(1) How many vans and carriages are at the Ipswich Railway Workshops awaiting repairs and painting?

(2) How many vans and carriages are listed to be withdrawn from traffic for repairs and painting and when will these vehicles be placed in the workshops for the necessary work to be carried out?

Answers:—

(1) "Ten carriages and brake vans are awaiting overhaul and attention. Ten long distance carriages are awaiting conversion to a suitable design yet to be determined. Three brake vans of old design are awaiting upgrading attention. A total of 24 brake vans and carriages and one power car is at present receiving overhaul."

(2) "A quarterly return is prepared listing carriages and brake vans which have been in service from three to five years. This list is for information only, and it is not required that the vehicles listed be withdrawn from traffic. This is dependent upon the condition of the vehicle."

ESTABLISHMENT OF PAPER-PULP MILL,
MACKAY

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

With reference to his announcement earlier this year that a mill costing \$72 million would be established at Mackay to produce paper pulp from bagasse—

(1) Have firm negotiations been completed for a site for the plant and, if not, what is the delay?

(2) Has the operating company, which is to contain a 50 per cent interest by Australian sugar and paper interests, been formed and, if not, what is the delay?

(3) In view of the need for the sugar industry to obtain as much export-income security as possible from its products and by-products with the pending collapse of its guaranteed British sugar markets, will he take urgent action to assist in getting this project under way?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "It is not the practice to disclose detailed information regarding projects which are still in the course of negotiation. However, as the Honourable Member is aware, the Process Evaluation and Development Corporation (PEADCO), a subsidiary of W. R. Grace & Co. of New York, carried out a feasibility study some months ago in regard to the prospects for the establishment of a bagasse-based paper pulp plant at Mackay. The

results of that study were most encouraging. The company is now in the process of exploring firm market outlets for the output of such an operation."

KILLING AND HANDLING CHARGES,
MACKAY ABATTOIR

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

(1) Does the sale agreement of the Mackay Abattoir include a clause which ties killing and handling charges with those being charged by the Metropolitan Public Abattoir?

(2) Was the 15 per cent increase in killing and handling charges at the Metropolitan Public Abattoir, which was gazetted in June, automatically passed on to the operators of the Mackay Abattoir, thus bringing about an increase in the price of meat in Mackay because of the inefficiency in operations at the Metropolitan Abattoir?

(3) Will he give an assurance that any increase in operating costs at the Metropolitan Public Abattoir brought about by the huge interest and redemption payments which will be necessary because of the increase in capitalisation required to rebuild the Brisbane works, will not also become a burden on the people of Mackay and district?

Answers:—

(1) "The agreement for the sale of the Mackay District Abattoir includes a condition that fees charged for local killing shall not be less than, nor more than one and a half times higher than those charged by the Metropolitan Public Abattoir."

(2) "See Answer to (1). The increased charges at the Metropolitan Public Abattoir were a direct consequence of wages award increases."

(3) "Interest and redemption costs in relation to the new works at Cannon Hill will be offset to a very great degree by lesser repair and maintenance costs and other operational savings arising from a more efficient design lay-out and product flow than is possible in the present old works."

BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BOARD

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

With reference to the recently gazetted Builders' Registration Regulations which were tabled in this House on August 10—

(1) Has the Builders' Registration Board estimated (a) the number of builders in Queensland who are eligible for registration and (b) the likely annual income of the Board and, if so, what are their estimates?

(2) What are the major expenditures which the Board is likely to incur in (a) its first year of operation and (b) subsequent years?

(3) Will local authorities be paid a fee for the administrative acts which they carry out for the Board and, if so, what will be the amount?

(4) What are the reasons for an annual roll fee of \$75 for the builder whereas an architect has only to pay an annual fee of \$5 for registration?

Answers:—

(1) "(a) The Builders' Registration Board of Queensland cannot assess with any degree of accuracy, the number of builders in Queensland who would qualify for, and seek registration under, the *Builders' Registration Act* 1971. However, it is anticipated that the number could exceed 1,000. (b) The Board has estimated its likely annual income in relation to expenditure which is likely to be incurred in carrying out the provisions of the Act."

(2) "(a) Establishment and administrative costs 1972-73 approximately \$162,000. (b) A forecast of expenditure for subsequent years would be premature at this stage."

(3) "No."

(4) "To cover the estimated expenditure in the administration of the Act, which bears no relevancy to the *Architects Act* 1962-1971."

DEPUTY PUBLIC CURATOR'S OFFICE,
TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) How many persons are presently employed in the local Deputy Public Curator's Office, Townsville and, of these, how many are classified officers?

(2) Is the present staff adequate to handle the volume of work passing through this office and, if not, what steps have been or are to be taken to ease the burden on senior staff?

Answers:—

(1) "Thirty-eight, of whom 12 hold classified positions."

(2) "The staff position of the office is reviewed periodically with the object of providing adequate numbers to deal with the work requiring attention. Such a review is at present being made."

POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER AND FINGER-
PRINT EXPERT, TOWNSVILLE

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

Is there at present a police photographer and a finger-print expert stationed permanently at the Police Department, Townsville and, if not, why have these personnel been withdrawn from the North?

Answer:—

"A constable experienced in police photography has been seconded to the Fingerprint Bureau, Brisbane, to receive additional training in that type of work to fill the vacancy at Townsville. This training is expected to be completed in October next. On its completion, the constable will go to Townsville station to carry out photographic and fingerprint work in place of the constable who previously carried out these duties there prior to his resignation from the Police Force. In the meantime, a competent constable at Mackay is being made available to assist with photographic and fingerprint work at Townsville."

CLEANING STAFF, MAIN ROADS AND
JUSTICE DEPARTMENT BUILDINGS,
TOWNSVILLE

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

Are the new Main Roads and Justice buildings at Townsville to have their own cleaning staffs when they are finally completed or is this work to be carried out by contract?

Answer:—

"The cleaning of the new Main Roads building is a matter for determination by that Department. The new Courts of Law building is scheduled for completion in 1974, and the matter of cleaning has not yet received consideration. At the appropriate time, after consultation with the client departments, a decision will be made. However, it is probable that this work will be carried out by contract."

NORMANTON-CROYDON RAIL SERVICE

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

(1) Is it intended to curtail or cancel the rail service from Normanton to Croydon?

(2) As the people of Normanton rely on this rail service each wet season, will he reassure them by making a definite statement to the House?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The rail service between Normanton and Croydon is at present under investigation."

BAMAGA SAWMILL AND TREATMENT PLANT

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

(1) Is he aware that pre-cut timber from Cherbourg is being used for house construction at Bamaga?

(2) How is this timber sent to Bamaga and what is the freight for the complete timber requirement for one house?

(3) Has he considered the enlargement of the Bamaga sawmill and treatment plant to the stage where it can fulfil all the requirements for Far North Queensland communities and the Torres Strait Islands?

Answers:—

(1) "The pre-cut timber mentioned by the Honourable Member is, no doubt, portion of a prefabricated modular type home which is now in production at Cherbourg. The building was designed by Works Department architects in consultation with Forestry experts and because of the local facilities the factory has been developed at Cherbourg. Some of these prefabricated buildings have been forwarded to Bamaga as well as other towns throughout the State."

(2) "By rail and co-ordinated sea service under the existing Government contractual arrangements with Keith Hollands Shipping Company."

(3) "The facilities at Bamaga are continually under review and as the Honourable Member will be aware from his recent visits, the entire industrial activity at Bamaga is being expanded and developed in keeping with local requirement and area need and, of course, this the Government will continue to do consistent with facilities and funds as they become available."

REPLACEMENT OF M.V. "MELBIDIR"; GOVERNMENT VESSELS, THURSDAY ISLAND

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

(1) What is the delivery date of the boat to replace the "Melbidir"?

(2) What are the details of the new boat and how do they compare with the "Melbidir"?

(3) How many boats at Thursday Island directly or indirectly come under his control?

(4) Are any other boats at Thursday Island due for replacement?

(5) Has a decision been reached as to the future of the "Melbidir" and its crew?

Answers:—

(1) "Estimated delivery time is February, 1973."

(2) "The vessel will be constructed of steel with greater cargo space (inclusive of cooling facilities) than the present ship and berths for 22 passengers as well as seating accommodation for 20. The Department will make available for perusal by the Honourable Member the general plans and specifications should he wish it."

(3) "Presuming the Honourable Member refers to vessels, the property of the Government or semi-Governmental bodies, and in respect of vessels engine powered over 20 feet, the answer is 7."

(4) "No, but one unit being phased out has been offered for sale by a semi-Government body. The need for replacement of all other units is reviewed from time to time usually co-incidental with the annual survey."

(5) "When declared surplus to requirement, method of disposal of 'Melbidir' will be determined. Her crew will have opportunity of positions on the replacement unit."

PACKAGING AND LABELLING REGULATIONS

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

In view of the support offered by retail grocers for consumer-group demands for new packaging and labelling laws, has the Government received any request for the introduction of legislation to provide for (a) a simple three-digit, day-of-the-year packaging date code on all food lines, (b) a sales-expiry date on all perishable foods, (c) the provision of not only a "packed for" statement but a "packed by" statement including the packer's name and address on all pre-packed goods, (d) compulsory weighing points and scales at all pre-packed food counters and (e) the district and State of origin to be marked on all pre-packed fruit? If not, is any action proposed on these matters?

Answer:—

"No such requests have been received. With regard to the specific matters referred to by the Honourable Member, items (a) and (b), whilst they are not provided for in Weights and Measures legislation they have received the consideration of the Australia wide Standing Committee on Packaging which does not see any advantage in including such provisions in Weights and Measures legislation. Items (c), (d) and (e) are satisfactorily covered by the Weights and Measures Acts and the Regulations thereunder."

LEAD CONTENT OF PETROL; AIR
POLLUTION MONITORING RESULTS

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

(1) In view of the British Government's decision to introduce legislation to cut the lead content of petrol and the move for the adoption of the British plan by the Common Market countries, is any similar action contemplated by the Queensland Government?

(2) Are the readings of air-pollution measuring devices referred to in his Answer to my Question on August 8 available? If so, where and at what cost?

Answers:—

(1) "The question of the lead content of petrol in relation to motor vehicle pollution is kept under review by the Air Pollution Council of Queensland, which maintains contact with overseas organisations and others in respect of this matter. The subject is also under review by the Australian Transport Advisory Council and by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Any recommendations from these bodies will be carefully considered by the Queensland Government."

(2) "Air pollution monitoring results are published in the Annual Report of the Air Pollution Council. Between times they are available, on request, from the Air Pollution Control Centre. There is no charge levied for any of this information."

OIL SPILLAGES, BRISBANE RIVER

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in the *Telegraph* of June 27 headed "Danger Fear on River Oil"?

(2) Did the Harbour Master say that he was tired of all the complaints?

(3) Who was responsible for the oil discharge and what action was taken against them under the provisions of "The Pollution of Waters by Oil Act, 1960 to 1961"?

(4) Are regular inspections carried out under section 6 of this Act on pollution-prevention equipment installed aboard ships?

(5) Who was responsible for the oil spill reported in *The Australian* of August 30?

(6) How many prosecutions have been launched under the Act?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "I am advised that the Harbour Master does not recall making such a statement but he can recollect receiving quite a spate of telephone enquiries about the

incident at a time when he was fully occupied organising clean-up operations and investigations into cause of the spill."

(3) "Investigations failed to place responsibility on any one of the six vessels at the Hamilton Wharves at the time."

(4) "Yes. All signatories to the International Convention to the Prevention of Pollution of Sea by Oil have legislated for the provision of prescribed ships equipment including oily water separation and tests as part of the normal survey of vessels."

(5) "This spill occurred during fuelling of a Department of Harbours and Marine dredger at Cairncross Wharf. Reports received to date indicate that a valve under the wharf had been inadvertently left open. The matter is being investigated in order to ascertain the person or persons responsible."

(6) "A record of prosecutions in respect of offences against the Pollution of Waters by Oil Act has been kept only since July 1, 1967. Since that date, there have been 12 prosecutions."

MEMBERS OF POLICE FORCE CHARGED
WITH OFFENCES

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

Further to my Question of August 10 concerning members of the Police Force charged with offences—

(1) What was the number charged in each rank and category?

(2) How many were charged with (a) departmental and (b) criminal offences?

Answers:—

(1) "Departmental charges—4 sergeants 1st class; 1 detective sergeant 2nd class; 5 sergeants 2nd class; 5 senior constables; 8 constables 1st class; and 13 constables. Court charges—1 detective sergeant 1st class; 1 sergeant 1st class; 1 detective sergeant 2nd class; 2 senior constables; 1 constable 1st class; and 6 constables."

(2) "(a) Thirty-six. (b) Twelve."

WEEK-END RAIL SERVICES, ROCKHAMPTON-
YEPPON

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

(1) With regard to the Railway Department's decision to discontinue certain rail services from Rockhampton to Yeppoon at week-ends and in view of the concern expressed by a number of Rockhampton citizens at the loss of this facility, will he give details as to why this decision was made?

(2) What was the loss incurred in respect of the discontinued services during each of the last three financial years?

(3) What patronage has been given during this time?

(4) What cuts in services are planned or anticipated with respect to the Rockhampton-Yeppoon run on days other than at week-ends?

(5) In view of the growing tourist potential of the Capricorn coast, the need for commuting facilities and the important part that Yeppoon plays as the hub of the tourist industry in Central Queensland, will he give consideration to an alternative week-end service such as a daylight rail-car tour?

Answer:—

(1 to 5) "The decision to withdraw the Rockhampton-Yeppoon week-end rail service was made for the reason that the operation was uneconomical. The Sunday service, operated by locomotive and carriages, averaged 72 passengers during the summer months for a revenue of \$49.30, as against a running cost of \$257.86. During the winter months (operated by rail motor) the average number of passengers carried was 20 for a revenue of \$26 and a running cost of \$137.61, a loss of \$111.61. The Saturday service averaged 12 passengers for a revenue of \$16.79, as against a running cost of \$76.54, a loss of \$59.75. There are no week-day services planned for elimination, but the matter will be reviewed should the return to the Department be proved uneconomical."

LAND FOR SUB-NORMAL CHILDREN'S WELFARE ASSOCIATION, HOME HILL

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

When is finalisation expected of the application lodged by the Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association for tenure of an area of land previously held by the Ayr Shire Council as a water reserve, near Groper Creek, Home Hill, which will allow the Association to proceed with improvements on the land?

Answer:—

"Notification of reservation for Educational Institution (Sub-Normal Children) Purposes of an area of 29 acres 36.5 perches described as portions 372 and 373, parish of Inkerman, will be published in the *Government Gazette* of September 16, 1972. Action to develop the land for its gazetted purpose may proceed immediately."

COLLAPSE OF SAND-MINING DAM, NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND

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

As soon as it becomes available, will he inform the House of the detailed report by his Department into the bursting of the

mining dam used in connection with sand-mining operations on North Stradbroke Island, as reported in the *Telegraph* of August 29?

Answer:—

"Investigations are continuing. At the appropriate time the information sought will be made available."

LAND FOR SCHOOL SITES, SUNNYBANK HILLS-BEENLEIGH AREA

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

In view of his Answer to my Question relative to the development taking place between Sunnybank and Beenleigh that school sites are under consideration, what are the locations of the school sites under consideration and when will they be acquired?

Answer:—

"The Honourable Member will appreciate that the disclosure of specific details of sites at such an early time, may have an undesirable effect on negotiations. However, I am able to inform him that the four sites being examined are located in the Ridgewood Heights development and the Sunnybank Hills development."

SALES OF DEEP-FREEZING UNITS AND BULK FOODS

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

(1) Is he aware of any business practices operating in this State in which deep-freezing units are being sold together with bulk-food orders?

(2) Has the Consumer Affairs Bureau received any complaints about such firms and, if so, what was the nature of such complaints?

(3) As food items are included in the sale with the household appliance, do such sales come under the Door to Door Sales Act and thus allow the purchaser the seven days "cooling-off" period?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "Yes. In the main, consumers have regretted making hasty decisions to purchase deep-freeze units and participate in freezer-food plans."

(3) "No."

"EVENTIDE", ROCKHAMPTON

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

With reference to "Eventide", Rockhampton, as at June 30, 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1972—

(1) What was the total number of residents?

(2) What was the charge per fortnight made to residents for board and lodging?

(3) What was the total number of (a) administrative, (b) nursing, (c) ground and (d) other staff?

Answers:—

(1) "June 30, 1969, 238; June 30, 1970, 246; June 30, 1971, 241; and June 30, 1972, 282."

(2) "June 30, 1969, \$20.40 per fortnight (maximum); June 30, 1970, \$21.80 per fortnight (maximum); June 30, 1971, \$23.00 per fortnight (maximum); and June 30, 1972, \$26.00 per fortnight (maximum)."

(3)—

—	June 30, 1969	June 30, 1970	June 30, 1971	June 30, 1972
Administrative	5	5	5	5
Nursing ..	53	53	55	79
Ground ..	11	11	11	11
Other ..	36	36	36	41
Total ..	105	105	107	136 "

UPGRADING OF ROCKHAMPTON-YEPPOON ROAD

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

In view of the growing concern in the Rockhampton district regarding the present condition and the increasing deterioration of the Rockhampton-Yeppoon road and the resulting number of road accidents occurring on this road—

(1) What work is planned during this financial year to improve the road?

(2) Will he undertake to have it upgraded forthwith in the interests of road safety and tourism?

Answers:—

(1) "While agreeing that there is a need for reconstruction of the Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road to a higher standard, I cannot agree with the Honourable Member's statement that the road is deteriorating. Adequate maintenance including reseals has been carried out."

(2) "Due to the general shortage of funds and the needs of other roads it has not been possible to programme any permanent works on this road this financial year, but considerable improvements are envisaged in the five year planning period."

LABELLING AND SALE OF PURE-WOOL GARMENTS

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

(1) Is he aware that machine-washable woollen dress fabric is a scarce commodity in Queensland shops?

(2) Has any investigation at Government level been carried out to determine why woollen articles generally are in diminishing supply?

(3) As it is apparent that shop assistants are not fully conversant with the fibre content of various garments and that articles branded wool-like are probably sold to people believing they have a genuine article, is legislation available to rectify this matter?

(4) Has the Government explored the possibility of deliberate fraud in substitute garments sold as wool with neither retailers nor customers fully aware of the facts?

(5) Because true-wool articles are probably no more costly than other fibre garments, will he undertake to have a Government programme of publicity for true-wool wear placed before the public similar to the "Buy Queensland Made" publicity?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. I am informed that machine-washable woollen fabrics are in short supply."

(2) "Yes."

(3) "Yes. The *Factories and Shops Acts 1960-1970*."

(4) "If the Honourable Member will furnish details in regard to these allegations to the Honourable the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs, they will be examined."

(5) "Such a programme is already being carried out by the Wool Industry."

ADVANTAGES OF CONTAINER SHIPS FOR EXPORT TRADE

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

(1) What has been the overall effect of container shipping on Queensland's exports?

(2) Have results indicated that perishable goods travel better by container and have importing countries expressed satisfaction at the effectiveness and cheapness of container shipping?

(3) Is sufficient container space available to meet the demand or could a variation of a product occur on the overseas market because of different shipping methods?

Answers:—

(1) "Containerisation trade with Japan, and the United States, has provided a reliable and regular service and is opening up new markets for Queensland exports. There have been no adverse effects from containerisation on the lesser-volume United Kingdom trade."

(2) "I am informed perishable goods travel at least as well in containers as in conventional refrigerated ships and the

acceptance of container shipping is largely the result of cargoes being packed and delivered in good condition."

(3) "There is a shortage of containers in the major Australian ports for the Japanese trade but this is being remedied. There is an adequate supply in the United States trade and an over-supply in the United Kingdom trade. Finally, containerised products are shipped with a minimum of voyage time and to a reliable programme and therefore any adverse variations in these products are considerably reduced."

**GRAIN SALES TO SOVIET UNION;
OVERSEAS TRADE CENTRES**

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

(1) Is he aware that the Soviet Union and the United States of America have agreed on grain contracts worth approximately \$630 million over the next three years?

(2) What attempts have been made by his Government to secure agricultural produce sales to the Soviet Union?

(3) Is he satisfied that there is no need to establish overseas trade centres representing this State, to particularise, agricultural commodity sales centres with roving commissioners who could maintain frequent contact with traditional and potential customers?

Answers:—

(1) "While my knowledge of some aspects of the activities of the Soviet Union would not equal that of the Honourable Member, I can tell him that the grain contracts in question are reported to be worth \$750 million and not the figure he quotes."

(2) "The search for new overseas markets is a prime function of the Commonwealth Government's Trade Commissioners, one of whom is located in Moscow. Some primary products, and meat in particular, have been exported to the Soviet Union but better results are available at markets nearer to Australia, for example Japan."

(3) "Yes. I am also satisfied that there is no need for the Honourable Member to continue addressing Questions to me on subjects which come within the specific ambit of any one of my thirteen Ministerial colleagues' portfolios. They are quite capable of dealing with any genuine enquiries the Honourable Member might make. I suggest that the Honourable Member, in future, address his Questions to the relevant Minister."

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, POLICE FORCE

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

Following the Answer to my Question on August 30 concerning commissioned officers in the Police Force—

(1) What were the numbers of commissioned officers in (a) the financial year prior to the appointment of the present Commissioner and (b) the last financial year in (i) the metropolitan area and (ii) the country?

(2) What were the numbers of uniformed and plainclothes policemen in (a) the financial year prior to the appointment of the present Commissioner and (b) the last financial year in (i) the metropolitan area and (ii) the country?

Answers:—

(1) "Particulars of numbers of commissioned officers as requested are—As at June 30, 1970—metropolitan 51, country 37. As at June 30, 1972—metropolitan 65, country 32."

(2) "Details of numbers of uniformed and plainclothes policemen as requested are—As at June 30, 1970—metropolitan: uniform, 1,215, detective and plainclothes, 269. Country: uniform, 1,316, detective and plainclothes, 261. As at June 30, 1972—metropolitan: uniform, 1,444, detective and plainclothes, 157. Country: uniform, 1,377, detective and plainclothes 149."

**CONCESSIONAL EXEMPTIONS FROM
CLEAN AIR ACT**

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

In view of the decision of the Government to allow a 3.5 per cent. content of sulphur in fuel oil at the Greenvale nickel project against the advice of the Air Pollution Council, will he advise the House of any other instances in which similar concessions have been made and what were the industries?

Answer:—

"I know of no case that is similar to the one referred to by the Honourable Member."

**MENTAL HEALTH FEDERATION OF
QUEENSLAND**

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

(1) Is he aware of the disturbance in the affairs of the Mental Health Federation of Queensland?

(2) In view of the significant part played by the Federation in rehabilitation and the involvement of departmental officers in an honorary capacity, will he take all possible action to bring about an amicable settlement in the affairs of this association?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "I am informed that at the recent Annual General Meeting, a new Constitution was adopted establishing the Mental Health Association of Queensland, and an active committee has already been formed."

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF INADEQUACIES OF PUBLIC CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

Mr. N. F. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

As *The Courier-Mail* in October, 1971, gave an intensive pictorial and editorial coverage of the inadequacies of the two public children's hospitals in Queensland, what facilities of his Department were provided for these reports?

Answer:—

"It would seem that the Honourable Member is seeking advice as to what facilities my Department made available to assist in the compilation of the various articles appearing in *The Courier-Mail* during October, 1971. If such is the case I assure him that such were due entirely to the journalistic talents of the staff of the newspaper concerned."

ADDITIONAL POLICE FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL AT INTERSECTIONS

Mr. N. F. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

In view of figures released by the Bureau of Census and Statistics, Brisbane, on motor vehicle accidents, which reveal that reported accidents at intersections controlled by police totalled 47, at intersections controlled by traffic lights totalled 915 and the total at uncontrolled intersections was 10,827, will he consider an increased allocation of police for duty at intersections and, if not, for what reason?

Answer:—

"Special enforcement measures are aimed at the prevention of intersection accidents. When police departmental records isolate an intersection with a repetitive accident history or otherwise indicate a possible need for engineering or regulatory signing, action is initiated with the appropriate authority."

CITY OF IPSWICH TOWN PLAN

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

(1) Has the proposed new town plan for the City of Ipswich, submitted on October 30, 1971, been approved? If so, what was the date of approval?

(2) If not, what is the reason for the delay and what period of time will still be required for the examination of the plan?

Answers:—

(1) "No."

(2) "My Department has written to the Ipswich City Council on certain matters relating to the town-planning scheme in question, and is awaiting advice from the council thereon. When such advice is to hand, further consideration will be given to the scheme."

CONZINC RIOTINTO AUTHORITY TO PROSPECT AT TARONG, NANANGO AREA

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

Have Conzinc Riotinto shown any interest in submitting a tender for the supply of coal for the proposed new power-house from Tarong, near Nanango, where they have at present an authority to prospect?

Answer:—

"Tenders closed on September 1, 1972, for the supply of coal to a new major power station, the size, location and timing of which are now the subject of investigation by the State Electricity Commission. Sixteen tenders were received and this company has submitted a tender."

INTRODUCTION OF VENEREAL DISEASE BY CREWS OF FOREIGN SHIPS

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

With reference to a report in the *Sunday Sun* of July 30, which dealt with the danger of the introduction of V.D. into Queensland ports by crews of foreign ships which carry no qualified medical officer—

(1) Has an official investigation been made into the allegations and, if so, will he release the report as soon as possible?

(2) If an investigation has not been made, will he give consideration to carrying it out at the earliest opportunity?

(3) If the allegations are found to be valid, will he, in conjunction with other authorities, consult with other Government

bodies concerned to ensure that the necessary measures for cure of the disease or the prevention of disembarkation are taken at the earliest possible date?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "The Queensland State Health Department accepts the responsibility in the matter of communicable disease within the State. In regard to the introduction of disease from outside Australia, it co-operates closely with the Commonwealth Health Department which has a specific responsibility in this area. When the report appeared the State Health Department made enquiries from the Commonwealth Health Department. The Commonwealth Health Department advised that the specific incident was investigated at the time and the problem was being examined in general."

CONSERVATION AND LAND USAGE SURVEY

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

With reference to the conservation and land usage survey instituted by his Government some months ago—

(1) Has the survey been completed and, if not, is he able to give an indication of when it might be?

(2) On completion of the survey, will there be a report given to the relevant departments and, if so, will copies of the report be made available to Honourable Members and organisations which request it?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "No such survey has been or is being carried out by any of the Departments coming within my Ministerial control, but I am aware that the Co-ordinator General is involved in a number of surveys and the Honourable Member might therefore care to direct his Question to the Honourable the Premier."

GAZETTAL OF NATIONAL PARKS,
RAIN-FOREST AREAS

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

(1) Does he recognise the need for the gazettal of more national parks containing rain-forest country?

(2) Is any consideration being given at present to the declaration of new areas between the Daintree River and Cape Tribulation?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes, the need for the gazettal of more National Parks containing rain forest country is recognised more particularly with respect to rain forest types not yet represented in existing National Parks."

(2) "Yes. The Cape York Peninsula is a part of the State where it is important that representative areas be reserved."

STAFF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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

What is to be the role of the Staff Development Officer advertised for the State Children Department?

Answer:—

"It is presumed the Honourable Member refers to the position of Staff Development Officer in the Department of Children's Services. This position was created following a Public Service Board appraisal of professional staffing needs in the Department. The role of the appointee will be to design and conduct training programmes for departmental officers at all operative levels. He will also assist related voluntary agencies in their efforts to provide adequate training for their institutional staff who care for children placed with them by the Department."

HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSES AND PENSIONER UNITS, SOUTHPORT AND ALBERT ELECTORATE

Mr. D'Arcy, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) How many applications are held at Southport for (a) Housing Commission houses and (b) aged-persons' units?

(2) How many Housing Commission houses and aged-persons' units are presently planned for the Albert electorate?

Answers:—

(1) "Rental applications held by the Clerk of the Court, Southport, at July 31, 1972, were (a) with points priority—three, nil priority—53; (b) 36."

(2) "Uncompleted dwellings in current contracts comprise 52 houses and 18 aged-persons units. A further 55 houses are programmed. Loans are also available from the Queensland Housing Commission for persons who have their own building sites. The initial allocations direct to Co-operative Housing Societies (Gold Coast and Woodridge), which serve this electorate, total \$180,000 and are additional to the foregoing figures."

INTERCHANGE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS WITH OVERSEAS COUNTRIES

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

(1) Has any consideration been given to granting employees of the State Government special leave to allow social and

cultural exchanges between Queensland's public servants and those in developing countries?

(2) Are entitlements in respect of seniority, long service leave and superannuation benefits forfeited under these circumstances?

(3) To encourage such exchanges, will he consider allowing bonded employees to have their bond suspended for the duration of their overseas exchange service and/or such service to be credited against the obligation of the bond?

(4) If not, will he initiate an immediate review of all terms and conditions to allow Queensland's public servants and State Government employees generally to volunteer for overseas exchange and/or service with the developing countries?

Answers:—

(1) "The Honourable Member's Question, in so far as it refers to 'social and cultural exchanges' and 'overseas exchange and/or service with the Developing Countries', would seem to embrace all situations in which officers are either seconded for duty or granted special leave to render service overseas. Under existing arrangements—(a) The services of officers may be made available, for periods up to two years or more by arrangement, to the Public Service of Papua and New Guinea and to undertake work in overseas countries under the Colombo Plan or on behalf of the United Nations. (b) Under the scheme of Commonwealth Co-operation in Education, in terms of which the more-developed countries of the British Commonwealth have agreed to assist the less-developed countries and territories, the services of several teachers of the Queensland Department of Education have been made available to overseas countries. These arrangements apply where official recognition is given to the overseas service to be rendered. In other cases where an officer may wish to render service overseas in a capacity in which he is personally interested, he may make application to be granted special leave and such application would receive consideration having regard to its particular circumstances."

(2) "In cases where officers are regarded as serving overseas in an official capacity, entitlements up to and during the period of overseas service are retained. Where leave is granted without pay, benefits are retained but the period of such leave may not be recognised for leave purposes and the officer is expected to maintain his contributions to the Public Service Superannuation Fund. Seniority would not be affected in either case."

(3) "Where an officer is under contract of service, consideration is given to the suspension of the terms and conditions of the contract but upon the understanding that he guarantees to return to duty at the expiration of the period of overseas service and serve the unexpired portion of his service contract."

(4) "The arrangements for officers to take up appointments in other countries are not so inflexible as to disallow consideration of a particular case on its merits and in the circumstances which have been outlined, the need to initiate an immediate review of all terms and conditions of the arrangements is not apparent at this stage."

RAIL FREIGHT CONCESSIONS ON WHEAT

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

Did the recently-announced freight concessions on the cartage of wheat include centres east of Goondiwindi, e.g. Inglewood (25 cents) and Yelarbon (3 cents), and exclude other South-western Division centres such as Goondiwindi and stations further west? If so, will he give early consideration to a review of these apparent anomalies?

Answer:—

"As from November 1, 1968, reduction was made in freight rates on wheat railed from stations exceeding a distance of 176 miles from Pinkenba. As from July 1, 1972, reduction was made in freight on wheat railed from stations located between 92 miles and 267 miles from Pinkenba. The overall effect of the reductions on wheat railed from Goondiwindi, Yelarbon and Inglewood was as follows:—Goondiwindi (reduction per ton) \$1.90; Yelarbon (reduction per ton) \$1.83; and Inglewood (reduction per ton) \$1.60."

MOTOR VEHICLE SEAT-BELT PROSECUTIONS

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

How many (a) drivers and (b) passengers were penalised for failure to wear a seat belt under the provisions of the Traffic Regulations 1962, in each month for which figures are available since the amendment came into force on January 1, 1972?

Answer:—

"I suggest the Honourable Member direct his Question to the Honourable Minister for Works and Housing, as this information is only available within the Police Department."

HOUSING COMMISSION OPERATIONS,
PINE RIVERS SHIRE

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

(1) When did the Queensland Housing Commission last approach the Pine Shire Council with regard to building any meaningful number of houses for rental in that shire?

(2) What are the Commission's plans for developing the areas of land it owns in the shire and what are its future intentions with regard to the building of houses for rental and home-ownership in the shire?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "I appreciate the concern of the Honourable Member that Commission houses be constructed in this shire for the lower and moderate income groups who look to the Commission for assistance. However, the attitude of the Pine Rivers Shire Council was so obstructive that there has been no point whatsoever in developing further land for construction of houses. As one indication of this lack of co-operation I quote the case of the last group contract in 1966 when it took the council almost three months to advise the Commission's builder that it did not propose to issue a building permit for three houses in his contract. On being requested by the Commission to advise the reason for this refusal the council took more than another three weeks and then merely advised that it proposed to abide by its decision—no reason was given as requested. The location for the houses was changed and they were constructed in another local authority area. In another case the council issued what purported to be a legal notice threatening certain physical action. The Crown Solicitor considered the notice invalid and, in fact, not even in accordance with the council's own by-laws. The council gave an undertaking that it would refrain from action without first giving further notice but it then withdrew such undertaking. It was necessary to issue a writ on the council and to obtain a restraining injunction from the Supreme Court. This resulted in the council withdrawing its purported notice and admitting that the house was lawfully erected and also meeting the Commission's legal costs. No subsequent request has been received from the council that Commission houses be constructed within the shire for rental and/or purchase. Should the council submit such a request and undertake to co-operate with the Commission as provided in the State Housing Act, and to give all practicable assistance and expedition to the Commission's work, I would be very willing, so long as such undertakings are observed, to have the Queensland Housing Commission resume its normal operations within the shire."

OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED TOWN PLANS

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

(1) Must objections to a proposed town plan be limited to detail available on any one map purporting to be the proposed town plan, or may objections be based on details available on all plans exhibited, such as the redevelopment and structure plans purporting to relate to the proposed plan?

(2) Is it a requirement that both the proposed plan and the proposed by-laws be displayed publicly together for a specified time, or may each be displayed separately at different times?

(3) Must objections be heard by the full council and, if not, what minimum number of councillors would represent a properly constituted committee?

Answers:—

(1) "The lodgement of objections to a town-planning scheme is governed by the provisions of section 33 of the *Local Government Act 1936-1971* to which the attention of the Honourable Member is directed."

(2) "The *Local Government Act 1936-1971* provides that a town-planning scheme and a by-law to implement such a scheme shall each be opened to inspection by any person at the public office of the local authority for a period of not less than 90 days. It is the usual practice for a town-planning scheme and a by-law to implement it to be opened to inspection simultaneously but there is no requirement in that behalf. The matter is one within the discretion of the local authority."

(3) "Objections to a town-planning scheme which have been made and lodged in accordance with the Act have to be considered by the local authority as a whole which is required to forward such objections to the Minister, together with its representations thereon, when submitting the scheme for the approval of the Governor in Council."

USE OF MICROPHONES

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Before honourable members begin giving notice of questions and asking questions without notice, I ask each of them to use, where practicable, the microphone in front of him, particularly when asking questions without notice, because "Hansard" has some difficulty in hearing them.

Mr. HOUSTON: I appreciate what you have said, Mr. Speaker, but I suggest that, for the benefit of all honourable members, Ministers, particularly those in the back row of the Ministerial benches, might also use microphones.

CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AMENDMENT
BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—
Minister for Local Government and
Electricity) (12.6 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second
time.”

I appreciate that a large number of mem-
bers on both sides of the House have spoken
on this Bill, but I regret that many entered
into a good deal of emotionalism in no way
related to the Bill.

As I explained in my introductory speech,
the Bill has two main purposes—

(a) It provides for the distribution of
the city 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 instead 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.

It also remedies a defect which occurred in
the processing of rules made by the council
for the purpose of establishing an aldermanic
superannuation scheme.

Honourable members opposite seemed to
see an ulterior motive to the Bill by implying
that it aimed at fragmenting the Brisbane
City Council. They apparently ignored that
part of my introductory speech where I said
the Bill did not provide for fragmentation
of the City of Brisbane into a number of
local authority areas.

Again, honourable members opposite
seemed concerned that the altered system as
set out in the Bill for appointment of the
Lord Mayor would be applied to local
authorities outside Brisbane. This was
despite my assurances that this would not
happen.

Another misapprehension of honourable
members opposite was their apparent fear
that the Bill sought to take away some of
the powers of the Lord Mayor. As I
mentioned in my introductory speech, the
Bill does not in any way seek to amend
the provisions of the City of Brisbane Act
relating to the powers and authorities of
the Lord Mayor. However, a degree of
power and responsibility will be restored to
city aldermen. The Lord Mayor, appointed
by the aldermen, will be able to exercise
similar powers to those he exercises now so
long as he retains the support of the
aldermen.

During the introductory debate, a number
of honourable members on this side of the
Chamber mentioned that rank-and-file alder-
men were mere rubber stamps and had an
increasingly small part to play in decisions of
the council. This contention is supported by
the previous Town Clerk of Brisbane, Mr.
J. C. Slaughter, in his paper titled “The

Great Experiment”, which was based on an
address delivered to aldermen and senior
departmental officers of the council at the
City Hall on 23 July 1964. In this paper,
Mr. Slaughter stated, *inter alia*—

“It cannot be denied that the council
has become merely an instrument to adopt
the reports of the standing committees.
This is not what was intended and should
not be allowed to continue”.

The provisions contained in the Bill will
assist in restoring to rank-and-file aldermen
a greater say in the government of the city.
As Mr. Slaughter said, this is most desir-
able, and I agree with my colleague the
Minister for Justice and Attorney-General
that it will encourage good candidates to
nominate for council election. They will not
do this if their only future is as rubber
stamps.

One honourable member opposite compared
the number of aldermen in the Brisbane City
Council with that in other capital cities.
There is no doubt that, with the fragmenta-
tion of these cities in other States into many
separate local authority areas, there are very
many local authority members administering
local government there, but it must be
remembered that the City of Brisbane is the
only local authority in Australia that is
administered by full-time, paid aldermen.
The Brisbane City Council is a unique local
authority in Australia, and for this reason
the Government feels that the method of
selecting the Lord Mayor must be considered
in a different light from the selection of the
mayor or chairman of a local authority
elsewhere in Queensland.

In my introductory speech, I explained that
the Government considers that the duties of
an alderman of the City of Brisbane are
less onerous than those of a back-bench
member of Parliament representing a
Brisbane electorate, and that accordingly the
number of aldermen is capable of reduction.
During the debate the Opposition raised the
question of the manner in which the number
of proposed electoral wards was fixed at 21.
Let me assure honourable members that this
figure was not just pulled out of a hat, but
was arrived at after due consideration of
the number of electors enrolled for State
electoral districts in the City of Brisbane.

I am advised that as at 18 April 1972, the
date of closure of the rolls for the last State
election, there were some 390,000 electors
in the City of Brisbane. Of these, 200,000
were resident on the north side of the
Brisbane River and 190,000 on the south side.
Having regard to the number of electors on
each side of the river, it was considered that
a North Brisbane zone should be created and
distributed into 11 electoral wards, and a
South Brisbane zone created and distributed
into 10 electoral wards. On present enrol-
ments, this will mean that an alderman will,
on average, represent fewer than 20,000
electors. The Government feels that this
is reasonable.

In support of this contention and other provisions contained in the Bill, let me quote from a report on the front page of the "Express" newspaper on Wednesday, 30 August. The report is headed "Alderman supports changes", and reads—

"Alderman Les Padman (BCP Clayfield) has supported the Government's proposed changes to the Brisbane City Council. He said he also did not disagree with the Government's proposals to reduce the number of Brisbane City Council wards from 28 to 21.

"Alderman Padman said he completely supported the moves to change the election of Lord Mayor from popular vote to election by aldermen.

"He said he believed the reduction in the number of wards would spread a more even work-load over the aldermen. The Government proposed to make 21 wards with 20,000 electors in each.

"At least three aldermen already had wards of about 26,000 and all three were serving their wards well, he said. Alderman Padman is on record as saying in 1968 that his job as an alderman took an average of 35 hours a week to do. Two other Brisbane City Council aldermen told an 'Express' reporter in private conversation that they did not even spend that amount of time doing their job as an alderman, but still did the job efficiently.

"Alderman Padman said it had been C.M.O. policy and it was now B.C.P. policy to have the Lord Mayor elected from the aldermen. He strongly disputed claims that the Lord Mayor would not be able to fill the position of Lord Mayor properly and serve a council ward at the same time."

Mr. Davis: Do you know why he said that?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Because he believed it. The Press report continues—

"If the Premier of Queensland and the Prime Minister of Australia can fill a local role as well as their State or national role, there is no reason why the Lord Mayor cannot serve a council ward", Alderman Padman said. Alderman Padman said he was also in favour of the various chairmen of council committees being elected from among the aldermen."

The Bill's intention to have the Lord Mayor elected from among the city's aldermen is supported by Professor Keeble, Professor of Regional and Town Planning at the University of Queensland. Professor Keeble was reported in the Press to have expressed this support at the Royal Australian Planning Institute Congress on 21 August. In "The Courier-Mail" of 22 August he was quoted as having said—

"Essentially the Lord Mayor is a chairman and surely the rational thing is for the body to appoint the chairman from among its ranks.

"I am not saying anything against Alderman Jones because if the method is changed we may well see Alderman Jones back as Lord Mayor anyway."

"The Australian" of the same date reported Professor Keeble as having said that an elected body could work better with a chairman elected from among its ranks; that this was more rational than having one appointed by popular vote. To my personal knowledge, a number of city aldermen, including a number of A.L.P. aldermen, support that part of the Bill relating to the appointment of the Lord Mayor.

The Leader of the Opposition, in an endeavour to discredit me, succeeded in expressing contempt for the opinion of taxmen in the Brisbane city area. Although I had many reasons for this amendment of the City of Brisbane Act—and these came from many different sources, some of which I will mention shortly—I do have a high regard for the taxmen of Brisbane because I believe they express the thinking of the average person. I have a great respect for the opinions of average persons. Apparently the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members opposite do not.

The Leader of the Opposition seems to think that the Bill is a personal attack on Clem Jones.

Mr. Davis: Of course it is.

Mr. McKECHNIE: In reply to the honourable member for Brisbane, I ask him to allow me to put forward my own point of view.

I hold the Lord Mayor in high regard. Our relationships have been good, and there is no thought on my part that the Lord Mayor should be discredited. In fact, I agree that he has done a good job for the city, because of State Government activities; but I am concerned at the situation that could arise, as it has arisen in many American cities that are governed by this type of government, which is not British in tradition. Several honourable members mentioned that a Tammany Hall type of government could arise within the Brisbane City Council if someone whose ideals are not what they might be should succeed the present Lord Mayor.

The Leader of the Opposition, when referring to the city council, spoke of the A.L.P.'s fight to have only 78 seats in the State Parliament. In fact, the A.L.P. was the instrument by which the number of seats was increased to 82, and there is no denying that the A.L.P. did bring that situation about.

Mr. Sherrington: In what way?

Mr. McKECHNIE: The A.L.P. opposed the Bill providing for 78 seats. As a consequence, the Government increased the number of seats to 82. Honourable members opposite cannot deny that, but for the A.L.P., there would now be 78 seats in this Parliament instead of 82.

The Minister for Justice defined quite lucidly the need for the two principles of the Bill, and he made it very clear that the Bill was unanimously approved by the State Liberal Party Conference in Brisbane and that all members of the Liberal Party in this House supported that determination. Cabinet also authorised me to draw up a Bill, duly tabled to my Local Government Committee, which approved it, and the Bill was eventually approved by an overwhelming majority of the joint Government parties.

The Minister for Justice also made it very clear that every member of the Brisbane City Council will now have an opportunity to nominate for the position of Lord Mayor, and this should encourage good candidates.

The honourable member for Redlands spoke on many matters relating to the Bill that only highlighted the fact that Sir Gordon Chalk, rather than the Lord Mayor, deserved credit for the development that has taken place in this city.

The honourable member spoke at great length about the taking away of the powers of local government. I remind him that this is not a Bill to amend the Local Government Act. It applies only to Brisbane, and I emphasise again that it will have no application to local government elsewhere in Queensland and that it does not affect the powers of the City of Brisbane.

Mr. Sherrington: Why not?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Because the majority of representatives in this House from within the City of Brisbane want this legislation, and the majority of members from outside Brisbane, I believe, do not wish it to be applied to other areas. I take heed of the views of both sections of elected members.

The honourable member for South Coast spoke of town planning and the fact that boards would relieve the city of many of its present responsibilities. He made it very clear that Government members are more experienced in local government than Opposition members. He also stressed the wonderful job that this Government has done not only for Brisbane but throughout Queensland.

The honourable member for South Coast also drew attention, as I did in my introductory speech, to the fact that the Government deliberately added to the Bill the words "and for other purposes" in order to give A.L.P. members the opportunity to raise any matters they cared to concerning alleged land dealings. This took them so by surprise that they voted against the provision "and for other purposes".

Mr. Bromley: That's a lot of rot.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The Opposition voted against it.

The honourable member for South Coast made it very clear that this Bill has no application outside the metropolitan area.

The honourable member for Toowong pointed out that the support of 17 of the 28 State members from electorates wholly within Brisbane is given to the Bill. Brisbane aldermen are, in effect, equivalent to Tasmanian members of Parliament; they are not aldermen in the true sense but professional politicians who receive salaries and very attractive superannuation entitlements.

There will not be any "flow on" from this Bill to other local authorities, as has also been suggested. The Treasurer, Sir Gordon Chalk, says this with the full weight of the Liberal Party in support. Under the proposed amendments the Lord Mayor will be answerable to the elected representatives, as are the Premier of Queensland and the Prime Minister of Australia.

The honourable member for Stafford made his maiden speech, which was heard by the House with respect and in silence. I welcome Alderman Harvey to this House as a local authority member with whom I have had the pleasure of co-operating at many Local Government Association conferences.

Mr. Houston: You didn't take much notice of him.

Mr. McKECHNIE: In reply to the interjection, I might add that I have worked very amicably at Local Government Association conferences with the honourable member for Stafford, and I have great respect for him. He and I take notice of each other's opinions. I agree with him that members of Parliament and aldermen can both fully occupy their time. However, in the case of the Brisbane City Council, the aldermen are not allowed by the Lord Mayor to exercise the responsibility that should be theirs.

The honourable member questions fragmentation under the Bill. In fact, there will be no fragmentation under this Bill. On the contrary, it may be an insurance against fragmentation should it achieve the aim of returning democracy to the people of Brisbane.

Like the honourable member for Stafford, I appreciate the unemployment-relief assistance from the Commonwealth and believe that there is a greater need for Commonwealth assistance on a more detailed and organised basis. However, here again we speak of local authorities generally and, while Commonwealth financial assistance is sought for Brisbane as well as local authorities, I cannot stress too much that this Bill applies to Brisbane only.

The Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs raised the matter of the council's ordinances and their approval by the State Government. I should like to point out that I have obtained a legal opinion on this matter, as follows—

"Council by-laws are submitted for the approval of the Governor in Council, but surely that approval is not to be construed that the policy in the by-laws is that of

the Government or the Governor. The Government should, in my view, determine that the council's proposals are bona fide and within its legal powers.

"The mere fact that the Government might not think that some of the proposals are the wisest is no reason to reject the plan or to require the council to amend it to conform to the Government's ideas. The plan is the council's, and the council should be made to stand up to its responsibility. If the State is to interfere there should be clear grounds, and these should be related to the legality of the proposals and their bona fides."

With reference to the comments of the honourable member for Sandgate, I believe that a greater responsibility will be endowed on aldermen and I hope that this will lighten the load of the Minister for Local Government in relation to Brisbane City Council matters. The honourable member referred to the number of wards in each of the two zones. The latest figures show 200,325 electors on the north side to be divided by 11, and 189,792 on the south side to be divided by 10. The total of 390,117 will give an average of slightly less than 20,000 electors in each ward. I thank the honourable member for Sandgate for expressing confidence in my integrity.

The honourable member for Lytton said that Brisbane would need to have a third electoral roll, and this is correct. This has applied in all other local authority areas in Queensland for a considerable time. The State Electoral Office can overcome most difficulties at a reasonable cost, as it has done for other local authorities throughout Queensland.

The honourable member for Lytton was also given ample opportunity to name the land developers on either side of the House. His whole speech was based on the fragmentation of Brisbane and, consequently, is not relevant, because, as I reiterate, the Bill has only two purposes, and these do not include fragmentation.

The honourable member for Merthyr supports the system of government as we know it from Westminster. He stressed the fact that the present system means that the aldermen are subservient to the Lord Mayor. This denies democracy. The aldermen have little power and, consequently, they are handicapped in acting on behalf of their constituents.

The honourable member for Salisbury issued a challenge on the reason for the Bill. Earlier in this speech I set out the reasons for the Bill. This is backed up by the reports I have already quoted.

Mr. Sherrington: What reports?

Mr. McKECHNIE: The honourable member challenged me, and I have supplied them.

Mr. Sherrington: I asked you to supply a list.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The honourable member for Salisbury also, quite wittily, read a poem. At the time, when honourable members were dealing with a serious matter, I thought he was being rather frivolous. However, in no sense of frivolity, I should like to reply in like manner—

Throughout all of South Brisbane
His conserve was best
He loved his dear Clemmie
Jack Egerton, Burns and the rest
He crossed the Brisbane River
To zone Number one
But ere he arrived at Parliament gate
The Bill was committed
Our Dougie came late
For Henry and cabbies
Had shot off in top
Leaving Clemmie and Dougie
Beside a tram stop.

The honourable member for Mt. Gravatt quoted a report from "The Courier-Mail" of 4 May 1968, and I believe that it is well worth repeating. It is headed "Q.C.E. Moves on Mayor Power Bid", and says—

"The top body of the Australian Labor Party in Queensland has 'suggested' to Brisbane City Council aldermen that it is opposed to powers being centralised in any Lord Mayor.

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

"Part of the circular said: 'The Q.C.E. has broadly suggested that it is opposed to powers in the hands of the individual. This is not aimed at Alderman Jones, but at the Lord Mayor, whoever he may be.'

"The circular in the minds of informed aldermen has confirmed that there is opposition in top circles of the A.L.P. to proposed increased Lord Mayoral powers under Chapter 2 of the ordinances.

"This section of the circular would also mean opposition to control of certain council activities passing out of the hands of rank-and-file aldermanic committees."

While I have received 60-odd written objections to the City of Brisbane Bill, I have at the same time received 80 written objections from Yeronga objecting to the Lord Mayor's plan to alter the zoning in that area, as well as many requests from the people of Gumdale about what is happening in that part of the city.

Mr. Houston: What does the member who represents Gumdale think about it?

Mr. McKECHNIE: In fairness, I point out that the honourable member who represents the Gumdale area has made representations that I have passed on to the Lord Mayor.

The honourable member for Wolston raised matters which cause me to reaffirm that this Bill is purely for the City of Brisbane and in no way suggests city fragmentation. He spoke at length about my

responsibilities. I accept them willingly, and have carried them out to the best of my ability. In addition, I personally believe that the principles of the Bill will be of benefit to the people of Brisbane.

The honourable member for Kurilpa claimed that the Bill does not go far enough, but again I point out to him that the Bill has two purposes only. He, too, supported the claim that the development of Brisbane is due to the Government and private enterprise, and expressed concern that the policy of the present Lord Mayor could lead to a legacy of debt for the City of Brisbane.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition seems to think that the Bill is inspired by vindictiveness. I made it very clear that I have respect for the Lord Mayor and that this is a matter of protecting the city, endeavouring to give it democracy and to protect it from the undesirable happenings experienced in American cities governed under the same system.

The honourable member for Ithaca again challenged the A.L.P. to name land developers on this side of the House whom the A.L.P. did seem keen to specify. In fairness to the A.L.P. I point out that the honourable member for Townsville West did, eventually, name two. One of those referred to, namely the honourable member for Yeronga, answered him very effectively this morning. The honourable member for Ithaca also referred to the fact that the A.L.P. opposed the increase of four seats in State Parliament. However, the A.L.P. themselves brought about the increase to 82 seats. The Country Party was content to leave it at 78.

The honourable member for Brisbane spent most of his time being derogatory, but there was much of his speech that I could not hear. He went to considerable trouble to compare the City of Brisbane with the Shire of Waggamba, where I once had the honour to be finance committee chairman. He pointed out that the area of Brisbane was 375 square miles compared with Waggamba's 5,000 square miles. While he has an argument on the basis of population, his claim does not hold water so far as area is concerned.

The Treasurer wound up the debate very effectively by outlining the work done by the State Government in the development of Brisbane. In conclusion, let me say that I do not deny that the City of Brisbane has in recent years experienced remarkable development. No doubt the Brisbane City Council can claim to have played an important role in that development but, as the Treasurer said, this Government has also played a vital role by providing subsidies to the council, by the construction of free-ways and bridges, and in other directions. Brisbane is experiencing remarkable development and we feel that the amendments contained in the Bill, aimed as they are at

bringing about more democracy in the activities of the Brisbane City Council, will facilitate and enhance that development.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.34 p.m.): We have listened to a remarkable speech from the Minister—remarkable in the sense that this is not the introductory stage but the second reading of the Bill. Normally, having a Bill before us at this stage we go into it in detail to analyse its purposes—what it may or may not do—and then draw conclusions on whether it will do what the Minister suggests. All we have heard from the Minister today is an introductory-stage reply. It is obvious that he was tired last Thursday night and wanted to get to bed early. What did he do? He got the Treasurer to apply the gag on us and, the next thing we knew, the vote was taken.

I was very pleased to read in this morning's Press that the Premier had this to say about the Bill: "There will be an opportunity for full, frank and free debate." I trust that this will be so. In addition, I hope that Government members—particularly Country Party members—will be given a free vote so that they can vote on the evidence presented during both the introduction and the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. Miller: Do you believe in a free vote?

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member had his chance the other day and abused the privileges of the House.

Mr. Miller: Do you believe in a free vote?

Mr. HOUSTON: I suggest that the honourable member keep quiet for a moment.

In their introductory speeches, certain Government members, including the honourable member for Ithaca, viciously attacked the Lord Mayor. Today, the Minister said that the Lord Mayor is a nice fellow. However, he did not refute what was said by the honourable member for Ithaca and other honourable members about the Lord Mayor. He has allowed that to remain in "Hansard" without one word of objection.

What happened in fact was that a few members of the Liberal Party held a meeting and decided that they had to get rid of Jones. I shall give the reason later. They then went to the local government committee. At that stage the present Minister for Lands (Mr. Rae) was chairman of that committee and he knew that he was to be given the Lands portfolio. At that meeting, those Liberal members presented their ideas and, by the time the present Minister was allotted the Local Government portfolio, this proposal was already an accomplished fact.

However, the Liberals were not doing well. The Press published many articles indicating that this matter might not go through. Then daylight saving became an issue. It was

important to the Country Party and, as a result, an agreement was reached with the Liberal Party to forget about daylight saving.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will get back to the principles of the Bill. Daylight saving is not involved in it.

Mr. HOUSTON: I certainly will. I was merely answering an interjection.

Following that agreement, the Liberal Party members were able to proceed with their proposal. This Bill provides that there shall be 21 wards in Brisbane instead of 28 and that the Lord Mayor shall be elected by the aldermen. This is a triumph for those Liberal members, who are still pushing the old conservative barrow. They are attempting to turn the clock back to 1930. On this occasion, they were not game to reintroduce property franchise, but I have no doubt that that is still in the back of their minds, because there is plenty of evidence of it.

In 1923, Greater Brisbane was created to overcome the problems of fragmentation of this city and of the existence of so many boards which operated without the public having any direct say at all in their operations. Prior to that time, in the Brisbane area, there existed the cities of Brisbane and South Brisbane, the towns of Hamilton, Ithaca, Toowong, Windsor, Sandgate and Wynnum, and the shires of Balmoral, Belmont, Coorparoo, Enoggera, Kedron, Moggill, Sherwood, Stephens, Taringa, Toombul, and parts of Tingalpa and Yeerongpilly. The boards in existence were the Water Board, the Victoria Bridge Board, the Wattlebrae Hospital Board, the Brisbane Tramway Trust, and the Electricity Boards of Balmoral, Coorparoo, Wynnum, Toombul, Sandgate, Enoggera, Kedron and Ithaca. The Greater Brisbane concept replaced 205 aldermen and councillors.

Since that time, Brisbane has been administered successfully by various councils of different political persuasions. Mr. W. A. Jolly was Lord Mayor for two terms, totalling six years. In 1931, Mr. J. W. Greene, who was elected by the aldermen under legislation introduced by a Government of similar political colour, lasted only one term. If that council had been the council that the people wanted, and had been successful, it would have been returned at the following general election, but it was not. It was defeated. Mr. Alf Jones became Lord Mayor of Brisbane, and served for two terms. He was followed by Sir John Chandler, who served for four terms. Then came Mr. Roberts, of the A.L.P., who served for one term; Sir Reginald Groom who served for two terms; and Mr. Clem Jones.

Mr. Knox: Why did Mr. Roberts only last one term?

Mr. HOUSTON: He left the Labor Party.

Mr. Miller: Why?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not permitted to depart from the principles of the Bill. If the honourable member cares to see me later, I shall tell him.

The Minister said that the Bill will help to produce better candidates for the Brisbane City Council. I have heard this cry before. What is a better candidate? Is the Minister saying that Messrs. Rudd, Padman, Orr, Crawford and Gainford are not good candidates? Is the Minister saying that they are not men of high integrity?

Mr. McKechnie: No, I am not.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister says that he wants men of good calibre. If that is so, what is wrong with the men who are already there? Why, then, change the system? If the present system has provided good and capable men, why change the system? There must be another reason; it cannot be that one.

The Minister went further and said that in a small local newspaper Alderman Padman said that he is now supporting the Government on this proposal. When he was in the council chamber and had an opportunity to express an opinion, he supported the opposition of the full council to this move. In today's "Courier-Mail" Alderman Padman is reported as saying—

"If the Government's reason for the change is political skulduggery, then I am against it."

In actual fact Alderman Padman is against it, because everyone knows that the Bill is an exercise in political skulduggery.

Mr. Porter: That is your conclusion.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is. Let there be no doubt about it.

The Minister said that the Bill will allow council committees to function. If that reasoning were applied to the operations of this Parliament, there might be some sense in it. On many occasions I have heard members of the ginger group advocating the institution of all-party parliamentary committees. I, too, have advocated it. But what has the Government done about it? It has absolutely refused to appoint all-party committees to deal with matters more important than the ones presently under discussion. The Opposition has asked for all-party committees on matters such as workers' compensation, insurance, and third-party insurance.

Mr. Porter: Which clause are you referring to now?

Mr. HOUSTON: I advise the honourable member that Mr. Speaker knows how to control the House. He does not require assistance from honourable members opposite.

The Minister said that he wants to see more council committees established. Does he not realise that the Brisbane City Council operates today solely through committees? Each

committee has a chairman and representatives of both parties, which makes it in effect an all-party committee.

Mr. McKechnie: I am not aware of saying that we wanted more committees.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister said that one of the reasons for the introduction of the Bill was to allow aldermen to serve on committees. I am telling the Minister that they now serve on committees.

Mr. McKechnie: I quoted Professor Keeble as saying that the aldermen could elect the Lord Mayor and the chairmen of committees.

Mr. HOUSTON: I shall come to that. The significant point at this stage is that the Minister suggests that the Brisbane City Council has no committees. I am telling him that the council has committees.

Mr. McKechnie: I did not suggest that.

Mr. HOUSTON: Every alderman serves on a committee. If the Minister is "fair dinkum" in what he says about committees, why does his Government not institute a system of all-party committees in this House?

Mr. McKechnie: I did not mention that there should be more committees.

Mr. HOUSTON: No, because it does not suit the Minister's purpose. The Minister should read all the things that Professor Keeble said.

What has to be studied now is the reason for the change. If one goes back through the speeches made by Government members such as the honourable members for Mt. Coot-tha, Toowong, Mt. Gravatt, Kurilpa and Ithaca, one sees that they have all consistently attacked the Brisbane City Council since they have been in Parliament and since Alderman Jones has been Lord Mayor of Brisbane.

I think that this statement by Mr. Lickiss exemplifies that—

" . . . so our Government today can turn this swollen, bloated, muscle-bound, power-hungry Greater Brisbane council into four, five, six or a few more local authorities . . .".

The Minister told us that there is nothing in the Bill providing for that. That is true; no-one denies that. But when there is a change, one has to find out the reason for it. It is obvious to me that if the present amending Bill does not do the job properly, a further change will be made.

The Minister was quite happy to read extracts from newspaper reports. I invite him to read the report of 18 November that says—

"The State Government could be asked to break up the Brisbane City Council into five local authorities.

"Liberal back-benchers want to see a central City council and councils to the north, south, east and west."

It then has more to say on the same subject.

Let me turn now to the political objective of the proposed changes. The first practical step in this drama of taking the control of the Brisbane City Council from the Labor Party, by one means or another, and putting it into the hands of anti-Labor factions was the redistribution of the State electoral boundaries in the City of Brisbane.

Let us consider, Mr. Speaker, what would have happened if the Electoral Redistribution Commission had decided, in its wisdom, to divide Brisbane into a certain number of electorates within Greater Brisbane. I wonder whether the present Bill would then have been before the House. If the commission had divided the City of Brisbane into 30 State electorates, I wonder what argument would have been used to reduce the number of council wards to 21, particularly when one remembers the statements that were made in this Chamber in 1960 when a Bill similar to this was before the House providing for a change in the number of city council wards from 24 to 28 to conform to the redistribution of State electoral boundaries that took place at that time. I refer honourable members to this extract from the "Hansard" report of the speech made by the late Honourable L. H. S. Roberts, who was then Minister for Public Works and Local Government—

"The provision about wards is almost identical with the provisions that became necessary after the 1949 redistribution. The Government carefully considered the whole problem arising out of the redistribution of State electorates before they decided to introduce the Bill. They were not unmindful of the fact that there might be some who thought that the extra expense involved in having four additional aldermen should be avoided. The Government realised that if that argument had been upheld, a deal of extra cost in conducting triennial elections could not have been avoided. One of the virtues of having the boundaries of State electorates and local authority wards coinciding in the metropolitan area is that the machinery of State elections can be used in council elections. The mere fact of using State rolls has meant a tremendous saving in cost. If the Council had to compile and print its own special rolls, the costs would be extremely heavy."

Mr. R. E. Moore: We have computers now. Have you ever heard of a computer?

Mr. HOUSTON: Is that why there are so many mistakes in the rolls?

Let me take it a little further. In reply to an interjection by Mr. Aikens, the honourable member for Townsville South, "Would you consider a proposal to cut Brisbane up into 14 wards or seven wards and give each alderman two seats or four seats?", Mr. Roberts said—

"That was considered, because we could work on divisions of the 28 seats. However, the Government, in their wisdom,

have seen fit to present this Bill providing for 28 seats in the metropolitan area. Having regard to this and many other factors, we think the proper thing is to continue the well-established principle of ensuring that State and local authority boundaries coincide."

That was the attitude of the Government at that time. There has been only one change since then in the set-up, and that is the power and domination of a certain section within the Liberal Party.

Let us also consider some of the other reasons the Minister gave as to why there should be 21 aldermen and not 28 or 30. How does he know how hard aldermen have to work? How does he know what their responsibilities are?

Mr. Porter: So what?

Mr. HOUSTON: If the honourable member is going to say, as the Minister did, that they do not work very hard or that they do not do as much work as M.L.A.'s, surely he must have some evidence. Alderman Harvey told us in his speech how hard the aldermen work, and, now that he has dual responsibility, he should know. Alderman Small said the other day that he is up every night until midnight trying to be an efficient mayor and an efficient parliamentarian.

Aldermen have different duties from those of M.L.A.'s. Aldermen have to look after roads, drainage, electricity, footpaths, health, playing fields, libraries, swimming pools, traffic control, transport, registration of buildings, water and sewerage, and see that there is compliance with ordinances concerning buildings, development and subdivision of land and so on. They have to administer the Town Plan and deal with a budget that is even larger than that of Tasmania. They have very many duties to perform. They are also very close to the people in their various wards.

On the other hand, State members have an entirely different field of duties. Most of our activities are associated with State-wide legislation, although there are some things affecting our own electorates that we have to deal with. We have to involve ourselves in matters associated with schools, education, police, housing, children's services and activities concerning the Public Curator. But we have not nearly the same range of everyday, bread-and-butter issues as aldermen have.

Mr. Chinchin: Don't you think members are interested in all the activities of the whole State?

Mr. HOUSTON: Of course they are.

Mr. Chinchin: Then why bring it down to those few items?

Mr. HOUSTON: If the honourable member listens, I will tell him more of the story. I will tell him why his argument is not worth anything. The Minister said, in justifying

the increase in members of Parliament from 78 to 82, that we must have more M.L.A.'s, because we, as M.L.A.'s, have to attend to matters affecting the whole State and therefore we should know the State. I have no argument with that. I suppose I travel throughout the State as much as any member of this House, to acquaint myself with its people and its problems. Of course, the Government only allows members a miserable 10 days a year in which to see the State. Certainly we have free rail travel, but today, because of the time factor, that is a very inferior method of transport.

If the Minister's principle is going to be applied, what about Federal members of Parliament? They have many things to worry about, too. They have to concern themselves with social services, employment and many other factors that affect the people in their electorates. Apart from that, they have to worry about Australia's defence, Australia's trade and the general activities of the nation, not just those of the State of Queensland, so, if the argument that we must have 33 State members in Brisbane and only 21 aldermen is valid, we should have about 50 Federal members. That is axiomatic if the argument is sound, but, of course, it is not sound. We have only seven Federal members for electorates basically associated with Brisbane.

Mr. Porter: Don't you know how a Federal member works? Don't you know the difference between the two?

Mr. HOUSTON: I am afraid the Minister does not know the difference, because the argument he used revolved around responsibilities and travelling. Those are the only points he made. And I am pointing out that, if that argument is sound, it should also apply federally.

Mr. McKechnie: What do you think of Alderman Padman's views?

Mr. HOUSTON: Alderman Padman was asked a question to get the answer that the Government wanted. Let there be no doubt at all about that.

Anyhow, let us now look at the next matter the Minister dealt with—the election of the Lord Mayor. The Minister said that he did not set out to abuse or discredit the Lord Mayor in any way at all. He also claimed that the Bill did not take away any of the powers of the Lord Mayor. However, the Minister's colleagues constantly attack the Lord Mayor over the powers they they allege he holds.

Mr. McKechnie: I added a proviso: provided he had the confidence of his aldermen.

Mr. HOUSTON: I have no doubt that any Labor Lord Mayor would have the full confidence of his aldermen—and much greater confidence than the members of the Country Party have in their Leader, the Premier. There is one thing of which the Minister for Local Government can be

proud, and that is that he was the one who saved the Premier from losing his head only 12 months ago.

No-one can deny that the Bill is designed to do away with the Labor council; but how can the Government do that while the council is led by a very popular Lord Mayor? At council election after election Alderman Jones had a resounding victory. On the most recent occasion he received a majority of thousands of votes.

The Minister indicated that if the aldermen had the right to select their Lord Mayor the probabilities are that Alderman Jones would be elected. I say there is no doubt that he would be.

Mr. Chinchin: Under pressure from the Q.C.E.

Mr. HOUSTON: All this talk about direction is not even worth replying to.

The Minister told us that it will be up to the aldermen to elect their Lord Mayor. He is only mouthing meaningless words. Surely the party that holds the greatest number of wards will be the one that nominates the Lord Mayor, and after that his election will be merely a formality. I would like to see that principle applied to Parliament and the election of Premier. It would be very interesting to see who would receive the Government's nomination. Would he be the Premier or the Treasurer? The Minister said that he wants the local authority system to be similar to that in the Federal and State Governments; yet in this State, Parliament does not even have a voice in the selection of Premier. However, it does select its Speaker, and I was very pleased to see the Government's nominee for that position "knocked over" by Parliament.

The Minister said he wants the co-operation of the Brisbane City Council. He would have us believe that he is introducing this Bill in the interests of the council. In "The Stanthorpe Border Post" of Tuesday, 4 July 1972, he is reported as saying—

"In this appointment I look forward to co-operating, and I stress co-operating, with the local authorities of Queensland to help those (within my own electorate), but not to the detriment of the 130 other local authorities throughout Queensland.

"Some years ago I served on the Waggamba Shire Council as chairman of the finance committee—

I have dealt with that statement—

"and I am sure that I will work in harmony with the local authorities. I assure you that in any decisions I do make their views will be taken into consideration."

Did the Minister take their views into consideration in introducing this Bill? The first the people of Brisbane knew of it was on 17 July 1972, when the front-page headline

of the "Telegraph" proclaimed "Shock City Council Changes". On that same day the Lord Mayor wrote to the Minister—

Mr. McKechnie: Was that a Monday?

Mr. HOUSTON: It happens to have been a Monday.

Mr. McKechnie: "The Australian" leaked it from the City Hall.

Mr. HOUSTON: "The Australian" did not leak it from the City Hall

Mr. McKechnie: Yes, it did.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister cannot prove that. In fact, his own letter refutes any such claim. The Minister will not be allowed to start making up stories as he goes along just to suit the occasion.

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

Mr. HOUSTON: Before lunch I referred to a statement attributed to the Minister about how co-operative he wanted to be with local authorities, and I said that the first indication we had that there were to be changes in the City of Brisbane Act appeared in a newspaper statement. The Minister said that it came from the City Hall. That is in complete contrast with his previous statement that, unfortunately, it was a leak from his own department. He cannot have it both ways.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. Never at any time did I say that the leak was from my department. The leak first appeared in the Saturday edition of "The Australian", a couple of days before the Leader of the Opposition quoted the "Telegraph" of Monday, the 17th.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to accept the Minister's explanation.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister cannot say that it came from the City Hall, because the City Hall knew nothing about it.

Mr. McKechnie: I said "The Australian" got it from the City Hall.

Mr. HOUSTON: "The Australian" did not get it from the City Hall. How would anyone at the City Hall know about it?

The Lord Mayor wrote to the Minister in these terms—

"I have been advised by representatives of the Press that they have received information that your Government proposes to alter the constitution of the City Council by reducing the number of aldermen to 21 and having the Lord Mayor elected by the council instead of at large by the citizens of Brisbane.

"It is the view of my council that this is a most retrograde step which can only have a seriously adverse effect on the city of Brisbane and its future.

"No doubt you will be advising me formally in this matter and I am, in fact, most surprised and disappointed that the matter was not discussed with me to obtain the council's views prior to a decision being made. In this regard may I ask that, before any action is taken, you allow me to submit to you the views of my council in respect of both proposals.

"Meanwhile, may I formally object in the strongest possible terms to the proposals as they have been conveyed to me."

Mr. McKechnie: What is the date of that?

Mr. HOUSTON: It is dated 17 July. The Minister cannot suggest that he did not receive it, because he replied on the 19th in these terms—

"My Dear Lord Mayor,

"Reference is made to your letter of the 17th instant regarding proposals for certain amendments of the City of Brisbane Act concerning the holding of triennial elections in the Brisbane City Council.

"As you are aware, the recent redistribution of State electoral districts raised problems in connection with the holding of the abovementioned elections since the boundaries of electoral wards in the City of Brisbane no longer coincided with the boundaries of State electoral districts and, in fact, five electoral districts were situated partly within and partly without the city.

"Cabinet has recently reviewed the matter and, as mentioned in the Press, consideration is being given to the introduction of legislation during the forthcoming session of Parliament to reduce the number of electoral wards to 21 and to provide that the Mayor shall be appointed by the aldermen from amongst their number."

That is quite straightforward, except that the Minister does not know what is going on. There are not five electorates outside the city zone, there are only four.

Mr. McKechnie: There are five.

Mr. HOUSTON: According to every other statement by the Minister, and according to his introductory speech, there are 29, plus four.

Mr. McKechnie: If you look back you will see the words, "Except one, which has certain islands at the mouth of the Brisbane River."

Mr. HOUSTON: The only things on the islands are mud crabs, and they do not get a vote.

The letter continues—

"I note that your Council objects to the above proposals and asks to be allowed to submit its views thereon. It was my intention . . ."

This is the most important part of the letter. It says—

"It was my intention to have discussions with yourself before any public announcement. However, as details of the proposed

legislation have already appeared in the Press such discussions would appear to be abortive."

Mr. McKechnie: That is quite correct. That was in the Saturday "Australian".

Mr. HOUSTON: What logic! Because somebody leaked the information, because someone in the Minister's department broke a confidence—there is no way in the world that it did not come from the Minister's department—

Mr. McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. I assure the House that the leak did not come from my department.

Mr. Wright: How would you know?

Mr. McKechnie: It appeared in "The Australian" of Saturday, the 15th, I think. I know where the leak came from.

Mr. HOUSTON: Where?

Mr. McKechnie: It came from the City Hall.

Mr. HOUSTON: Let us be logical. This city council business is a serious matter. My statements have frequently been challenged in this House. The Government decided to amend the City of Brisbane Act. I imagine that the only people who knew about it originally were the members of the Minister's committee who referred the matter to him, and that he in turn discussed the matter with the officers of his department.

Mr. McKechnie: What about my discussions with the Lord Mayor?

Mr. HOUSTON: Why did not the Minister say in his letter that he had already discussed this matter with the Lord Mayor? He did not discuss it with the Lord Mayor at all. Not in any letter or by word of mouth until just now has the Minister claimed that he discussed this matter with the Lord Mayor.

Mr. McKechnie: Because the Lord Mayor asked me to keep it confidential.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Do you want us to tell you what the Lord Mayor said?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, I want the whole thing. That is what I am asking for.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You might get it before long.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is all right. It suits me. If the Treasurer wants to raise any particular matter, let him do it during this second-reading debate. I am sure that Mr. Speaker, who is in control of the House, wants this whole matter discussed openly and frankly. I take it that is the purpose of a second-reading debate.

Mr. McKechnie: I honoured the Lord Mayor's request that it be kept confidential, and I intend to keep it that way. This is the first time you have heard about it, and I have not said yet what the Lord Mayor said.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister did not include it in his letter to the Lord Mayor, either.

Supposing the Minister did tell the Lord Mayor, which I am not admitting. The point is that he would then say to the Lord Mayor, "After we have made the decision, it is no use talking about it." However, the Minister said earlier that he would talk about it before any decision was made.

Mr. McKechnie: I had spoken to the Lord Mayor at that stage.

Mr. HOUSTON: No, you had not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will address the Chair.

Mr. HOUSTON: Very well, Mr. Speaker. The point I am making is that the Minister did not consult the Lord Mayor, and it is up to him, in closing the second-reading debate—

Mr. McKechnie: It is not up to me to break a confidence with the Lord Mayor, and I do not intend to do it.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am sure that when I speak to the Lord Mayor he will give me authority to ask the Minister to tell us what he said.

Mr. McKechnie: It is all right if he does.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister has suggested that the Lord Mayor is only another alderman. Does he not realise that many men in our community who would not be prepared to stand as an alderman would be quite willing to stand as Lord Mayor of this city? Previously there has been no shortage of nominations for election as Lord Mayor. In fact, we have had experience of aldermen standing for election as Lord Mayor, and, on occasions, more than one person has wanted to be the lord mayoral candidate. If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Jamieson was opposed for selection as the C.M.O. lord mayoral candidate. The Minister has pointed out that if more than one person stands for election as Lord Mayor, only one can win. What about the people who oppose a future Lord Mayor in election as an alderman? They will be beaten.

Every member of the community who stood against any member of this Assembly was unsuccessful, so what does it matter whether they stand as the lord mayoral candidate or as aldermen in a particular ward, or for election in a State seat or a Federal seat? In every election, some people must be unsuccessful. To claim that the reason why a person should not stand for election as Lord Mayor is that another candidate will be defeated and not take his place in the council does not stand up to the facts of life.

The Minister says that the Lord Mayor should be selected by the aldermen and not by the citizens as a whole. What he is saying in fact is that it is more democratic for six aldermen to determine who the Lord Mayor

will be than for all the people of this great city to be given that opportunity. If there were 10 aldermen on each side of the council and one Independent who said, "I am not going to vote for anyone", the Government would take over and say, "We will tell you who will be Lord Mayor". The Bill gives the Governor in Council the right, under those circumstances, to tell the citizens of Brisbane who is to be their Lord Mayor.

Sir Gordon Chalk: If the council refuses to elect a Lord Mayor.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not a matter of the council refusing to elect a Lord Mayor. Why should the Governor in Council have that power? It is not to be found anywhere else. Whilst the Lord Mayor is elected by the people, there is no problem. The problem is created only by the Bill.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It would not develop into a deadlock. That is the purpose of the Bill. If we had the situation where aldermen of the Labor Party, or of any other party, refused to elect a Lord Mayor, there would be chaos.

Mr. HOUSTON: Under the Bill?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Yes.

Mr. HOUSTON: That could not happen in the present situation. One of the fundamentals of the present method of electing the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, councillors and shire chairman is the fact that the people know who is to be the leader. There was the spectacle about three months ago of the electors of Australia, in their wisdom or otherwise, electing John Gorton to be Prime Minister.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No, they did not.

Mr. HOUSTON: Don't give me that nonsense. Every newspaper said, "This is a battle for leadership." What do Gallup polls reveal today? Under the present system, the people of Brisbane know who the lord-mayoral candidates are, and they know that their votes will go towards electing the candidate of their choice as Lord Mayor. Under the system proposed by the Government, six men or women in the council could determine who was to be appointed Lord Mayor. Of course, we have now seen Mr. Gorton slamming Mr. Eric Robinson. I wonder where the Deputy Premier stands on this issue?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Read below that report and you will find where I stand.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Government is taking away the rights of the citizens of Brisbane to elect the Lord Mayor. That is a most important principle.

It has been suggested that the Bill will have the effect of bringing the Lord Mayor closer to the aldermen. That is only problematical. To apply that reasoning to this House, how close, for instance, to the Liberal Party is the Treasurer? How close

is every member of the Liberal Party to its leader? Every chance they get, half the Liberal Party members cross the floor to vote with us.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to deal with the principles of the Bill.

Mr. HOUSTON: The principle now under discussion is election of the Lord Mayor.

It has been suggested that there are no problems in requiring the Lord Mayor to be an alderman. In fact, there are plenty of problems. It is quite natural that a person who represents an electorate or ward will do all that he can for that ward.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Don't you?

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right; I do.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Wouldn't you do it as Premier?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, but the difference is that all that I would be able to do would be to obtain perhaps a new school or a new police station. A Minister, even the Premier, has no power to do more than that. Under the City of Brisbane ordinances—

Sir Gordon Chalk: Isn't it the same situation in Brisbane?

Mr. HOUSTON: At present, yes.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Isn't there the same position with transport on the aldermanic side as the Minister for Transport? Doesn't the same principle apply?

Mr. HOUSTON: The Minister said a short time ago that this change will give the aldermen greater power.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Quite true.

Mr. HOUSTON: Now the honourable gentleman is telling me that the aldermen have the power.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: It would be quite normal for the Lord Mayor, if he represented his ward well, to tend to give favoured treatment to that ward. After all, they would be the only people electing him.

In my opinion, this is a retrograde step. At present the Lord Mayor, irrespective of who he is—as I said earlier, Sir John Chandler and others have held the office—can consider Brisbane as a whole. I reiterate that the ideas and actions of the Minister have not stood up to scrutiny. The change is being made to bring about, if possible, the defeat of the Jones Labor council. That is the whole purpose of the exercise. The Liberal Party believes that it cannot gain control of the council while Lord Mayor Jones is a lord-mayoral candidate at a City Council election; his personal standing is too high.

Looking at the figures for the last election, one sees that Jones received 209,000 votes, compared with Jamieson's 121,000, and in only one ward, Toowong, did the Lord Mayor not receive more votes than his opponent. In fact, in that ward he received 5,163 against his opponent's 5,467. With 28 wards, and taking a line from the recent State election, the Liberals know that they cannot defeat the A.L.P. in a City Council election. Of the present 33 metropolitan seats, 17 are held by the Liberal Party and 16 by the A.L.P. However, the Liberal Party believes that, with the right redistribution commission, 11 anti-Labor seats can be created. All that would be needed then would be to have those seats return anti-Labor candidates and the Lord Mayor would be selected from among them.

In his second-reading speech this morning, the Minister indicated that the 17 Liberal members of Parliament—that is, the majority of the 33 metropolitan members—wanted a change. But he did not say that they represented, even with D.L.P., Country Party and independent votes, less than 50 per cent of the electors of Brisbane. In the 29 electorates wholly in Brisbane, the A.L.P. polled 167,644 votes, the Liberals 132,675, the D.L.P. 27,897, and the others 6,858. In other words, the total anti-Labor vote was 167,430, or about 210 fewer than the A.L.P. vote. In the other four metropolitan electorates—Pine Rivers, Redlands, Salisbury, and Wolston—the A.L.P. received 31,608 votes, the Liberals 11,338, the D.L.P. 3,657, and the others, including the Country Party, 7,511. In other words, the A.L.P. received 31,608, and all its opponents together received only 22,506.

Mr. Sherrington: That is democracy.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right, and honourable members opposite got their information from the figures at the last State election.

Why do members of the Liberal Party so desperately want an anti-Labor council? They say it is because of the Bennett report of 1967. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that Mr. Bennett's report in 1967 was acted upon by the Parliament of Queensland on 1 November 1967, when an amendment was brought down to the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act. Surely Mr. Bennett's recommendations would have been included in that Bill. To use Mr. Bennett's report as a reason for any change now is well behind the times.

I remind honourable members that Mr. Bennett was no more critical of the Lord Mayor than he was of bodies such as the Town Planning Committee, the members of which, as I mentioned previously, are highly respected citizens of this State, many of them in private business, some of them top-ranking public servants.

Mr. Chichen: Who is chairman?

Mr. HOUSTON: One man is chairman. The honourable member is not going to tell me that Sir David Muir, who is on the committee, can be brainwashed by anybody, nor can he tell me that Sir Arthur Petfield, who is also a member of the committee, can be stood over or dictated to by the Lord Mayor.

Government members—particularly those who are most vocal—say that the Lord Mayor has too much power, but the Minister has said that his power is not to be altered. In any case, the new ordinances setting out the power of the council and of the Lord Mayor were gazetted on 1 January this year. They were tabled in this House in August, and, to my knowledge, no Government member has objected to them or to anything that has happened.

The real reason for the change goes back to a Bill we passed in this House, known as the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act of 1971. A new Town Plan has to be on public exhibition on or before 28 February 1974. In other words, the next council will lay down laws for subdivision, building requirements, land zoning and other matters vital to land and property developers and speculators.

We know that there are land speculators in our State who are quite prepared to make thousands of dollars profit provided they are given the opportunity. I know one such developer who purchased some land in March 1965 and started selling it in May 1965. He divided it into 14 allotments and sold six at that particular time, leaving eight unsold. His total outlay on the subdivision, including the cost of the land at \$20,000, was \$23,275. Allowing for the interest he would have earned on the money, his total outlay was \$27,000. For the lots that he sold he received \$43,150. The eight lots still unsold are valued at \$52,000. In other words, the total return for an outlay of \$27,000 is \$95,650. Allowing for commission of \$5,200, the total profit on that deal for an outlay of \$27,000 is \$63,450 or a capital return of 235 per cent., which is not a bad return in anyone's language.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: He starts with \$27,000.

Mr. R. E. Moore: How much sewerage did he put in?

Mr. HOUSTON: He did not put any sewerage in.

Mr. Porter: Are those council figures?

Mr. HOUSTON: No. I picked them up off the street.

Sir Gordon Chalk: He got them on the way home.

Mr. HOUSTON: And it was not the same taxi-driver, either.

I have an idea that some honourable members opposite know about this deal by a company named Glenrobi Pty. Ltd. We know something about Glenrobi. The shareholders of Glenrobi are William Daniel Lickiss, Elma Gwen Lickiss—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think the honourable member is getting a little out of order. Land dealing does not come within the ambit of this Bill. When the honourable member starts naming members of this Chamber he is getting away from the ambit of the Bill, and I do not think I can allow him to continue along those lines. In saying that, I am applying Standing Order No. 120.

Mr. HOUSTON: At the introductory stage I was challenged to give information I had at my disposal. I did not then have the information at my disposal. Since then, the Premier has publicly challenged me through the daily Press to disclose what I know.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You should have done it before.

Mr. HOUSTON: I did not have the information then. Certainly there were certain innuendoes, but I did not then possess the information that I now have. The Treasurer can take my word for that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I do not intend to permit any member to mention any other member in regard to land dealings, irrespective of what anyone may have said.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You deliberately waited until Mr. Lickiss left.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha did not have to go. He did not go on my authority; he was elected by the Government to go.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: I will obey your ruling, Mr. Speaker, as it applies to honourable members, but I am sure that you will allow me to mention one or two other deals that will show what land developers can get, provided the rules are made to suit them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I am not going to permit that, as it does not come within the ambit of the Bill.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am very sorry that you will not allow me to debate it today, Mr. Speaker, because I consider that it is relevant to the Bill. Just to show that there is no ill-feeling on my part, I accept your ruling, but I give notice that I shall move disagreement with it.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You already had that written out.

Mr. HOUSTON: Of course I did; you told me this could happen. I have been in this Parliament for too long to be caught on that one. You will get the names before this week is out, whether you like it or not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Sir Gordon Chalk: It is just a stunt.

Mr. HOUSTON: It was not a stunt at all.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It is a stunt; you had it written out. You knew it was outside the ambit of the Bill.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not outside the ambit of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I am not going to permit unruly interjections. I warn honourable members on both sides of the House.

Mr. HOUSTON: As you have ruled that we cannot go into the real reasons behind this Bill, Mr. Speaker, let us look at some of the things that the Government could do.

Mr. Chinchin: Were you imputing any dishonesty?

Mr. HOUSTON: I cannot discuss it; Mr. Speaker will not allow me to do so. If I could, I would answer the honourable member's question.

Mr. Chinchin: I would like to hear it.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member is not going to have me thrown out by Mr. Speaker. I am too old in the head for that.

Apart from all the comments that we have made, let us look at this Bill from the point of view of the elector. Apparently the Government has forgotten all about him. When Parliament was debating the Electoral Districts Bill, Government members argued very strongly in support of an increase in the number of State members so that they could give service to the people. At the present time in the metropolitan area a State member represents approximately 25,000 people, whereas under this Bill an alderman will represent approximately 35,000 people. As well, the area of a council ward will be 1½ times that of a State metropolitan electorate.

In 1925, when the population of Brisbane was approximately 253,000, our predecessors decided that they should be represented by 20 aldermen, which meant that each alderman, in addition to the Lord Mayor, represented 12,000 to 13,000 electors. Today, 47 years later, the Government is trying to turn the clock back by adding to the responsibilities of the aldermen.

During the debate on electoral redistribution the members of the Liberal Party argued very strongly that it was quite all right for metropolitan electorates to cross the Brisbane River, but now they say that the Brisbane River must be the boundary between the two zones. Why the change in attitude? Why is it that the honourable member for Brisbane is required to cross the river to represent constituents who live on the south side while at the same time the Government says that an alderman should not do so? Of course, the residents in that portion of his electorate on the south side of the river are very fortunate to be represented by the honourable member for Brisbane.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. HOUSTON: Let us now look at the last State redistribution. At the time we said we were worried because, by not having a Supreme Court judge presiding there could be suggestions of gerrymandering in the redistribution of the State electorates. As I said in my Address-in-Reply speech, there was plenty of evidence of gerrymandering in the last redistribution. What we can look forward to in the next one is anyone's guess, particularly as the Minister knows who the commissioners are to be but refuses to tell us.

When the commission is appointed and makes its recommendations, it is essential that every submission should be presented to Parliament and made public so that the people of the State, and those in Brisbane in particular, may know exactly what different people requested and what the commission acceded to.

We note from the measure that the Government is objecting to the council appointing its own presiding officers. Why should that be so? Surely the council is capable, through its Town Clerk, of appointing responsible men and women as presiding officers. Why is it necessary to have only those approved by the Government? This Bill reeks of a big-brother attitude. I am sure that the Government wants to make the council only a subsidiary of itself, subject to its way of thinking. If it cannot achieve that through the ballot box, it will try to do so by administrative procedures.

There are many other details in the Bill that the Opposition will be discussing. We intend to oppose the Bill at this stage. In our opposition to the Bill we are conscious that it is necessary to take some action, but it is also necessary to ensure that the City of Brisbane has electoral boundaries that are acceptable to the people, and that they be finalised well before the next election.

I believe that the Government has accepted wrong advice from the Liberal Party convention. Instead of accepting advice for the break up of the city council, and agreeing to reduce the number of aldermen and alter the present method of electing the Lord Mayor, it should have instituted a partial redistribution of the State electoral zones. In that way many things could have been implemented. Firstly, many of the present shortcomings would be overcome. In the redistribution of the south-east zone, the commissioners could be told to confine some electorates to the City of Brisbane. It should constitute the City of Brisbane boundary as it was previously, that is, a combination of State electorates.

A close analysis of the figures makes it very clear that 30 electorates can be formed within the area of the City of Brisbane. If that were done all that would be necessary would be to pass a Bill similar to that of 1960, declaring

that the State electorates in the City of Brisbane are the electorates for the city council. Of course, that would defeat the Government's main purpose, namely, the reduction in the number of aldermen.

Mr. R. E. Moore: What about the electorates projecting beyond the Brisbane area?

Mr. HOUSTON: There would be no electorates projecting outside Brisbane under this scheme. No-one can tell me that the commissioners could not do this. They could virtually take the quota of 12,657 for the south-east zone laid down by the State redistribution commission. It would only be a matter of redistributing the existing electorates. Allowing for one-fifth, up or down, that would be 15,188 to 10,126. A fair analysis indicates that a number of electorates are above the quota.

All honourable members, particularly the honourable member for Surfers Paradise, should listen to these figures because they are very important. A partial redistribution is allowed for under the existing Act, and if one were conducted now, it would remove this out-of-balance situation. At the time of the last election, Pine Rivers had 16,758 electors, and was 32 per cent above the quota determined. That proves that the recent redistribution was scandalous, to say the least, in every sense. Surfers Paradise had 16,439 electors.

Mr. Chinchin: You are speaking about the Electoral Districts Act, which is a different Act.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member should go back to sleep.

We oppose this Bill because the Government should conduct a redistribution of the south-eastern zones to achieve some uniformity there, and then that could be applied to the City of Brisbane, as was done previously. I am making an alternative suggestion. The Labor Party does not oppose a measure and leave it high and dry; it offers an alternative.

The Albert electorate had 15,335 voters and was 21 per cent above the quota. Mansfield had 14,972 voters and was 18 per cent above the quota. Both South Coast and Redlands were 18 per cent above the quota. They are growing electorates, so a partial redistribution is required urgently. Now is the time to do it. All the machinery is available, and all the Government has to do is to appoint three commissioners and the matter can be attended to. Brisbane had 11,284 voters and was 11 per cent below the quota, and Merthyr had 11,353 voters and was 10 per cent below the quota.

Brisbane, at present, has 29 electorates plus four parts, namely, Pine Rivers, Redlands, Wolston and Salisbury. The number of electorates within 5 per cent of the quota is 24, so no great changes would be needed. A quarter of Pine Rivers, slightly over a quarter of Redlands, between a quarter and

a third of Wolston and approximately two-thirds of Salisbury are in the Brisbane area. Therefore, all that is required, in my view, to overcome this problem and to allow Brisbane to progress as it has in the past, is to correct the anomalies in the State electorates. Neither the method of electing the Lord Mayor nor the reduction in the number of aldermen has any logic or wisdom.

The Bill allows for 20 per cent over or below the quota. The Minister said the quota would be 19,000. Does he realise that electorates could vary between 15,200 and 22,800 electors, a difference of 7,600?

The Minister has decided belatedly to legalise the provisions of the superannuation scheme for aldermen. Alderman Harvey and others are more conversant with that subject than I am. However, the Government has shown complete carelessness in not legalising this matter. What would have happened if, in the interim, an alderman had passed away after paying contributions?

As the Treasurer is in the Chamber, I should like to reply to one statement that he made during the introduction of this Bill. He said that the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha and the honourable member for Yeronga had had no land dealings since 1963. According to my information, on 17 July 1972 the company belonging to the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha sold to the directors of the War Service Homes Branch a parcel of land comprising 15 acres 2 roods 7.6 perches.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (2.55 p.m.): I would have thought that the second-reading debate would be somewhat different from the debate on the introductory stage of the Bill last week. We thought that we would really hear something substantial from the Opposition, something that would warrant the Opposition's massive build-up to this issue. Judging from the performance of the Leader of the Opposition, we have no chance of hearing anything like that. We will have the same dreary, dispirited trailing of smelly red herrings. We will see the same obsession with personal abuse and innuendo. And again we will hear no vestige of cogent argument against the political principles which the Bill enshrines.

I believe that in the introductory debate we saw one of the sorriest, most pathetic spectacles that this Chamber has ever seen. From all the Press build-up in which the Opposition revelled, to the extent that they have been quoting it ad nauseam, this was to have been the big "knock down, drag out" event. If I may put it in surfing parlance, the Opposition thought they were "hanging five" on a mighty wave of public hostility to the Government. I could say that they struck a dumper, but that would not be true as the wave turned out to be not even the slightest ripple. The threatened Opposition mayhem revealed itself as a kind of dance-school minuet.

Indeed, it would not have surprised me in the least on Thursday last if, when each Opposition member had resumed his seat after trotting out the same sort of pathetic things one after the other, a kind of disembodied voice had floated down from the Trades Hall hill saying, "Good on you, Mildred. You've done your bit for the commercial." Speeches from the Opposition consisted of a kind of bovine, stupid repetition which certainly did not put any life into the debate. They offered no argument at any stage. This was the biggest fizzer of a debate that this Chamber has ever seen, certainly in my time. The "Great Debate" turned out to be a great damp squib. It was a bit like the strip-tease dancer on amateur night who promised to do the full reveal but who, when the time came, would not take off her dressing-gown. It was an awful effort. No attempt was made at any stage to argue the case rationally or sensibly. Instead, we had the sorry spectacle—and there was a bit more of it today—of Opposition members relying on smear, innuendo and slander—mud-slinging at its foulest. At no time did we have substantiation of fact or documentation.

The Leader of the Opposition has taken refuge in the coward's castle of discovering on the second reading that he could not give the documented evidence that he was invited, challenged, and even pleaded with, to give at the introductory stage. He says, "I didn't have it." About a month ago I debated this issue on a television programme with Alderman Burton, I think it was. He said that he had all the facts, and that they were going to be released the following Tuesday, when the House met, by way of a question. Nothing happened. I find it impossible to accept that the Leader of the Opposition today has some documentation on these matters that he did not have last Thursday. If he has not, what was the basis for all the newspaper stories, Mr. Egerton's statement, and so on? I believe this to be a complete fabrication and, as the Treasurer said, a put-up job.

The Opposition knows that it has no facts. It carefully did not give any story at all at the introductory stage. It tries to do it on the second reading when it knows it cannot, and now it has moved disagreement with Mr. Speaker's ruling in an attempt to mislead the public into believing that it has some facts which, in reality, it does not have. If this is to be the sum total of the Opposition's contribution to the debate on this matter, we have indeed come to a pretty poor pass. All that we have had is a compound of gutter tirades and scurrilous aspersions, one of them against a member who is not here and will not be here for another few weeks.

Mr. Chinchin: The disagreement motion was pre-prepared.

Mr. PORTER: Quite obviously. As I have said, it was a put-up job. It was one of the most obvious operations that one could come across.

I believe that the way in which the Opposition has attempted to handle this debate will do it a great deal of harm. We have all seen the spectacle of the domestic dog that finds something foul to roll in and comes home smelling to high heaven. The Opposition is rolling in its own foulness, and, in my view, the odour of this operation will remain with it for many a long day and honourable members opposite will be very sorry about it.

There are two major propositions that virtually every speaker from this side of the House kept to at the introductory stage and which, obviously, we will all keep to at the second-reading stage. The first is that the number of wards of the Greater Brisbane City Council is reduced from 28 to 21. Again I say that the Government intends to reduce from 28 to 21 the number of professional ward representatives. There is a system of professional ward representation in Greater Brisbane that is unique in Australia; no other capital city has it.

What were the arguments advanced against this proposal? The first one was the work load of the aldermen. The work load of an alderman is, of course, what he chooses to make it. It is largely a matter of the degree to which he usurps the role that the professional council officers should accept, and do accept in other councils. I believe that a tremendous amount of the work that city aldermen bother themselves with should not be touched by them. There should be direct representation in many matters between the appropriate officer of the council and the people whom the council serves.

Another argument advanced—and the Leader of the Opposition played around with this one—is that because the number of State members of Parliament has been increased, ipso facto, the number of aldermen should also be increased because there is, again, a relativity between the two. But I noticed—and I went through the "Hansard" proofs fairly carefully over the week-end—that every member of the Opposition who dealt with that matter was very careful to skirt round it and was very careful not to fully equate parliamentary representation with the representation of a ward in the Greater Brisbane City Council. No case was made—in fact, no attempt was made to make a case—for more full-time professional party representation in the city council.

Why should such a case be made? Why should honourable members on this side of the House go along with such a proposition? It was the product of socialist thought and socialist planning back in 1924-25, and the Government has been overlong in doing something about it. Honourable members opposite, the Leader of the Opposition among them, made a great story about the fact that

Brisbane had grown in size and that the Government now proposed to reduce the number of aldermen from 28 to 21 when the number should be increased. What are the facts?

In 1925, when the City of Brisbane Act became operative, 20 aldermen were provided for the new City of Brisbane. But, in the municipalities telescoped into Greater Brisbane, 205 aldermen were serving. So that socialist concept was to reduce 205 aldermen to 20, and I therefore reject with contempt the notion that what is being done now is untoward. The fact that the A.L.P. was prepared to say that it was quite in order to decimate the number of aldermen then serving shows that the story about the reduction being wrong now is just so many crocodile tears being wept by the Opposition.

Of course—let us be quite clear about it, Mr. Speaker—this is really only a side issue. As the debate developed at the introductory stage—I am sure we will find that it will develop along the same lines in this debate—the real reason for the Opposition's performance was the change in the electoral machinery to elect a Lord Mayor. The number of aldermen is a lesser issue for most honourable members opposite, as I think it is for the Labor Party as a whole. The key issue is somehow to retain for the Lord Mayor the despotic powers that he has been able to assume over the years.

One has to ask oneself, "Why is this sought?" Is it really because honourable members opposite are so keen on the democracy that they keep talking about, bringing in the word with great unction every now and again? Why have there been such massive efforts to protect a system that is alien to our concepts of government at every important level of government? Why has there been this enormous care to preserve a system which is so productive of discrimination, intimidation, oppression and downright illegality? With all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition and his quoting from the Bennett Report, I suggest that if he reads it again he will find that it refers to direct illegalities committed by the Lord Mayor and the Town Clerk.

Why has there been this desperate effort to sustain a system where some very few people, for their own advantage, can squeeze Brisbane until the very pips crack? Indeed, is this the answer? Is this why so much is being done—because, under the present set-up, such huge sums are being made by the favoured few? Is this the reason why the Opposition will move heaven and earth in an effort to retain the system as it stands at present? Let us make no mistake about it; all the slurs, all the vague innuendoes that come from the Opposition will not disguise the fact that those who are connected with the council's operation at its highest levels are making a mint of money out of the present system.

Mr. Houston: Is that an innuendo? Whom are you naming?

Mr. PORTER: It is not an innuendo. Facts on this point have already appeared in "Hansard".

Mr. Houston: How are they making this money?

Mr. PORTER: If the honourable member does not now know how they are making it, I suggest he read the relevant "Hansard". It is there on record, and the statement was made by the Lord Mayor himself. That was years ago, but if the honourable member is suggesting that the Lord Mayor's operations are of a lesser extent today than they were six years ago his imagination operates in a very peculiar direction.

I repeat that in all that has been said, no attempt has been made to answer the Government's proposition that in any major area of governmental responsibility—and this Greater Brisbane certainly is such, with a population, expenditure, income and debt greater than those of the State of Tasmania—there must be equality at the electoral level—that is, the level where elected representatives operate—and there must be equal accountability. It is only then, when it comes to voting in the party room, where decisions should be made, that things can be levelled out. It is only then when a leader's vote is worth no more than the vote of the humblest back-bencher, or whatever he might be called in the council, that one can get a real equality of elected people.

In my view, any other system, where one man is empowered to outweigh all the other elected persons, is utterly wrong. I find this the very antithesis of democracy. Because of the machinery of his election—it is constantly quoted at us that he represents so many hundreds of thousands of votes—one man is worth more than 28 other men. If this is a good system, then we do not really need aldermen; we only need a city president. He can do the lot. He does, anyhow, and has done for years. This has been the history of the Greater Brisbane council of the last decade.

In my view, a desperate surgical operation is needed to help Greater Brisbane. We cannot afford to continue this "Peyton Place" story of prima donna rule where one man makes the decisions for all, even down to matters of minor detail. Literally everything has to go through the office of one man, and the decisions are made according to what he thinks is best according to his own personal and material whims.

I loathe this system. I think it has done a great deal of damage to Brisbane and the sooner we fix it up, the better. It is a system that leads directly to autocracy.

My colleague the honourable member for Ithaca, in his introductory speech, referred to the fact that Mr. Stopford, the then Home Secretary, in introducing the City of Brisbane Act said that we had to be very careful and must include provisions to curb the power of a Lord Mayor elected in this way. He

said, "We do not want a Mussolini." That statement shows a great deal of foresight because, despite the curbs that were put into the Act, we do have a Mussolini. The danger was foreseen; it has been bypassed over the years by the incumbent of the lord mayoral office, and we have a small-time dictatorship there.

The political philosophy that we espouse is equal responsibility for all elected people. That is why we do not believe in presidential systems. The honourable member for Redlands seems to laugh. I would dearly love him to tell us whether or not he wants a presidential system for the State or the Commonwealth. Before the next Federal election is held let him tell the people of Queensland what he wants so that he can see how they react. It is because of their fear of the Australian Labor Party and its wish to have centralised, enormous powers vested in a few people that they almost invariably reject the A.L.P. at an election.

The Churchill dictum of "trust the people" is the one I go by all the time. I do not like "Big Brothers" or "Big Fathers", or "strong" Lord Mayors or other "strong" people. I believe in democracy and rule by a number of elected people, not by one. That other concept is quite alien to our Australian and British tradition. The strong-man concept brings with it all the overtones of paternal dictatorship—of "Big Brother". We do not want a "penny Hitler", a "pint-sized Stalin" or a "mini-Chairman Mao". We want the type of democracy that, with all its drawbacks, disadvantages and flaws, is infinitely preferable to one-man rule. I reject the notion that we, the people, are so miserable and spiritless that we cannot afford to look after ourselves and have to abdicate our responsibility, giving it to the "big" figure, saying, "Here you are, 'strong' Lord Mayor, you look after us and do what you think best for us." I say, "To hell with that ideal" It is the complete anathema to what I have always believed as democracy and to what I believe is the wish of the overwhelming majority of the Queensland and Australian people.

I believe that anybody who tries to advocate otherwise has a very deformed and distorted view of what are the essential aspects—the essence—of real democracy. Maybe it is possible that they put their true convictions to one side in order to serve those who are wielding quite enormous political, financial and advertising revenue power; hence they have this huge vested interest in retaining the present system.

When we hear the arguments put forward for retaining a system that obviously puts power into the hands of the few, we should remember another Churchill quotation. He said that there is nothing more persuasive than the public man who is equating public interest with private advantage. Quite clearly the role of the Lord Mayor is the milk in this particular coconut. No matter what the Opposition does, with all its charges,

assertions, innuendoes, and indications that it will reveal something when the right time comes, this is what the argument is all about.

From the Opposition we hear the suggestion that the Liberal Party is out to "get" the Lord Mayor. How are we out to "get" the Lord Mayor? I invite the Opposition—it has ample time for this at this stage—to explain how the new machinery for electing the Lord Mayor will in any way "get" him. How will it stop the present Lord Mayor from becoming Lord Mayor again if he wishes to? How will the Bill put any obstacle in his way? Indeed, the Treasurer was correct when, at the introductory stage, he said that, far from hindering the present Lord Mayor, this Bill will make his passage to the lord mayoralty, if he wants it, easier. The plain fact is that if the present Lord Mayor runs for a ward and is elected—I should think that this would be pretty sure—and if the Labor Party wins a majority of the new wards—I should think that in the present climate this, too, is likely—

Mr. Davis: You can say that again.

Mr. PORTER: Then what is the worry? If that occurs, who can stop Alderman Jones from again becoming Lord Mayor? I will tell Opposition members who can stop him. It is the Labor aldermen, and they alone. Nobody other than his fellow Labor aldermen can stop him from again becoming Lord Mayor. And that, of course, is the worry.

Mr. Aikens: That is what they are afraid of in a secret ballot.

Mr. PORTER: Quite obviously the fear is that he will not make it by popular vote of his equals.

The simple fact is that no number of red herrings, no amount of crocodile tears, as I said earlier, will change the position. This Bill will not block Alderman Jones, or anyone else, from becoming Lord Mayor. All that is changed by the Bill is the machinery by which Alderman Jones, or anybody else, shall become Lord Mayor. Not one obstacle is put in his path. Indeed, it is made easier. Nothing in the Bill will impede, obstruct or hinder him in his progress if he wants to get there, and I challenge Opposition members to demonstrate anything to the contrary.

Other statements were made at the introductory stage. It was suggested that we should not change anything in the Greater Brisbane set-up; that we should not alter the number of aldermen; that we should not rearrange the wards; that we certainly should not change the machinery by which we find a Lord Mayor because Brisbane has been converted from a squalid collection of Aboriginal humpies and bark huts into the magnificent city it is today purely because of the present Lord Mayor and his administra-

tion. This is the "big lie" technique; but if it is repeated often enough people will believe it. It is true that a great many people who do not have the opportunity of visiting many other capital cities, or going overseas to see other cities, are unable to make useful comparisons between the way other cities operate and the way Greater Brisbane simply does not operate. If they were able to do this, it would be very difficult to sell the remarkable story that Brisbane is a magnificent city and that it has been made magnificent by the work of the Lord Mayor and the present administration.

The Treasurer pointed out that whatever has occurred in Brisbane over the last decade has been provided largely by the millions of dollars—I think he referred to a sum in excess of \$100,000,000—that have been poured into the city by the State Government, not as loans, but as money provided for major city improvements.

When people say to me, "The Lord Mayor has done a wonderful job for Brisbane," I often say to them, "Tell me what he has done." They start off with a halting story about sewerage, but there is a story about that.

Mr. Baldwin: And it is a good story.

Mr. PORTER: The honourable member for Redlands has come in happily again. He snaps at every bait that is offered. What are the facts about Brisbane's sewerage? Firstly, the council has had tons of money from the Government. The other major fact is that the fundamental job in sewerage, the big trunk mains and so on—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I remind the honourable member that sewerage has no relevance to the Bill under discussion.

Mr. PORTER: I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was merely dealing with the suggestion that we should not alter the administration of Greater Brisbane in this way because Brisbane is run in a much better way than are other capital cities in Australia. If you will permit me to develop the point a little further, I will try to show that that is not so.

Sewerage is one point on which there have been a number of connections—the tip of the iceberg, as it were, at the present time—but the great bulk of the necessary, unspectacular work was done by previous administrations. That is a simple fact of life. Opposition members can check on it if they so wish.

Any suggestions that Brisbane is such a fine city compared with other cities, that nothing should be done to disturb the even tenor of its ways, and that we should leave the present monstrosity operating as it is, do not accord with the facts. For instance, Brisbane has less usable developed park land and playing space—that is, situated within walking distance—than any other

capital city in Australia. Time and again I have heard the Lord Mayor say that Brisbane has more park space than any other capital city in Australia. What is the fact? The Adelaide City Council has 3,772 acres of park land and playing space in the heart of that city. Imagine having almost 4,000 acres of such land in the heart of Brisbane! Of an area of almost 8,000 acres in Adelaide, nearly 50 per cent is park land, which is developed and available within easy walking distance. Does any Opposition member suggest that nearly 50 per cent of the heart of Brisbane is park land? I doubt whether we have 5 per cent—or 2 per cent for that matter.

Perth is slightly larger than Adelaide, covering 14,065 acres. It is equivalent to about four Federal electorates, whereas Brisbane is equivalent to almost eight. Perth has 3,766 acres of park land and playing space that is developed and usable; in other words, close to 30 per cent of its area. Does any Opposition member claim that, in the centre of Brisbane, almost 30 per cent of the land is available as parks and open space? Again I say that I doubt whether we have 5 per cent. And what we have, as the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt mentioned by interjection, is being rapidly eroded—fenced in and sold to commercial interests—at every opportunity. Perth has no fewer than 47 fully equipped children's playgrounds in its metropolitan area. Honourable members should go around the suburbs of Brisbane, make a count, and see what the sorry story is here.

Brisbane also has fewer library services in its suburbs than any other capital city.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I cannot allow the honourable member to pursue this line of argument unless he relates it to the Bill under discussion.

Mr. PORTER: I am relating it to the Bill under discussion to the degree that I am pointing out that the Opposition's claim that what is in the Bill is wrong and should not be implemented, and that what we are doing is right because the way Brisbane is being run at present is greatly to its disadvantage. In my view, the two changes proposed by the Bill will greatly advantage this city, which for a very long time has been disadvantaged under the existing system. I believe that I should be permitted to pursue this line to some degree because it demonstrates the argument in favour of the changes that the Bill proposes.

Brisbane has not one civic centre. Perth, which is smaller than Brisbane, has a number—at South Perth, Mt. Hawthorne, City Beach, and so on. They are magnificent complexes which serve the citizens.

Brisbane has no real city plan. The only plan it has at present provides no long-term goal even for the inner-city area, and yet vast changes are being made. Brisbane has fewer

qualified town-planners and pays less attention to suburban beautification—that is, gardens, parks, roads, nature strips, trees and so on—than any other capital city in Australia. Brisbane does not pay anything like the same attention to keeping its suburbs clean and tidy. Honourable members should drive around this city and see what is going on. Our open spaces are being rapidly filched. Further, without any doubt, Brisbane has the worst public transport system of any capital city in Australia.

One very pertinent thing that warrants change, particularly in the lord mayoral role in Brisbane, is that, under pressure from the Lord Mayor as he is currently elected, the council has totally abandoned the proper tendering procedures for major works. I instance the hire-purchase operations associated with the City Square project, the Anzac Square proposal, and the Albert Street proposal for the rearrangement of what formerly was the markets area. There has been a complete abandonment of a concept which, in other States, is enshrined in law and has to be followed.

In addition, Brisbane carries a debt-load infinitely above that carried by any other comparable city. At present it is about \$240,000,000, and the stage is being reached where almost 40 per cent of every new loan raised must be used to service existing loans.

Mr. Casey: Some country shires are using up to 60 per cent in that way.

Mr. PORTER: I am referring to Greater Brisbane which, because of the size of its operation, is not in fact a local authority. Regrettable as the situation in other shires may be, Brisbane is not in the same category.

For the purpose of comparison, I have mentioned Perth, which is the size of four Federal electorates. Brisbane is the size of eight. The indebtedness of Perth in 1968, which was the most recent figure that I could obtain in the Library, was \$12,500,000. The indebtedness of Brisbane, twice the size of Perth, in 1968 was \$156,000,000. Does anyone suggest that this sorry spectacle of extravagance and incompetence does not require that something be done to rescue the City of Brisbane before it is too late?

I believe that there is a very real need for substantial change, and I welcome the Bill as a first change. My personal view is that there should be more changes, and I shall endeavour to persuade the majority of my colleagues to my way of thinking. However, till I am able to do that all that is being done is what is provided in the Bill. By any yardstick that anybody cares to use, it can be demonstrated beyond doubt that Brisbane is not progressing as other capital cities are progressing, and, with its hills, hollows, winding river and subtropical climate, it is certainly not the city that undoubtedly it deserves to be.

The other big lie that was tediously repeated during the introductory debate, and that I expect to hear again, is that if the council has done anything wrong, the Government has approved it, hence condoning it. By this reasoning, whatever the council may have done wrong is not the fault of the council but of the Government. That argument is simply specious rubbish, and it suggests that the council has no responsibility whatever for its decisions. If it is a good argument, no council at all is needed, as the Government could make all the decisions. Of course, that is complete nonsense. The Minister properly pointed out that even though the Government has power to intervene, naturally it does not unless there is very real reason for doing so. The council is an elected body, and it must accept the consequences if it makes wrong decisions. That is the way the system operates, and the Government does not condone or approve whatever the council may do that is wrong in effect, intention or principle.

Arguments concerning the tramways were raised. When it was mentioned that the Lord Mayor scrapped the tramways, it was said that the Wilbur Smith Report recommended their removal. Wilbur Smith can recommend till the cows come home; the decision to act was one for the council. It made that decision, and it must live with it. The council has been doing wrong things for many years and getting away with it because it has had a habit of doing things sub rosa and presenting the Government with a fait accompli. The Government then has either to ratify what the council has done, appoint a royal commission to inquire into it, toss the council out, or do extreme things that Governments generally are most reluctant to do.

The most cogent argument for altering the present system and for having a council in which the Lord Mayor has equal accountability with the aldermen, so that there is a sharing of responsibility and decisions are made at a consensus level rather than by the one man at the top, is a recitation of some of the things that have happened. There was, for instance, the Sandgate hire-purchase sewerage scheme carried out, at a cost of \$11,000,000, in a way in which the Act of the day specifically provided that it should not be done. Of course, it was done not only ultra vires the Act, forcing the Government to approve of it, but also in such a way that the interest was included with the repayments and it was impossible to discern what the interest rate was. Most experts believe it was not less than 22 per cent, and it may have been as high as 28 per cent.

There was also the sale of the council's transport assets, and the money produced from the sale of these assets, which were purchased by previous councils, was used to bolster the council's failing finances. The Treasurer pointed out how, over the recent

couple of years, every now and again the council has had to suspend payment on its cheques for periods of a month to two months, and sometimes three months, because it did not have the necessary money to operate. This is one of its ways of squandering assets to get money to pay its way. There is now an expensive lease operation for the council's transport system.

Then there was the scrapping of the tramway system, although it was the only paying part of the whole council transport operation. It was scrapped, and the tracks were covered over. Cities in other parts of the world are now bringing their tramways back again. They have discovered that they are a very important part of a total transport system.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. PORTER: The Leader of the Opposition does not seem to know anything about it. It is a pity his reading is not a little more extensive.

Honourable members have seen the King George Square operation of the city council. I well recall the Lord Mayor's constantly touting in the Press that this proposal would not cost the people of Brisbane one penny, that we would have this magnificent city square—an awful concept at best—

Mr. Houston: You were always opposed to it.

Mr. PORTER: Yes. And it was to be done on a basis under which the people of Brisbane would not pay one cent. What has happened? The favoured contractor who won this contract was paid out with public money and got out of it very nicely; but the people of Brisbane will pay between \$100,000,000 and \$150,000,000 over the life span of the square to amortise it. If anybody thinks he can deny those figures, I should like to see him try.

Then there was the purchase of Lennons Hotel for \$4,250,000, when the best real estate opinion around the town was that it was worth \$2,500,000 at the best. Why \$4,250,000? And the finance for this project is still on a pro-tem basis—a kind of "rob Peter to pay Paul" operation.

There has been a cynical denial of the council's trust obligation—in the eyes of many people, almost a sacred trust obligation—relative to Anzac Square, a quite cynical rejection—

Mr. Houston: Is Anzac Square dealt with in the Bill?

Mr. PORTER: I am speaking about—obviously the honourable gentleman does not care to hear it—the long record of misdeeds by the Brisbane City Council under a Lord Mayor who has literally plenipotentiary powers whenever he wishes to exercise them. And these are schemes that he personally has negotiated. There was an attempt to sell off part of the Mt. Coot-tha reserve to

commercial interests. Who negotiated that? The Lord Mayor—not the council; the Lord Mayor in person.

We have also seen the elimination, by changing the coding system of the town plan, of the citizens' right of appeal, which the Government was able to reinstate last year by an amendment of the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act.

One could go on and on mentioning the host of things that have sprung from deficiencies of the present system, under which a Lord Mayor who, because he is elected by all the people in the Greater Brisbane area, believes that he is superior to the sum total of everybody else. Walking on water is no problem to him. This is the problem that the Government has seen and is attempting to cure in this Bill.

I believe that the Bill is a good one. It will have the overwhelming support of this House, and I am certain that, as time goes on, it will have the overwhelming support of the people of Brisbane.

Mr. Aikens: It only scratches the surface of the problem.

Mr. PORTER: The honourable member for Townsville South says there are other problems. I hope that some time we will get round to dealing with those. This Bill deals with only two facets of this problem—

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. I said that this Bill only scratches the surface of the problem.

Mr. PORTER: Obviously, I am unable to agree with the honourable member.

I look forward to hearing the remainder of the second-reading debate. I do not expect that we will hear anything different from what we heard at the introductory stage, and the transparently clumsy device of evading our challenges is inexcusable.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (3.36 p.m.): After studying the Bill during the week-end, I am more than ever convinced that the Opposition is not only politically right but also morally right in continuing its opposition to it to the very death-knock, no matter which way that death-knock might go. The Government has not stood upon the only findings and evidence that have been available to us as a responsible Legislative Assembly; it has neglected entirely the three great expressions of opinion adverse to this move, and against those three has posed wish, feeling, hate, spleen, greed and smear.

We have the findings of three objective public-opinion surveys conducted by the Press and our own petition, which no doubt will be pigeon-holed in some archive. Nevertheless, I remind the Government of its presence. I do not need to say any more than that the Government will forget it. As well, of course, we have expressions of

opinion from the Press. We all know that the Press, regardless of what party political machine it might oil and support, on this issue has been most outspoken—and not without good reason. I would submit that its objection to the proposed legislation is based upon its understanding of the good and welfare of the City of Brisbane, and associated businesses even outside the City of Brisbane which have benefited and even battered upon the existence of the City of Brisbane as structured under the City of Brisbane Act, and upon its recognition of the forthright, strong, determined, and even courageous efforts of the Lord Mayor and many of the councillors to promote the good of this city and to expand the development of city government.

I would say that the opposition to the City of Brisbane concept is being carried on by a small, disgruntled group to whom favoured political circumstances have given unprecedented power. The Press, beyond all doubt, supports the issue that the people must not be robbed of the power to say who will be their chief man in city government, representing the whole of the city. The voters of Brisbane have been most forthright for 12 years in saying that they approve of the City of Brisbane concept and have shown their further approval by their reaction to this retrograde legislation.

I feel that I am morally justified in continuing the Labor Party's opposition and in supporting our Leader's contentions, made in the name of the majority, against this thinly disguised precursor to the weakening of city government and to its final fragmentation. The Minister gave a very unconvincing reply to the introductory debate. In his opening remarks he said that one purpose of the Bill was to restore power and responsibility to aldermen, to save them from being used as rubber stamps. Many of the aldermen have been in the Brisbane City Council for 12 years, and the Government claims that these poor, long-suffering aldermen, without any power and responsibility, have been used as rubber stamps. At this stage of the Government's final retrogression it comes out with these high-sounding, ultra-democratic, crocodile-tear songs for the aldermen of the City of Brisbane. That alone is enough to make any person with half an ounce of nous stop and ponder: why after 12 years?

As was pointed out at the introductory stage, in 1962 the Government put forward all the arguments in the world in favour of an increase in these so-called rubber stamps. Without any reservation whatever I claim that the statements made by Government members in this Chamber are an insult to the quality, ability, integrity and political maturity of the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council, including those of their own political colour—the Rudds and the Crawfords. They are an even greater insult to the understanding of the people of Brisbane. The Government purports to be acting on behalf of the citizens of Brisbane, yet it has the cheek to

insult their political intelligence with its statements. I—and, I am sure, the people of Brisbane—will not accept the Government's claim that, in spite of all these insults, it is trying to help us. The situation is paradoxical and unacceptable.

I have known several aldermen for 12 years, and I know that they are not men who are content to be rubber stamps. On the motion of objection that was recently carried by the Brisbane City Council they showed this to be true. Do honourable members really believe that if what certain Government members have put forward as the reasons for this Bill—the re-establishment of human dignity and responsibility, and all this other boloney that we have heard—were true, the aldermen, having been given the golden opportunity to oppose the motion of objection, would have passed it unanimously? This is untenable and idiotically laughable. We must look elsewhere for the motives behind this legislation and reasons for its introduction so soon after Parliament has re-assembled and at a time when a great number of really important issues need to be dealt with. Even the Press does not believe that this Bill is justified, and on the brink of a Federal election the Minister has his Federal colleagues really worried.

The Minister has said that the election of Lord Mayor by aldermen will allow the committees to function. Does he imply that these committees, which are built within the structure of the city council, have not been functioning for 12 years? If they have not been functioning, what has this Government, which has had 12 years of opportunity in which to amend, interfere, and attempt to wreck (as it is wrecking now), been doing in all this time? It had the power; why did it not use it? I again suggest that the Government is in a weak position, and I will expand on that shortly.

The Minister has made a convenient accusation which shows how little he knows of the workings of the council, how little he thinks we know, and how little he wants the citizens of Brisbane to know. I will leave it to Alderman Harvey, the member for Stafford, who has at his fingertips the workings of the council, to educate the Minister and his colleagues, if he wishes to do so, on how the committees and the Lord Mayor function.

The Minister said that he "feels" the Lord Mayor should be elected by the aldermen. What difference is his feeling from my feeling? If I said, Mr. Speaker, "I feel the Lord Mayor should not be elected by the aldermen," we are both back at taws, on the basis of animal feeling. And that, of course, is the basis of the reasoning in this legislation. It is pure animal reasoning based on the greed and grasping aspirations of a certain little clique that has recently come to power.

Mr. Davis: Also Chalk.

Mr. BALDWIN: I suggest it was the ginger group. Its members have come to power, and I remind them of the power they wielded in March 1971 when this House was discussing the redistribution legislation and how, because they thought their necks were being put on the block by their loving, mesalliance, Country Party colleagues, they wrecked the redistribution on clause 5. The Minister had the cheek, in this House, to say that Labor caused the number of parliamentary members to be increased from 78 to 82 when we had previously often declared, and still do declare, our opposition to an increase in numbers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will return to the principles of the Bill.

Mr. BALDWIN: Mr. Speaker, I hope in all sincerity that you will give me, as chairman of Labor's local government committee, an opportunity to answer statements made by the Minister this morning.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is introducing the matter of State redistribution which has nothing at all to do with the Bill under discussion.

Mr. BALDWIN: I agree that it has nothing to do with it, and I would not have mentioned it if it had not been raised by the Minister. That is my only reason for referring to it.

To get close to the issue, I ask: what caused the introduction of this measure, and what is implied in its principles? I stand on my statement—and I will wait for history to prove me true or false—that this has been prompted by the ginger group, which is no longer a group, but is now the metropolitan Liberal Party with the balance of power in this House. And they know it! Queensland is now being effectively misruled and misgoverned by a power junta. I cannot yet bring myself to believe that all Country Party members can supinely submit to such indignity for their party. I hope they will show a spark of the country manhood that Australian country men are renowned for and that they will reject, repudiate and throw out this measure which is a menace to them, and will go down as a blot on the legislative history of this House. This very important issue is a matter not of feelings but of facts; not a matter of greedy groups but of democratic considerations of the highest moral order.

The Minister has tried to use every sticky tentacle to entangle every person and organisation and to implicate them in this very disgraceful blow against the progressive evolution towards strengthening city government that has been going on since 1964. He started with the address of Mr. J. C. Slaughter in 1964 and attempted to rope in Professor Keeble because of his recent remarks, under question, at the opening session of the recent Royal Australian Planning Institute conference. At the opening of that conference I heard the

answer given by the professor. His ability as a town-planner and architect, and his motives in those areas, are unquestionable. However, this is a question of local government legislation, not of town-planning. Professor Keeble stated, as reported, that the Lord Mayor was no more than a chairman and, therefore he did not see why he could not be elected by the aldermen. Within the limits of that narrow statement, he must be accepted, but that is not the situation, and I have no doubt that other Opposition members will expand on it. I have other matters to introduce and debate.

Why not seek the opinion of Mr. Gerry France, the senior lecturer in the Department of Government at the University of Queensland? Fortunately we do not have to. He has given it forthrightly, without being asked by us. He said that this is poor, retrograde, dangerous legislation. I would rather accept his than anyone else's criticism and opinion of the legislation. For the Minister to ask Professor Keeble that question and obtain his reply is the same as his asking a taxi-driver's opinion of the Lord Mayor and applying it to a matter of local government legislation.

The Minister has accused Labor Opposition members of having contempt—that was his word—for taxi-drivers. I reject and repudiate that accusation. It was never our purpose to put it in that light. Our purpose, as I have stated, was to show that a taxi-driver knows his own trade well. He knows the roads and who has helped him to transport his passengers around the city more freely. For the Minister's one opinion of a taxi-driver, I could give 10 opinions that the Lord Mayor has assisted people to move around the city more quickly without burning up so much of their time.

I remind the Minister that the Australian Labor Party, with my personal assistance, supported the candidature of a taxi-driver named George Harvey in the Federal election. He is a good taxi-driver and a good person, and was a good candidate. He accounted well for himself. To make such accusations against us, in the face of the facts, smacks of trying anything to make a point.

The next most astounding explanation made this morning by the Minister was that the Labor Party was responsible for the increase in the number of State seats. The Opposition gave no support at all to that proposal, but we have every right now to look at the City of Brisbane and say what we would do about the number of aldermen. The obvious answer is that if we were going to do anything in the present situation, we would not be reducing the number of aldermen. I am merely using the Government's facts and legislation to build an argument on what we would do if we were in its position.

In my opinion, the most important matter concerning the Bill is not speculation on a politically cowardly attempt to take the power

to elect the Lord Mayor from the citizens of Brisbane, but the credibility of the Government. The leader of the Government is on record publicly as saying that he was not interested in votes but in seats. What an about-turn is this piece of legislation to reduce the number of city wards! What it boils down to is obtaining power at any price, and that is in keeping with the Government's philosophy. The Government is reducing the number of seats because it hopes for a power junta that will give it political power, and the Country Party has fallen for the trick.

The Deputy Premier is on record as defending the right of Ministers, who are paid approximately \$17,000 a year by the taxpayers to serve the people and who serve themselves, instead, with company shares. I mention these things because they cannot be divorced from a consideration of the Bill, especially the timing of its introduction and the complete lack of explanation to the people of the reasons for it. It is the credibility of the Government that is now at stake. It is on this basis that I introduce what might seem to the casual observer to be irrelevancies but which are in fact relevant and tied up with the whole problem. I shall go further and say that the Liberals, in revenge, wrecked the Country Party's butter-versus-margarine legislation, and in return—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the principles of the Bill. Legislation dealing with margarine does not come into it.

Mr. BALDWIN: I am trying to make the point that it is the credibility of the Government that is at stake. I am reminding the people of Brisbane, and indeed of Queensland, as it is my duty to do, that the Government's credibility is a matter of continuing argument. However, if that is your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I shall have to accept it. I shall simply ask members to cast their minds back to the other issues dealing with Cooloola and the drilling of the Great Barrier Reef.

The latest politically illegitimate product of the political mesalliance between the two Government parties is the proposal to take electoral power from the voters of Brisbane—to weaken the power of city government by reducing the number of aldermen and take away the power of the Lord Mayor. Despite all the statements from Government members, the taking away of the right of the people to vote for the Lord Mayor removes their power in city government, and thereby, to some extent, the power of the Lord Mayor, who has to rely directly upon the people of this city for approval of his work. That approval rolled in during three successive city council elections.

Mr. Lane: Has he had the approval of all his aldermen?

Mr. BALDWIN: If the honourable member interjecting had put a finger in one ear

so that what I said previously did not pass right through his head, he would have heard me answer that question earlier.

Mr. Lane: Why don't you answer the question?

Mr. BALDWIN: I have answered it already, while the honourable member was snoring.

The redistribution of the ward boundaries is another attempt by the Government to gerrymander its way into a pseudo non-party council.

Mr. Lane: What is wrong with a non-party council?

Mr. BALDWIN: I will answer that question in a minute. The honourable member has the patience of a two-year-old child.

Mr. Lane: We have to wait all day. You never get to the point.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BALDWIN: I have only 40 minutes, not all day. If I had all day, the honourable member would learn a thing or two.

When trying to establish foundations in democratic worth, any socially mature person appeals to experience and to history. Let us look, Mr. Speaker, at a little bit of history.

When Hitler could not gain electoral power, he marched into Parliament House, with his jack-booters, his black-leggers, and threw the elected members out the second-storey windows. But the most important part about it is that the very next thing he did was to take away the rights of the citizens of the cities to elect aldermen and the chief burgomasters. I say that the Government's actions are not unrelated to his, both in their philosophy and in their long-term motives. In all the debate entered into by the Minister and his colleagues, not one tittle of reason has been given to the people of Brisbane as to why or how Brisbane will work better with a mayor elected by the aldermen, and with only 21 aldermen, than it is working now. Of course, they want anti-Labor help in electing the Lord Mayor, and they hope to increase the percentage of that anti-Labor help by a gerrymander within the Brisbane metropolitan area.

The honourable member for Toowong, in common with his colleagues, has continued to reveal the outdated principle of local government to which honourable members opposite adhere, that is, that there should not be any professional politicians in local government. What the honourable member says, in effect, in this context is that there should be no party politics in shire, town or city councils.

I do not intend to quote from the document that I have here. I shall mention it so that honourable members might avail themselves of the wealth of information, based on historical premise and progress, on this particular matter. It is a paper delivered to the

A.N.Z.A.A.S. conference at Brisbane on 27 May 1971. It is by senior lecturer G. France and is entitled "The Betterment of Local Government". I refer honourable members to that for the basis of what I have abstracted from the wealth of information there.

What they really mean, these people who mouth this outworn shibboleth, is that they do not want Labor politics in city, town or shire councils, only their own. I have said in this Chamber both at the introductory stage of this Bill and on other occasions that almost 70 per cent of the councils in the State of Queensland have almost 100 per cent majorities in those councils. So while one party, with only one sectional interest, was represented on those councils, that was all right. But when new sections of interest, such as wage and salary earners, commercial and industrial men, and so on, moved into the area of larger cities, they should not have any representation. This is what their statement really means, and it belongs to the last century.

The honourable member for Toowong went on to challenge us on the credibility of our opposition, the basis of his statement being that we have made no submission to increase the number of aldermen. Despite the notorious immensity of his ego, the honourable member, with his power group, might control the Country and Liberal Parties, but he does not control the Labor Party. He does not know what we are going to propose on this matter, but if he stays around and awake long enough, he will find out. He said that we want a presidential system. What about his own party structure? Labor members do not have to submit to something on which members of his party have often voiced their public disapproval, that is, that their leader selects his Cabinet solely on his own personal beliefs and feelings.

We base our arguments, in opposing this measure, on the main premise that Government members have attempted to conceal by invention accusations that we have made against them. They say that we are only moaning about the good of Alderman Clem Jones, the Lord Mayor, and his power. They have dragged that into the debate time and again. We have said—and I will repeat it so that they get the message loud and clear—that our second greatest concern is the raping of the power of the people of Brisbane on both counts proposed in this legislation. I have already told the House what our main concern is. Government members are raping the power of the people of Brisbane by removing from them the power of election of the Lord Mayor and by reducing the number of aldermanic wards for the city.

I will have something more to say on that if I have time later. At present, I want to continue with what the Minister said in his opening remarks at this stage. In answer to something that I had mentioned at the introductory stage, he said that my submissions substantiated the Treasurer's assertion that

the State Government had greatly assisted the Brisbane City Council. This same old cry, of course, was taken up by the honourable member for Toowong and, as others opposite have done, he accused the Brisbane City Council, constituted as it is, of not doing as much as it should for the people of Brisbane. The inference, of course, is that if it is reconstituted as proposed, it will do something more for the people of Brisbane. The significance of that and its implications are arresting and shocking.

In the debate on the Appropriation Bill the other day I quoted two pages of city council subsidies that have been reduced, figures that were taken from the Treasury Department's communications with the council. One, for instance, touched on the matter that the honourable member for Toowong tried to make a big point of, namely, that the city council has not done as much as it should to beautify the banks of the Brisbane River. He forgot, or he may not have been present to hear it, that in my opening speech I had cited that very instance as one that had been completely wiped off the State Government's subsidy list to the city council. If a person who is starved long enough and is thrown a piece of meat bends down to pick it up, he can be kicked in the behind. That is exactly what this Government is attempting to do to the Brisbane City Council.

The Government's claim that it has ploughed back into the Brisbane City Council a great deal of money by way of assistance is merely a qualitative one. What does the Government expect any thinking person to believe from it? Does it expect the people to believe that it should not have given the Brisbane City Council any financial assistance after the council has provided transport, education and health services to the people of this city? After all, those services are bound up with the Government's responsibilities. Does the Government expect us to say that after the people of Brisbane have bought, used and paid tax on billions of gallons of petrol they should not get back from the State Government some of the money paid by the Federal Government out of that very tax? I could extend this argument to cover beer, races, tobacco, cigarettes, and so on. The Government's statement was a stupid one, designed to bolster its argument that the political power of the Brisbane City Council should be emasculated in the interests of the people of Brisbane. The Government's argument is simply not tenable—in fact, it is invalid and even irrelevant to the Bill under debate.

The Minister has also claimed that the Bill will return democracy to the aldermen. Does he really expect us to believe that for 12 years these aldermen have been putting up with anti-democracy? Are they a mob of masochists? Are the people of Brisbane a lot of political idiots because they have continued to return those aldermen with increasing majorities over that period of 12 years? The arguments put forward by the

Minister and his colleagues are peurile, infantile, unacceptable and irrelevant, and are not based on fact. The motive behind the Bill is unseen, and we are forced to guess at it. We have to guess why this legislation has come before Parliament at this time.

Are the aldermen subservient to the Lord Mayor to such an extent that they would put up with being rubber stamps without having any say? Would they be happy to contend with that undemocratic state of affairs for 12 years and not do a thing about it at this stage? The Government is insulting their integrity—their human quality—and I hope the day will come when it will have to answer directly to them for that insult.

The honourable member for Toowoong claims that Brisbane is suffering as a result of the present set-up, but he did not say how the city will cease to suffer if this set-up is replaced by the one proposed in the Bill. All the honourable member has left me to take from his vague argument is one very damaging abstract, and I say this in the light of what I have proposed previously, namely, that we are now faced with the possibility of a power junta having the balance of power. He expects us to draw the inference that, if this Bill is passed, all the ills will be cured and the City of Brisbane will progress at a much faster rate and along better lines than previously. I do not accept that contention.

(Time expired.)

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (4.15 p.m.): We have been in this Chamber for the better part of two days listening to a debate that is geared to the reorganisation of the city council as it functions in Brisbane. The honourable member for Redlands has at least introduced a little light humour into the debate by the use of the word "mesalliance" and other French terms. That word, of course, is related to "liaison", as no doubt he is well aware.

There is an old story concerning a senior female member of a political party—I will not name the party—who reprimanded a younger male member of the party for not engaging in sufficient liaison. After he said to her, "Madam, this word comes from the French and involves intimate personal relationship," he heard no further from her. Maybe the honourable member for Redlands should take that lesson to heart when talking about mesalliances associated with our city. The word "mesalliance" is used in respect of a bad relationship, although the honourable member may not agree with my translation.

Mr. Baldwin interjected.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It is indeed relevant to the matter under discussion, because for some years, we have had an example of a mesalliance in this city.

The point that is relevant to the discussion is simply whether we wish to have an efficient local government or not. I believe, as I am

sure many other honourable members do—although they may not admit it—that local government should not be deeply involved with party politics. If possible, it should be entirely divorced from the vituperative aspects of politics.

Mr. Sherrington: We indulge in it.

Dr. CRAWFORD: That may be so, but I believe we would have a much more satisfactory form of local government in Brisbane without it.

There has been general hysteria about the way the city council is structured, and marked hysterical reaction when the efficiency of the city council has been questioned in any way. Questioning the efficiency of the city council appears to be categorised in the same way as a person who is told to write his own reference. If he can produce a reference saying that he is efficient he gets the job for which he is applying. That, of course, would not be accepted in any form of the commercial life of this or any other city. Various people who, I believe, should know better keep eulogising the activities of the city council structure while completely ignoring, or conveniently forgetting, irrefutable facts concerning some of the methods employed by the council in implementing its day-to-day activities. For many years there has been dissatisfaction with the way the council has functioned, and there are probably many reasons for that. This culminated in June 1967 with the setting-up of a commission under Mr. A. L. Bennett. His report is available for all to read. Without condemning anybody or making any suggestions about how things should be changed, he pointed out quite categorically that of the 130 cases relating to land dealings that he investigated and in respect of which the people concerned were prepared to give evidence, there were wrongful dealings or wrongful conduct by the council in 42 of them. Nobody can refute that that happened. To my mind, that is evidence that, however the council functions at the moment, it needs to be restructured so that these happenings do not recur.

Recently, honourable members have quoted extensively from newspapers, both here and through the public media, what other people have said at various times. Over the week-end one newspaper ventured the opinion that politicians should express their own views instead of simply quoting from newspapers. Many of us would agree with that opinion. In recent years an amazing change has taken place in the attitude of the Queensland newspapers located in this area on their conception of the whole idea of local government. I suppose it is because of this change that honourable members on both sides of the House have quoted from newspapers to bolster their points of view in this context.

Prior to the proposed legislation and also prior to the change in this policy, the definite attitude of the Press was that various aspects of council administration could be looked

at carefully, that Chapter II needed to be investigated and that the whole structure could not be allowed to continue in the manner in which it was functioning at that time. In March 1968 "The Courier-Mail" said—

"Allegations that the Brisbane City Council is thumbing its nose at legislation on land use and subdivision cannot be ignored."

Mr. Davis: Who said that?

Dr. CRAWFORD: That is in the leading article.

At the same time, Mr. T. H. A. Cross, an architect, was claiming that the City Hall was bluffing its way around the laws and had tried to set unjust and possibly illegal conditions on land-use applications.

An editorial in "The Courier-Mail" at the time went on to suggest—

"The pressure is more subtle than in the past. It is merely 'suggested' to the applicant that he fulfil a condition. But the implication is that a permit will not be granted unless he does."

It is because of this type of public awareness in 1967, as a result of the Bennett Report and many revelations that came to light in 1968 that many people who are concerned about how this city functions and how local government actually works in practice have been looking at methods to improve the whole process of local government. There is no doubt whatever that in 1967 and 1968 local government in Brisbane needed an overhaul—and it still does.

This need culminated in the appointment, during 1970, of a highly specialised expert committee to advise the then Minister for Local Government. It comprised Professor G. Roberts, Professor of Architecture at the University of Queensland, Mr. John Andrews, Deputy Co-ordinator General, Mr. H. Merrin, town-planner and engineer, Mr. J. Birrell, engineer, Mr. P. Heathwood, architect and town-planner, and Mr. F. Costello, a practising architect in town-planning in this city who was previously employed by the council as one of its town-planning and architectural advisers. He is also a lecturer at the Queensland Institute of Technology, Brisbane.

There is no doubt in my mind that this was a very valuable addition to the Department of Local Government. The opinion of this expert and highly distinguished committee, after examining the whole of the council's planning in the 1970's, was that the planning methods implemented by that local authority were not only wrong in principle but could also be said to cause or be causing irretrievable damage if it were allowed to extend for a further decade.

There is also no doubt that this Bill is the result of the concern of those who wish to see the best possible form of local government in our community. The pressures

exerted on the committee I have mentioned subsequent to the production of its initial report were quite extensive, and those who were responsible for its appointment also had pressure applied on them at that time. As a result of that pressure, the services of the committee were dispensed with for a time early in 1971. The then Minister for Local Government, Honourable W. A. R. Rae, said that the relationship between Government departments and the Brisbane City Council was much better, without anyone having to contend with a host of academic opinions. In other words, that particular phase had passed, and the status quo had been restored. Common sense prevailed, and the committee was reappointed and has since given expert and invaluable advice which resulted in the legislation that was brought down late last year. It will no doubt continue to make suggestions which, when implemented, will assist the growth and development of this city.

Charges have been made, especially by Queensland newspapers, that the current Bill to alter the structure of the Brisbane City Council has come "out of the blue". That is completely untrue. The documents to which I have been referring show that there has been a continuous examination of what is best for the city.

Mr. Sherrington: You will agree that it was not mentioned during the State election campaign. There was not a hint of it.

Dr. CRAWFORD: No, but it was mentioned towards the end of last year.

It is a fact that the process of restructuring the Brisbane City Council is a continuing one, and the Bill is a part of that process. The amendments in the local government field introduced last year did begin to return some democratic processes to council functioning. This resulted in the average citizen—I hope we are all concerned with him—being able to take the council to court, if necessary, without having the sword of Damocles hanging over his head in the form of costs that the city council could, because of its previous interpretation of the previous legislation, force him to pay. As a result of the amendments of last year the democratic process made a marked step forward.

However, situations have arisen since in which the Brisbane City Council has given rather scant attention to the legislation when applications for subdivisions have been received. I have received legal advice that the forms that have now been introduced by the city council, which people wishing to contact the council on matters of subdivision are asked to complete, are illegal under the 1971 legislation. Here again is a very relevant point in consideration of the Bill and the necessity for restructuring the council. I have been told that these forms are so illegal that if a lawyer filled them in he could, under the regulations that the council is attempting to implement, be taken to court by his client and charged with illegal activity. I believe

it to be most important that provisions designed to protect the citizens should receive the attention that they deserve and be examined most carefully by the Government.

Once again we come to the question of whether the council is or is not functioning efficiently in the interests of the citizens. It would be interesting to hear the opinion of the architect to whom I referred previously in "The Courier-Mail", with its current editorial policy, would publish an opinion that in effect disagrees with it.

Mr. Sherrington: Why doesn't the Minister act if these things are illegal?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I believe that the Minister is acting.

Mr. Sherrington: Why didn't he act on them, if they are illegal?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! The honourable member for Salisbury will have an opportunity to speak later in the debate.

Dr. CRAWFORD: The culmination of the ingenuousness of the present newspaper attitude is, of course, seen to the full in the recent so-called poll of public opinion to which the city has been subjected. The poll itself could not possibly gauge anything except the number of newspapers sold and their circulation in the Brisbane area.

Mr. Low: Things have changed a little over the week-end, haven't they?

Dr. CRAWFORD: Yes, it is true that they have changed a little over the week-end.

On the subject of public opinion polls, I ask this question: What about the poll, pseudo or otherwise, which showed that the citizens of Brisbane objected to Anzac Square, which was to be a war memorial in perpetuity, being re-gazetted by the council as a car park? A poll on that issue was conveniently ignored.

As far as current practices of the city council are concerned, do citizens of this city wish to have land resumed compulsorily, as occurs at the moment, and then have that land sold by the authority at a profit?

General attention must be given to the whole system of local government, and this Bill will commence that process. People will never benefit from a city-State that elects a single person to a position from which his colleagues cannot remove him. It is perhaps relevant to mention that in recent years the Prime Minister of this country was removed by his own party when it was considered that he was not doing the job for which he had been elected. It is not possible to remove anybody who is elected on the presidential system, and if we wish to introduce throughout Australia the presidential electoral system, under which the whole of the electorate elects the Prime Minister, the Premier, or any

other person, to that supreme authority, we will automatically give to the person concerned greatly enhanced and greatly augmented powers. There is no other way in which that system can work. We are all aware of the tremendous and awe-inspiring powers of the President of the United States of America. As a general principle, I would much prefer a democratic system as it functions in our traditions, by which a series of candidates are elected by the people as individuals and then the leader is chosen.

Mr. Baldwin: In local government?

Dr. CRAWFORD: In all government. Historically, down the ages the presidential system is modelled on the ancient cities in Italy and Germany, and these cities have shown over the years the very great amount of malpractice and mal-use of power which can be expected if one individual is given too much power. We must have restraints on personal power in all our government structure. Only then will we have true democracy with the protection of the individual; there is no other way in which this can be achieved. If we had a benign dictator running this city, or the State, or the country, and he was elected by the people, it would be to the disadvantage of the people; there is no argument about that.

The city council budget, for example, which deals with this city of over 800,000 people—a number twice as large as the population of Tasmania—was bulldozed through the council in 24 hours. That, in my view, is not democracy. The vetoing of any discussion by any leader is unacceptable to me.

Mr. Sherrington: What about the gag that was applied on the introduction of this Bill?

Dr. CRAWFORD: This Bill will enable the rank and file to act as true representatives of the public, from whom they hold an election mandate. There is no relationship whatever between the functioning of this House and the body under discussion.

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (4.35 p.m.): I should like Country Party members to listen well to my comments today because I think they apply particularly to them. I occupy a unique position in this debate. Not being one who is bound, as they are, by caucus decision, not being one who is obliged to support the proposal that has come from a small segment of the Liberal Party and a very small group of people outside who are endeavouring to have this measure put through, and, of course, not being one who has to stand up and politically support the current administration of the Brisbane City Council, I should like to say at the outset that I strongly oppose the introduction of the measure and the principles contained in it.

In saying this, I speak not only on my own behalf but on behalf of the people of North Queensland. I have recently made a tour

throughout the 30-odd local authority areas of North Queensland and in every area without exception persons of all political beliefs were strongly opposed to the proposals in this Bill. It has been alleged here that so many Brisbane members support and favour this Bill. This is indeed a wrong concept for Parliament. It is wrong to endeavour to elicit support by pointing out that so many people from one area or group favour the move. In dealing with legislation, each and every one of the 82 members of this House is responsible to the whole of the State, and that is a matter that each and every one of us should remember.

During the period I have been in Parliament, some members have shown particular interest in Brisbane and the administration of the Brisbane City Council, but I believe that Parliament is responsible to all of the people of Queensland, especially since those in other areas of Queensland have been affected by things that have occurred within the Brisbane City Council.

If a Bill is to be introduced to do something relative to the Brisbane City Council, it should be to bring it into line with every other local authority in Queensland. Despite the assertion that the Brisbane City Council is unique—it is true that it is the biggest in Australia and different from all others in that it has fully paid aldermen—every local authority is different from others in its own sphere of operation and area and, irrespective of what we say about it, the Brisbane City Council is a local authority and, as such, is merely one segment of this third arm of Government in Australia today.

I repeat that if anything is to be done, it should be to bring the City Council legislation into line with the Local Government Act. Basically, the only difference between the Brisbane City Council and other local authorities is that its rules are called ordinances, whereas those of other local authorities throughout the State are called by-laws. Certainly, the City of Brisbane Act was needed initially to amalgamate the various local authorities in the Greater Brisbane area, but its formation as such does not mean it is not a local authority and should not be treated as such.

I believe that this Bill is a further step towards making Brisbane a State within a State. I am aware that this thought was expressed in part at the introductory stage. However, the Brisbane City Council does have certain powers, and a budget that exceeds that of one of the States. The step that is now being taken assures a continuation of political domination of the Brisbane City Council. I do not refer only to the group that is in power at present, for as long as the provisions of this Bill apply, the political domination of the Brisbane City Council will be assured. Whether such domination should be extended to other local authorities is a matter of opinion, but I believe that it should be guarded against and watched very closely.

If the Government desired to reduce the power of the Jones administration, it could have done so by much easier and more subtle methods. It has been alleged that the Brisbane City Council has run wild, engaged upon illegal activities, and done many wrong things. If those allegations are true, instead of introducing this Bill the Government should have used the power that it possesses under existing legislation to prevent the Brisbane City Council from perpetrating illegal acts on various people or groups of people.

There is no doubt that, when compared with previous administrations in the Brisbane City Council, that of Alderman Jones has been successful. But this success has been due mainly to the ability of the Jones administration to obtain finance from the State Government with which to carry out its works programmes, to the detriment of other local authorities in Queensland. That claim can be substantiated by an examination of the Loan Council allocations. Each such allocation must be approved by Cabinet before it can be obtained. The Brisbane City Council has had available to it a lot more money than before. The honourable member for Toowong has already said this, and it is true. In addition the council has had finance made available to it from other sources. Special Acts of Parliament have been passed by this Government to allow the Jones administration to obtain finance from avenues that are not normally open to other local authorities.

I do not deny the citizens of Brisbane the right to have a fair and reasonable means of travel to and from their places of employment. I reckon the people of Brisbane are mad to stay here. If they moved to the provincial cities or to the country areas, they would find life much easier. However, that is beside the point. In the last financial year the allocation to the Main Roads Department was increased by some \$11,000,000 or \$11,500,000. The whole of that increased spending has been applied to the freeway system in the City of Brisbane. The Brisbane City Council has benefited to the detriment of other local authorities in Queensland, because on a percentage basis the allocation of Main Roads funds to other local authorities is down on that of previous years. In spite of the fact that on a State-wide basis a huge increase has occurred in Main Roads allocations, the whole of the increase has been devoted to one programme, the freeway system in Brisbane.

Let us look at the amount of money that the State Government Insurance Office has contributed towards the tremendous building programme within the City of Brisbane. Brisbane is the city in which 45 per cent of the State's population reside. Having travelled throughout the State, I have seen nothing to indicate that the S.G.I.O. has invested similarly on development in other areas. Surely the State Government should accept its responsibility to the whole of the State and ensure that the developmental

finance available through the State Government Insurance Office is spent proportionately throughout the State in areas such as those represented by the honourable members for Callide, Maryborough, Mount Isa, Mourilyan and so on. I have advocated this policy before. Probably 95 per cent of the developmental finance available through this State Government instrumentality has been spent on improving the general aspect of the City of Brisbane. My point is that the Government, at all times, has had power to do something about Brisbane City Council administration by reducing the finance made available to it and by controlling other activities of the council.

Last week the Treasurer admitted that there had been a big loss in the Brisbane suburban railway system. As the member for Townsville West and other northern members know, the northern and the central divisions of the railways carry the southern division. And the greatest loss of all in the southern area is incurred on the suburban transport system of the Brisbane City Council. The rest of the people in Queensland have a right to say what should happen in the City of Brisbane.

I repeat that every country member should take an active interest in what is to happen under this Bill, and that every country member should be extremely concerned with what is happening today.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Why is that?

Mr. CASEY: The honourable member for Windsor is not a country member. If he travelled a little further afield in the State, he would know what I am talking about.

The Jones administration has had more money made available to it by this Government than by any other Government. The Forgan-Smith Government, the Cooper Government, the Hanlon Government and the Nicklin Government did not give as much to Brisbane as has been given by this Government in the last five or seven years. If the Government believed that the Brisbane City Council was getting out of hand, it had power at all times to bring it into line. What has been done has been to the detriment of all other areas in Queensland.

I know that many members representing country and provincial city electorates are concerned about this aspect of governmental spending in Brisbane, but the political organisations are completely on side with what has been done. That is why Jones and his administration have had such strong support in Brisbane.

People in the northern areas of the State are sick and tired of carrying this great "blurb" of pollution and congestion. It is about time their opinions were heeded more closely by the Government.

At no time have I strongly favoured the new State movement in North Queensland, but what I have heard today in this House represents a further step towards making Brisbane a State within a State, and that concerns me deeply. If that is the case I am forced to the conclusion that we in North Queensland would be better off with our own State. Only last night, when I examined the local government records published by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, I found that there are as many miles of sealed roads in the City of Brisbane, or the Brisbane area, as there are in the whole of Mackay, Townsville and Cairns and the North West statistical division of Queensland. In other words, the area north of the 22nd parallel—almost half the area of the State—has the same mileage of bitumen roads as Brisbane.

On the other side of the story, according to 1971-72 figures supplied to me by the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs, the area north of the 22nd parallel exported, through northern ports, 54 per cent of State exports. Yet it was responsible for only 11 per cent of the State's imports, and most of that 11 per cent was fuel and petroleum products, which are so necessary for the people to cover the large mileages necessary to conduct their businesses and do their work.

The Government has complete power over Brisbane City Council finance, and the Treasurer has complete power over the borrowings of the council. There has certainly been no attempt to cut them back to keep the council within bounds.

The Minister claimed that, under the proposed system of electing the Lord Mayor, the services of a person who was a good alderman would not necessarily be lost because he stood unsuccessfully for Lord Mayor. He gave that as one of the reasons for this particular provision. His argument has no real logic because this system will not be extended to country areas. I oppose that principle. I do not know how the Minister can claim it works with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane but not with a country mayor or shire chairman. Surely the same logic must apply in both cases.

Mr. R. E. Moore: But Brisbane is a city-State.

Mr. CASEY: In reply to the honourable member for Windsor, there is no difference between the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and the mayor of Mackay, Townsville or Mt. Isa, or the chairman of the Widege Shire Council. Each is the elected chairman of his council, and under the Local Government Act carries heavier and higher responsibilities than ordinary aldermen or councillors. The Minister's case lacks logic. He defeats it by his own argument. He says he is concerned that local government does not lose the services of a good man, but what is to happen

to the seven good men who will lose their seats in the Brisbane City Council? They will get the axe.

Mr. Aikens: What gives you the idea they are good men?

Mr. CASEY: I think they are good men, and the Minister, in introducing the Bill, paid a compliment to the aldermen of the Brisbane City Council. He said that each and every one of them had done his best in his own sphere and that he bore no malice towards any one of them personally. I thank the Minister for those comments. If the Minister's reasoning is followed and the community does not want to lose good men, I suppose the only way in which that could be obviated would be by the adoption in Brisbane of a ward system similar to the Tasmanian system of election of members to the State Parliament. In that State, there is multiple representation and multiple selection within electorates. The people would then have within their area a selection of candidates whom they knew and whom they could support.

There have been allegations of things going wrong in the council, and the Minister has said that power and responsibility will be restored to aldermen. I cannot see that the Bill will produce any situation different from the present one. Surely in the Brisbane City Council, whether the Jones administration or any other be in power, decisions are made by a majority of aldermen. Surely aldermen have always been able to disagree with the Lord Mayor, just as that power resides, and will be retained, in every other local authority and council. If aldermen or councillors disagree with mayors or chairmen, it is the majority decision that counts. Surely what is needed is not an amendment of the Act but an assurance by the Government that the legislation is being observed by all persons under its jurisdiction. If any person steps out of line, whether he be in Brisbane or anywhere else in the State, surely the Act contains provisions under which he can be brought into line by either his own council or the Government. The Minister has strong powers under the City of Brisbane Act and the Local Government Act, and I cannot see that many of the arguments advanced in support of this Bill stand up to scrutiny.

All the arguments put forward today and last Thursday confirm that Queensland is long overdue for a complete reappraisal of local government, in Brisbane and elsewhere throughout the State. The last royal commission into local government was held in 1928, and since then there have been six or seven redistributions of State electoral boundaries. The commissioners to be appointed to redistribute Brisbane wards will be required to give consideration to community or diversity of interest, means of communication, physical features, density of population, and so on as defined in the Bill. These considerations should also be applied to redistribution

in local authority areas generally. In the 44 years since 1928 nothing has been done about local authority boundaries. The time is ripe for the appointment of a royal commission into the powers, responsibilities, boundaries and areas of jurisdiction of local government in Queensland. I also suggest that the time is ripe not for amending the City of Brisbane Act but for seeing what can be done about bringing the City of Brisbane into line with other local authorities under the Local Government Act.

Mr. HARTWIG (Callide) (4.59 p.m.): I have listened with interest to speeches dealing with local government and politics in general, and I say here and now that in my opinion few contributions from the opposite side have been made by men with a knowledge of local government.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTWIG: The fact is that at the last Brisbane City Council election about 300,000 people voted. It would be interesting to know how many of these people were actually ratepayers. I should like to know, too, the amount of Commonwealth aid and State Government revenue that goes to the Brisbane metropolitan area.

Much has been made of the City of Brisbane and the wonderful job that Lord Mayor Clem Jones is alleged to have done for it. In my opinion, without the assistance of private enterprise, the State Government, and the Federal Government, Brisbane would be the most backward city in the Commonwealth. In fact, it has had that reputation over a number of years. When the Lord Mayor of Brisbane appears on television screens against a background of work that has been implemented by the State Government, it is time that the Government took credit for what it has done for the City of Brisbane. In common with other honourable members, I have made requests for the urgent sealing and redesign of main roads, highways, and so on, and the remainder of the people of Queensland, particularly those living in country areas and provincial cities, are looking with envy at the amount of money being poured into the City of Brisbane and its surrounding areas.

Mr. Marginson: Did you say that your shire is not getting its fair quota?

Mr. HARTWIG: I said just that.

I exclude the honourable member for Stafford, Mr. Harvey, from the comments I am about to make, because I think his speech at the introductory stage was very interesting and that he is one honourable member who knows what happens at meetings of the Brisbane City Council. It has been my privilege on a number of occasions to sit in on meetings of the Brisbane City Council, and I challenge honourable members opposite to say how often they have listened to debates in the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

Mr. HARTWIG: The honourable member for Salisbury has interjected. As far as I am concerned, "S.S." does not stand for "Sherrington from Salisbury".

It is true that for 12 years I have been associated with local government, and I have sat in on a budget debate. I should like to challenge the right of the Brisbane City Council to control, for example, transport. In no other city in Australia is public transport as bad as it is in Brisbane. Any honourable member who does not believe me has only to go to Queen Street or Adelaide Street at this time of the afternoon to see people conjecturing and guessing when their buses will arrive.

Mr. Newton: If the Government had proceeded to electrify the railway system, as it should have, that would have eased the problem.

Mr. HARTWIG: Who removed Brisbane's trolley buses and trams? The Brisbane City Council.

The honourable member for Salisbury said that I was elected to be Minister for Environmental Control, but not one member opposite has referred to the poison gases exuded into the atmosphere of Brisbane every week by Brisbane City Council buses. Every week, thousands of cubic feet of these gases are pumped into the atmosphere of Brisbane by these buses. This has a definite association with the functions of local government, yet not one honourable member opposite has referred to the great importance of pollution control. As one who lives in the country and enjoys country air, I can assure honourable members that on approaching this city the fumes can be smelt from miles away.

During the Brisbane City Council debate that I attended, the Lord Mayor and his deputy had absolute control of the whole of the budget and the council's financial affairs. No other alderman got to his feet; no chairman of any committee spoke on the budget. I was there for four hours. It is time the people of Brisbane were told a few facts. Alderman Harvey knows that this is so.

Mr. Bromley: Why didn't you wake up?

Mr. HARTWIG: I was awake. The honourable member is the one who should wake up. Budget estimates for transport, water, sewerage, parks and everything else were introduced by the Lord Mayor, and everything was dealt with by him. No other alderman had any say whatever.

The reduction in the number of aldermen from 28 to 21 is no serious threat to local government. It has happened in other centres throughout the world and is still happening in other cities.

Mr. Marginson: Would you like your own shire council reduced in size?

Mr. HARTWIG. It was reduced many years ago. The honourable member was never on a council and would not know.

Mr. R. E. Moore: He was on the Trades and Labor Council.

Mr. HARTWIG: That is the council he was on.

A few years ago the City of Sydney faced the same problem as Brisbane is experiencing today, and the State Government there did the right thing. They put in an administrator and cleared the whole position up.

Mr. Sherrington: They put in an administrator to get rid of a Labor council.

Mr. HARTWIG: They put in an administrator, who cleared up the whole position. As a result, nobody can deny that Sydney—and Melbourne for that matter—both leave Brisbane for dead.

Honourable members opposite are crying and whingeing about Clem Jones. I am not dealing with Clem Jones; I am supporting a Bill that is brought down to assist Brisbane on its way. We do not want to be overrun with aldermen. I believe that 21 knowledgeable men can aptly and properly govern the city.

Reverting to environmental matters, the sewage effluent of this city is being allowed to flow untreated into the Brisbane River at Eagle Farm. What do those honourable members opposite who ask me if I would like to be Minister for Environmental Control think of that?

Mr. Sherrington: What I said was that you were only elected on the promise about a Minister for Environmental Control.

Mr. HARTWIG: I am interested in this city. I am a Queenslander just as the honourable member is, and at this moment raw, untreated sewage is flowing into the Brisbane River.

Let me now deal with parking facilities in Brisbane. I have as much right as anybody else to drive to the city, but I find it almost impossible to park my car, simply because parking space in the main city streets has been replaced by bus zones. Even the taxi-cab ranks are being taken out of the city area and resited in the suburbs. I have witnessed elderly people trying to board buses, and I have even seen one lady knocked down by a bus. All that the Jones administration has done is make Brisbane's transport system completely chaotic.

Did the Lord Mayor seek the approval of the people of Brisbane before he eliminated the trams? The answer is "No". At that time the Press would have hanged Clem Jones. One thing that the Brisbane City Council has done is build car parks in the heart of the city, but only at great cost to the ratepayer. This alleged great friend of the worker, Clem Jones, demands that a person shall pay \$7.35 a week for the privilege of parking his car in the King George Square car park from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week. That shows just

how much Clem Jones is helping the worker! If a motorist parks his car at the Wickham Terrace parking station he is required to pay 70c a day, or \$3.50 a week. These are the impositions that the Labor Party is forcing upon the people whom it is supposed to be helping.

The Lord Mayor is supposed to be a great sportsman, yet until a few weeks ago he was doing his best to drive the racing industry out of the metropolis. The racehorse-owners are being forced out of business—and I have personal experience of this, because I own racehorses.

The Leader of the Opposition has claimed that local government is the closest arm of government to the people. The Brisbane City Council is so close to the people that it is taking away their right to park their vehicles and forcing them to pay as much as \$7.35 a week in car parks that were constructed at a cost of millions of dollars of the ratepayers' money. For decades to come, the people of Brisbane will be paying off this huge mortgage.

Recently I attended a convention on pollution and environmental control. The current world-wide trend is to convert cities to the complete use of electricity. Instead of becoming all-electric, the clock in Brisbane is being turned back 100 years by the Jones administration in the field of environmental control, and the health of thousands of citizens is being endangered.

Mr. Sherrington: What about your Government's diesel locomotives?

Mr. HARTWIG: If it were not for an efficient railway transport system, the workers would never be able to travel to and from their employment.

As one who has been associated with local government for a number of years, I can see nothing wrong with the Bill. We are all agreed on the point that the City of Brisbane is due for some improvement, and an Opposition member has agreed that there have been irregularities. That being so, this Bill will ensure that the Lord Mayor is answerable to the council and to the people because every three years he will have to win his ward—in other words, win his spurs—and then be re-elected by the aldermen themselves. That is the system in Sydney and Melbourne today, and who would say that Sydney and Melbourne are suffering as a result? Nobody could argue that we are depriving the council of Government aid, or that Brisbane as a city is not backward. In fact, it is dirty and grimy. It is time we were afforded an opportunity to place it on a decent footing, and I urge honourable members to support the Bill.

Mr. HARVEY (Stafford) (5.16 p.m.): My first contention is that we are taking from the people of Brisbane their power as exercised by their elected representatives. The most important thing so far as the City of Brisbane is concerned is that in 1924 we

had 21 aldermen. Today, with more than twice the population, we are to return to that situation. Rather than reduce the strength of the public voice in the council by this measure, which I consider to be most undemocratic, it would be appropriate if the Government were to consider establishing a commission to investigate other fields if it considers that certain people in the council are usurping any of the powers conferred by legislation. I believe that there is power to deal with this matter under an Act of this Parliament. As a newcomer to this Assembly I am probably unaware of many parliamentary responsibilities and functions, nevertheless I am aware that the council ordinances, in consolidated form, were tabled here on 8 August last in accordance with section 38 of the City of Brisbane Act. There is plenty of power to deal with the Brisbane City Council, and I believe that this is the avenue we should be investigating rather than a reduction in the number of aldermen in the council.

Constitution of home rule can be listed in three categories: first, to prevent unnecessary legislative interference with local government; secondly, to enable cities to adopt the kind of government they desire, with certain democratic protections in the interest of the people. I believe it is the Government's responsibility to ensure that, at all levels, local government conducts itself properly. After all, local government is a part of the Department of Local Government of the State and the Government is responsible to ensure that all levels of local government, irrespective of where they may be in the State, carry out the constitution given to them. I know that, at times, Governments have stepped in to dissolve local authorities in this State.

The third category is the necessity to provide cities with sufficient power to meet the increased need for local services and the changing pattern in our community today—and today we have to meet changing patterns. The State should mould local institutions according to the policy and expenditure necessary to meet current requirements. The Premier has the use of an aeroplane to travel throughout the State. Candidly, I do not personally decry that fact because I consider it is necessary for him to keep in contact with all avenues of responsibility in all fields.

Over the week-end I was in the Monto area. I noticed roadworks in progress between Brisbane and Monto and I also noticed the good, clean, healthy air in Monto. Mention has been made of carbon monoxide. I point out that carbon monoxide from 120 buses is only equal to that from one motor vehicle.

Reference was made to the assets and liabilities of the Brisbane City Council. As at 30 June 1972, the gross loan indebtedness of the council was \$235,212,000, less a sinking fund of \$40,759,000, leaving an indebtedness of \$194,000,000, compared with the council's assets, disregarding roads, bridges, etc., of \$386,000,000.

Reference was made to the council's public transport system in comparison with rail transport. The honourable member for Mackay pointed out what the North was contributing to transport in the Southern Division, particularly in passenger services. Last year, the North contributed \$10,500,000 to move 19.8 per cent of the people of Brisbane who travel by rail. I do not decry that, because it is far better and far more economic to shift people than vehicles. It is important to spend money on public transport, and the sooner a good public transport system is provided, the better.

Last year the Brisbane City Council Transport Department incurred a loss of over \$2,000,000, most of which resulted from the transportation of 14,000,000 school-children. The Treasurer, following representations made to him, relieved the council of its obligation to pay to the State Transport Commissioner 4 per cent tax on its gross revenue. However, the council is required to pay vehicle registration and diesel-fuel tax at the rate of 17.5c a gallon, which exceeds the actual cost of the fuel.

Reference was made to Commonwealth Aid money granted to the Brisbane City Council and local authority areas in general. As chairman of the Brisbane City Council Transport Committee, I have been supplied with certain figures. If any honourable member would like a copy, I shall supply him with one. The figures indicate that from 1 July 1950 to 30 June 1972 the Commonwealth Aid grants to Queensland amounted to \$427,515,000, of which \$70,165,000, or 16.41 per cent, was allocated to local authorities. From 1 July 1950 to 30 June 1972 the Brisbane City Council received \$4,003,000, or .93 per cent.

I admit that the Brisbane City Council received special grants in connection with the Mt. Gravatt-Capalaba (Market Access) Road, Mt. Cotton Road, Lytton Road, Scrubb Road, Cribb Road, and so forth, and matching grants from the Government in various fields.

I now refer to a ridiculous situation for which I blame the Commonwealth Government. The petrol tax paid by the council for 1970-71 was \$152,102, and diesel-fuel tax amounted to \$295,901. This represents approximately \$448,000 paid in tax to the fund, from which the council received only \$700,000 in return. Because the Brisbane City Council operates public transport on Crown land, it is required to pay diesel-fuel tax. If it operated in paddocks or on land owned by the council, as the railways operate on land owned by the Crown, it would not have to pay this iniquitous tax. This is one of the taxes imposed on the Brisbane City Council.

Mention was made of parks, park areas and the like. A previous speaker mentioned park areas in Brisbane. I correct him. Park acreage is 10,900, of which 4,900 acres are forest reserve, over 3,260 acres are developed recreational area, and unimproved land totals 2,387 acres.

Mr. Baldwin: The honourable member for Toowong was way out on that one.

Mr. HARVEY: Yes. I do not criticise him unduly for that, because I am probably in a better position than he is to know these things.

Another speaker compared Brisbane roads with those in the rest of the State. There are in Brisbane 2,558 miles of road, of which 1,842 miles are paved or concrete roads and 295 miles are formed roads only. Much of this roadwork attracts a Government subsidy of 15 per cent, because roads, bridges, streets, drainage, and reclamation work attract a subsidy of that amount only.

Mr. Hartwig: What about the \$30,000,000 on the Wilbur Smith plan?

Mr. HARVEY: I will admit that, but I am talking about subsidy allocations, without any strings, to local authorities.

As I have already said, mention was also made of parks and recreation areas. At one time the Government gave the Brisbane City Council a 20 per cent subsidy on park and recreation-area development. Today the Brisbane City Council does not receive a cent for this work. The council is being constantly cut back in its subsidies for this work.

Mr. Chinchin: You are leasing so much of it.

Mr. HARVEY: The council leases much of these areas to sporting and recreation bodies, because we believe it is better to have such areas made available to young people so that they can occupy their time in healthy pursuits instead of roaming the streets, getting into trouble, and finally turning into criminals and coming before the courts. Competitive sport encourages the development of a healthy community, and reduces the possibility of young people turning to crime.

In the matter of subsidies, I admit that the Government must cut its cloth according to the measure. I consider that the Brisbane City Council, and probably all State instrumentalities, are receiving a bad deal from the Commonwealth Government. In a local government publication of March 1972 the Premier acknowledged this point when addressing the Local Government Association. The Premier, in opening a conference of that body, declared that his attitude was based on optimism, and that the shires would pay their debts. He said that the State Government had disbursed \$171,000,000 in subsidies to local authorities and other local government bodies since 1952. He also said that this was approximately \$12,000,000-plus a year, or about \$92,310 per annum for each of the 130 local authorities throughout the State.

As I mentioned at the introductory stage last week—I ask honourable members to pardon me for reiterating it—I consider that

it is necessary for local authorities throughout the State to work in closer collaboration with the State Government in preparing a case to the Loan Council and to the Federal Government to ensure that it acknowledges this third arm of government—which, candidly, it has not done for a long time. The Commonwealth Government is continually reducing its debt, while the indebtedness of the States and local authorities is increasing. That indicates clearly the situation that prevails in Brisbane, in Queensland, and in local authority areas generally.

I mentioned in an article that was published in a local newspaper that the total loan raisings by local authorities and semi-governmental authorities throughout the State in 1960-61 was \$44,744,000, which attracted subsidy of \$12,477,000 from the Government. To relate that figure to the unit work rate, I pointed out that the basic wage was then \$27.10 a week. Ten years later, in 1969-70, total loan authorisations for local authorities and semi-governmental authorities in Queensland amounted to \$86,258,000, and the basic wage had risen from \$27.10 to \$38.80 a week; yet the subsidy from the Government had increased by only \$2,855,000. In other words, the subsidy had increased only from \$12,000,000 to \$15,000,000 although the loan authorisations had in fact doubled.

However, that does not really convey a true picture, because on 8 November 1968 or thereabouts a Bill was brought before Parliament permitting electricity supply authorities to utilise for capital works a greater percentage of the funds they received from revenue. That was deemed necessary because of the lack of loan funds for capital works in Queensland, and the various authorities are now spending more and more money from their revenue. I know that the Minister for Local Government has the matter in hand, because I have spoken to him and to the Commissioner for Electricity Supply. They are both aware of the need for a review of the over-all planning of electricity supply in Queensland. It will be done progressively, step by step, not all at once. I acknowledge that now, and no doubt honourable members will have an opportunity to discuss the matter subsequently.

Mention was made of the congestion on the roads in Brisbane and of the number of buses, and so on. The honourable member for Callide spoke about trolley buses, of which there were 32 in use in Brisbane. They were taken off the road, as were the trams, because of their inflexibility.

The Wilbur Smith Report mentioned that George Street would have to be made a one-way street and that the flow of the traffic in Elizabeth and Ann Streets would have to be reversed. In fact, it said that Ann Street would have to be a one-way street right down to Brown & Broad's at Newstead. Matters such as these had to be determined. I know that when Sir James Holt was Co-ordinator

General he wanted a determination one way or the other on the use of trams on the new Victoria Bridge.

I point out to the honourable member who referred to trams that the book value of the trams in service in Brisbane was \$538,000, and there was no question of meeting loan indebtedness on that amount. The conversion from trams to buses, with the necessary depots, cost \$14,000,000. Of this amount, only \$7,000,000 was used for buses. I acknowledge that under this deferred payment scheme the Bank of England owns the chassis and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia owns the bodies and they have to be paid for over a period of five years. I will also admit that when the Treasurer went to the Loan Council he probably had his knuckles caned because of this arrangement. But this is causing added loan indebtedness to service. If the servicing of our loans was not involved in this conversion, I can assure honourable members that today the department would be operating at a profit.

But do we really want public transport to operate at a profit? If it was, I candidly think that we, as a public instrumentality, would be exploiting the user. We have to acknowledge what has been done in England and in parts of America, where the whole public transport system is heavily subsidised.

I take honourable members' minds back to the 1947 report on railway electrification which was approved by the Government in 1950 and subsequently put under way. Over \$16,000,000 had been spent on it when the Labor Government went out of office, according to figures disclosed by Sir Gordon Chalk, the then Minister for Railways, on the occasion of the Ford, Bacon and Davis Report, although Sir Thomas Hiley disagreed with him by approximately \$2,000,000. Nevertheless, they were not quoting exact figures, so I will say no more on that issue. Then the Wilbur Smith Report was issued, quoting a figure of over \$340,000, and last week Mr. Wilbur Smith himself said that this figure had doubled. This is an indication that we should not put off till tomorrow the things we can do today.

One of Brisbane's greatest problems today is traffic. The Government gave the Council certain powers under the Traffic Regulations to control traffic parking in this city. Roads, of course, are intended to facilitate the movement of people and when we realise that it costs anything from \$9 to \$12 per square yard to construct a main road it will be seen that the roadway is not intended to be used for the parking of vehicles. For a vehicle to come into the central city area and park throughout the full 8-hour commercial trading period is literally storing an unproductive piece of machinery which occupies an area of approximately 20 ft. by 10 ft., and this the community cannot afford.

When we establish off-street parking stations, I believe that it should be done in conjunction with the removal of parking

spaces from the kerb side, thus permitting a freer flow of traffic in the streets. A previous speaker mentioned traffic congestion and brought out a very good point. Do honourable members realise that peak-hour traffic in the principal streets of Brisbane is travelling slower now than it did in the days of horse-drawn vehicles? For example, a horse-drawn tram would travel at more than 4.37 miles an hour, which was the rate of movement of the last tram services in Brisbane. Trams travelled along Queen Street at the rate of 4.37 miles an hour, and at present it takes up to 17 minutes for a bus to travel from one end of Elizabeth Street to the other.

This is where our problems lie. We are getting a concentration of people in Brisbane, and this increases the problems of the local authority. In fact, problems are increasing for all local authorities because, while Brisbane is experiencing an increase in population, other areas are suffering a decrease. Over the week-end I noted a report that local authorities in other areas are suffering recessionary problems because of drought and other factors. They must be recognised, too, so I am not going to be selfish and say that we should consider Brisbane in its entirety. This would be wrong and improper.

If I were at the other end of George Street I would probably have to speak as an alderman of the Brisbane City Council and my concern would be aldermanic, as a member of the Brisbane City Council. But here I acknowledge that my responsibilities are to the State as a whole, and one must acknowledge the many problems that exist in other spheres of government throughout the State.

We must ensure that local authorities are given the legislative right to function properly and receive the support of the Government in carrying out their responsibilities as the elected representatives of the people. Under no circumstances should the number of wards in Brisbane be reduced. Instead, greater power than at present should be placed in the hands of the aldermen to constitute and function as committees of the council.

I will admit that from time to time the Brisbane City Council has made mistakes. I am even prepared to admit that on occasions as an alderman I have made mistakes. However, the person who does nothing is the one who never makes a mistake. In the past we have seen caretaker Governments, and we certainly do not want to see them again at any level of government. We must ensure that all levels of government are given constitutional power to protect the interests of the people, and that such power is not abused or misused in any way. Members of Parliament must acknowledge the authority that is bestowed upon local authorities by the people.

Certain portions of the Bill deserve commendation. However, the provision to reduce the number of aldermen to 21 is improper.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (5.43 p.m.): It has been a refreshing experience to listen to the honourable member who has just resumed his seat. Instead of doing as his Leader did, he has tried to inform this House why he believes these amendments should not be made to the City of Brisbane Act. I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition did not set this pattern in the early stages of the debate this morning. Instead, he decided that he would make a personal attack upon an honourable member who is at present overseas. I take strong exception to the attack that he made. The Leader of the Opposition asked us to accept his word that last Thursday he did not have in his possession the information—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member is about to refer in any way to land dealings, I remind him that I have ruled that they cannot be debated.

Mr. MILLER: I hope, Mr. Speaker, that you will give me the opportunity of replying to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition about one of my colleagues. He made it quite clear—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLER: May I say, Mr. Speaker, that two years ago the present Lord Mayor invited the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha to join the Town Planning Advisory Council. I find it rather strange that the Lord Mayor saw fit to invite a person who he thought was acting not in the best interests of the people of Brisbane to be a member of that body.

The Leader of the Opposition accused the Minister for Local Government of not refuting what I said last Thursday night when I quoted newspaper cuttings that are available to the public generally. If it is the job of anyone to refute what I said, it is that of the Leader of the Opposition, not the Minister for Local Government. If the newspapers printed anything that was wrong, the Lord Mayor had an opportunity to take them to court or to issue a writ to prevent their printing further similar matter, as he has done in the past.

The Leader of the Opposition suggested that we should have a free vote in this Chamber on this issue. I find it rather strange that the Leader of the Opposition should refer to a "free vote", because not long ago, when we debated Sunday trading in hotels in this Assembly, he was asked by the honourable member for South Coast, "How long did you have them in the A.L.P.?" and he said, "One thing that A.L.P. members take pride in is their belief in democracy; their acceptance of majority rule, and the fact that they do not 'rat' on their mates." Yet he is the man who is asking members on this side of the House to take a free vote on this issue. What hypocrisy!

In this city we need a strong, democratic Lord Mayor, not a strong Lord Mayor. The only trouble is that A.L.P. members have forgotten the meaning of the word "democratic". We do not want a Lord Mayor who will ride rough-shod over the feelings of A.L.P. aldermen or C.M.O. aldermen. Under the present system the Lord Mayor is responsible for his actions only once every three years. I want him to be responsible for his actions every time he speaks in the City Hall chamber. I want him to be responsible to aldermen for his actions, because they, in turn, are responsible to their electors. I want the aldermen to be able to demand of the Lord Mayor that he answer questions asked in the City Hall, which is certainly not the present position, because he refuses to answer certain questions.

I want the Lord Mayor to be responsible to the aldermen in the same sense as the Premier is responsible to every member in this House who asks a question. I should like Opposition members to cite any occasion on which the Premier has refused to answer a question. The Prime Minister of Australia, likewise, has to answer any question put to him. But, unfortunately, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane does not see fit to answer questions put to him in the City Hall.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. MILLER: That is quite a different matter. The questions put to the Lord Mayor are straightforward questions requiring straightforward answers, but he has not given them.

The aldermen should have a say in the running of the city. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the committee system within the City Hall. The committee system in the City Hall is a farce. Who sits on the committees in the City Hall? There are seven members, six of them A.L.P. members and one a C.M.O. member. What say has one C.M.O. alderman against six Labor aldermen? He may as well not have any say whatsoever. If honourable members opposite wished to have an all-party committee, they would want equal representation on it. But do they want equal representation on a committee in the City Hall? They are quite happy with the fact that six A.L.P. aldermen equal one C.M.O. alderman. The only difference in this set-up was on the Transport and Electricity Committee, of which the honourable member for Stafford was the chairman. I understand that, on that committee, there were five Labor aldermen and two C.M.O. aldermen. Do Opposition members claim that these committees act in a democratic fashion? I say that they do not. They are far removed from the people, and the council is no longer in touch with the people.

I wish to deal with some matters in my area which prove, beyond doubt, that the council is not in touch with the people. In 1971, an elector in Ithaca wrote to the Brisbane City Council seeking approval

to build a house on a piece of land in Bardon. The council gave its approval. This person is still endeavouring to get his plans accepted by the council. It refuses to provide an access road to the property.

Mr. Aikens: He didn't sling. That's the trouble.

Mr. MILLER: That is the trouble, and it is happening all over the city. A person who is prepared to pay money to the council towards the provision of works has his plans passed. If he is not prepared to do so, his plans are not passed. That is only one instance.

The planning within the City Hall is in a terrible state. A light industrial area is situated between Coronation Drive and Douglas Street, Milton. People on the northern side of Douglas Street have applied to the council to have their land zoned as light industrial. The council has ignored the wishes of the people, who cannot sell their properties because they are living in a street where there is continual noise. At present these properties are zoned as residential B. However, nobody in his right senses would build units or flats opposite an industrial area where bottles are clanging from half past 2 in the morning.

As I said, the council, in its wisdom, ignored the wishes of these people. Why is the council so far removed from the wishes of the people? The railway line provides a natural boundary in this area of Milton, and if the council had any form of sensible planning, the light industrial area would be extended from Coronation Drive up to the railway line.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. Would you, Mr. Speaker, enlighten me on where the Bill deals with planning?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no valid point of order.

Mr. MILLER: In answer to that interjection, I believe that the Lord Mayor is responsible for the lack of planning in Brisbane.

In Milton, a woman's land was resumed by the council, and it has made no endeavour to compensate her in a fair and honourable way. She has been offered \$2,000 for two areas of land which have reduced her property to 14.1 perches. This was done by a council which is supposed to be close to the hearts of the people of Brisbane.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (5.55 p.m.): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I move—

"That the honourable member for Nudgee be heard."

Mr. Tucker: The honourable member for Nudgee was ignored.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Townsville West. If he interjects again, I shall deal with him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. Tucker: The honourable member for Nudgee was on his feet and you did not take any notice of him. The Premier did not even call. You are embarrassed yourself.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Townsville West will now leave the Chamber.

Honourable Members interjected.

NAMING OF MEMBER

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I now name the honourable member for Townsville West for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the honourable member for Townsville West be suspended from the service of the House until 11 a.m. tomorrow.”

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I have a motion before the House that the honourable member for Nudgee be heard. That was before the Premier rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no substance in the point of order.

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42

Ahern	Knox
Alison	Lee
Armstrong	Low
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie
Camm	Müller
Campbell	Moore, R. E.
Chalk	Müller
Chinchen	Murray
Cory	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
Hodges	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. W.	Bird
Hughes	Lane
Kaus	

NOES, 34

Aiken	Jones, R.
Baldwin	Jordan
Blake	Leese
Bousen	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	<i>Tellers:</i>
Inch	Davis
Jensen	Yewdale
Jones, N. F.	

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. Tucker: Heil Hitler to all of you!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Whereupon the honourable member for Townsville West withdrew from the Chamber.

CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

Mr. MELLOY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You heard me and you saw me rise.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I did not notice the honourable member. Furthermore, the question has been decided. There is no valid point of order.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 44

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

NOES, 33

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion—That the Bill be now read a second time (Mr. McKechnie)—agreed to.

[Sitting suspended from 6.11 to 7.15 p.m.]

COMMITTEE

(The Acting Chairman of Committees, Mr. W. D. Hewitt, Chatsworth, in the chair)

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of s. 3; Interpretation—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (7.16 p.m.): As you, Mr. Hewitt, and all honourable members know by now, this clause is the pivot on which the whole of the debate so far has hinged. Therefore, there is no need for me to enlarge upon the special importance that the Australian Labor Party attaches to it.

The Opposition sees in the clause, as has already been stated in this Chamber, the major inroad that will be made into the successful operation of the Brisbane City Council. It is not sufficient to speak, as honourable members opposite have done, about undemocratic dictators in the city council. As the council now stands, it should be remembered clearly that the Lord Mayor, however he may be elected, is one of a body of 29 members. To suggest that 28 members, some of whom are the party-political choices of honourable members opposite, though they deny it—

Mr. Chinchin: The clause does not say anything about 28.

Mr. BALDWIN: I am taking the present situation, and honourable members opposite—

Mr. Chinchin: You should stick to the clause.

Mr. BALDWIN: I say to the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt that this clause is the pivot of the Government's activities in this Bill, and I am speaking to it on that basis. The position of the Lord Mayor has been challenged in this Chamber on the very premise that he is a dictator with too much power.

Mr. Chinchin: Don't you agree?

Mr. BALDWIN: I am answering the challenge on that premise, which has been put forward by honourable members opposite, not by the Opposition. I suggest that I should be allowed to answer it on that basis. That has been the whole tenor of the introduction of the Bill.

The powers of the Lord Mayor, defined and accepted by the Government, are limited to a certain extent. If any one of the powers given to him by the Government includes something dictatorial, the Government—not the Opposition; not the Lord Mayor—has to answer to the people of the City of Brisbane for that. On the other hand, if this matter is to be considered on a personal basis, the 28 aldermen of the city as a group are answerable to the citizens of Brisbane, who have a chance to express their opinion once every three years.

I see the proposed limitation of the power of the people as totally unnecessary. It has been irrelevant to the Government's own arguments, and I have the backing of honourable members on this side of the Chamber when I say that we will oppose it to the limit.

Mr. O'DONNELL (Belyando) (7.20 p.m.): I rise also to support—

Mr. Knox: This is the late shadow Minister, relegated from the front bench to the back bench.

Mr. Baldwin: Cut the personalities.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. O'DONNELL: I appreciate, Mr. Hewitt, that you recognise that members on the front bench opposite are extremely rude. In supporting what has been put forward in opposition to the deletion of the term "Mayor" I have, from my experience, which is a very long one indeed, come to the strong conclusion that the debate in all its ramifications has been devoted to the present Lord Mayor of Brisbane and that the council itself is a secondary consideration.

What astounds me is that the legislation relates to the head of only one local authority in the State. The Minister himself has made it quite definite that no action is intended with any other local authority outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. McKechnie: That is correct.

Mr. O'DONNELL: He said this very definitely and now he has reiterated it. This in itself indicates that the legislation is solely directed against one personality. I am not going to reiterate any of the arguments put forward, but I would know from my experience in rural areas of this wide-spread State—places where communication is most difficult—that tens of thousands of people interested in local government condemn the action being taken by the Government in trying to deprive the Lord Mayor of universal suffrage in Brisbane and confine his election to a group within the council.

On that point we could do well to consider how few in this House have been responsible for the Premier's election as head of this State. The same thing would happen in this council. Whatever the number of aldermen that is decided tonight, the issue gets down to minority selection of the person who will hold this most important position. It should be remembered that not only in rural areas but also in the metropolitan area the position of head of a council, whether it be shire, metropolitan or provincial city, is one of great responsibility. In seeking such a position a candidate has to make a decision that will affect the whole of his local government life. But in doing so he knows that he is putting himself forward to all of the people, to be selected on his merits and not simply by a number in his caucus or a group of friends within the council.

I feel that this move is not in the best interests of the community and the fact that it is to apply to only one council indicates that it is a personal attack on one individual in the entire State. That is an important issue. I do not intend to deal with the vices or virtues of the Brisbane City Council or

the Lord Mayor. If honourable members listened carefully to the speech made this afternoon by the honourable member for Toowong, they would have heard him stress the fact that in 1967 Mr. Bennett submitted a report to Parliament on his inquiry into the Brisbane City Council. That report indicted the council on certain matters. Mr. Bennett found that of the 130 cases examined 40 involved illegality.

Mr. Lee: That's a fair average, isn't it?

Mr. O'DONNELL: Admittedly so; provided Mr. Bennett furnished a faithful report—and I have no reason to doubt that he did. However, who were the accessories before the fact, to the fact and after the fact?

Mr. Porter: The Lord Mayor.

Mr. O'DONNELL: No; this very Government. It is supposed to supervise and control the activities of all local authorities. If, as Mr. Bennett found, those illegalities occurred, they did so with the knowledge of the State Government and the appropriate Minister.

Mr. Chichen: Do you think two wrongs make a right?

Mr. O'DONNELL: It is not a case of two wrongs making a right. For five years while that report has rested on some office desk—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I have allowed the honourable member to make passing reference to the Bennett Report; I now ask him to come back to the clause under debate.

Mr. O'DONNELL: The report is relevant to this clause because the report indicted the Brisbane City Council and tonight we are debating not only the aldermen but also the Lord Mayor and his activities as head of that council, which, the Government claims, had no say at all because the Lord Mayor is a tyrant. The Minister claims that the council has no freedom or democratic rights. If the council had been such a terrific burden on the ratepayers of Brisbane, and if the Lord Mayor had imposed his will on the 28 aldermen as well as on the ratepayers, the Government should have taken appropriate action immediately after the Bennett Report was submitted. The deletion from the administration of the City of Brisbane of the operation of the Lord Mayor as an individual with his right to the general vote of the public is a retrograde step. The Government cannot justify it. If it could it would extend such a provision to all the other local authorities of this State—and this, it says, it is not going to do.

I ask: has not the Department of Local Government sufficient control to bind any person who wishes to take the law into his own hands or to perform any illegalities, which the Bennett Report found had occurred? Has the Government done anything to repair any damage that the report states has been inflicted on certain individuals?

Mr. Porter: It is amending the Act.

Mr. O'DONNELL: That is not the solution. Prior to the recent State election there was an outcry for the appointment of an ombudsman. Was that merely a move to pass the buck? The Government has no desire to act on its own initiative to deal with any reports that reveal irregularities. It has a tremendous responsibility, and it is now trying belatedly to get out from under. No-one can tell me that some of the major activities of the Lord Mayor and the Brisbane City Council were not well known to the Treasurer and the Minister for Local Government of the day. In those circumstances why did not they give their reasons for condoning what has been stated as a case against the council?

If we are to have a periodic clean-up by the Government of its own ineptitude, it will not be long before the people of this city, and those in the rest of the State, take a definite stand. I know very well that people outside the city who have not listened to the arguments, but have read reports in the Press, are appalled at the intervention of the Government in this matter. They are appalled not only that the method of electing the Mayor is to be changed but that the number of aldermen is to be reduced.

We should not forget that the first wise or unwise words muttered by the present Minister for Local Government were these, "I am interested in the amalgamation of councils." What is said tonight will be conveyed to members of other local authorities in the State. It will be met with a great deal of suspicion throughout Queensland.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (7.32 p.m.): I rise to support the remarks of the Opposition's shadow Minister for Local Government on this clause, which deals with certain definitions in the Act. Opposition spokesmen have made it clear at both the introductory and the second-reading stages that we are totally opposed to the deletion of the word "Mayor" and the method of his election as envisaged by this measure. It is fit and proper that we should take our present stand on this clause as it deals with the definition of "Election". With the deletion of the words "Mayor and other" the provision will read, "Any election of the aldermen under this Act."

It is all very well for the Minister and other Government members to say that this measure is to be confined to the City of Brisbane. Many matters on which the City of Brisbane Act is silent have been discussed in this Chamber but the Local Government Act has covered the situation. Honourable members are well aware of that fact.

This clause is sectional legislation and can be described in no other way. The Government is well known for its sectional legislation.

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

Mr. NEWTON: I make it clear to the Minister that he can give the Committee all the assurances in the world about other local authorities and the election of their mayors, but we will not be convinced. On its past record, the Government cannot be trusted. On other occasions assurances have been given, but they have not been honoured.

Throughout the debate a lot has been said about the qualifications of the people who offer themselves as candidates for the office of Lord Mayor. There is no doubt in my mind that the parties or organisations concerned have always endeavoured to put forward the most suitable candidates—men who could lead the Brisbane City Council in all matters affecting this great city. This cannot be denied. I refer not only to the present Lord Mayor but also to previous Lord Mayors. If the Government succeeds in having this legislation passed—and the Opposition has objected to it all the way—it will take this right not only from those parties and organisations but also from the people who vote in Brisbane City Council elections.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to previous Lord Mayors of Brisbane, some of whom—for instance, Sir John Chandler—became members of this Assembly while holding the office of Lord Mayor. This legislation will take from the people of this city the right to select the person they desire as Lord Mayor, while those in every other local authority will have that right. As I was not afforded the opportunity to speak during either the introductory or the second-reading stage because the gag was applied, I have risen to voice my opinion on this clause.

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (7.38 p.m.): It is rather disappointing that the Opposition members who have spoken so far have been unable to offer any sound or reasonable criticism of the principles contained in the Bill. They have seen fit to challenge the aspect of the election of the Lord Mayor of this city contained in clause 2, which deals with the definition of "Election". It seems to be a strange clause on which to make such a challenge. I thought it would have been more suitable to challenge the principle of the election of Lord Mayor when discussing, for instance, clause 7 or clause 8. It is true that clause 2 refers to the definition of "Election" and, if agreed to, will omit the words "Mayor and other", so that the definition will read, "Any election of the aldermen under this Act." Therefore, in fact, the election of the Lord Mayor does arise under this clause.

Mr. Sherrington interjected.

Mr. LANE: It serves no good purpose for the ineffective Opposition Whip to throw insults at me on matters that have no relationship to the Bill. I intend, in the time

allotted to me to say what I wish to. I have noticed that the Opposition's arguments during this debate have been based on a series of personal insults, unsubstantiated accusations, and smears of all kinds. These have, in particular, been made by the Leader of the Opposition.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Chamber to come to order.

Mr. LANE: This clause seeks to delete the words "Mayor and other" from the definition of "Election". I think the fact that the Opposition has raised this matter indicates the tenor that the debate will take this evening. Even before the main portion of the Bill is reached, the Opposition has shown that it will endeavour, by stonewalling, to turn the debate into a filibuster in an attempt to waste the time of the House and prevent the Government from getting on with the business of governing.

I was also surprised when the honourable member for Belmont spoke of this clause as sectional legislation. Of course, to someone with a socialist outlook that is exactly how it would appear. However, that is not how it appears to someone of broad Liberal ideals. We on this side of the Chamber take a flexible attitude towards the management of the State. We live in a great and diverse State that includes many different types of environment and locality, and it is therefore necessary to have laws that vary from one place to another. In Brisbane there is a Lord Mayor who is entitled to a high salary and a large payment for expenses, and a number of aldermen who are fully paid officers of the council. Who would suggest, for example, that they should be on the same basis as the aldermen in Boulia, on the fringe of the Simpson Desert?

Mr. Tomkins: They are called "councillors" out there.

Mr. LANE: As the honourable member for Roma quite rightly points out, they are called "councillors". There is no relationship between the local authority in the capital city of Brisbane and local authorities in the Outback. That is why this clause is necessary.

I do not wish to engage in the type of filibuster in which the Opposition has been engaged for the last few weeks. The Labor Party has been particularly vocal in the daily Press. If I may be given the opportunity to do so, I should like to compliment the Federal president of the A.L.P., who is now the honourable member for Lytton, on the very efficient propaganda campaign that he has waged in recent weeks. It has been waged round the definition contained in this clause.

When it first became known that the Government was considering legislation to amend the City of Brisbane Act, the honourable member for Lytton and his very

efficient staff pressed the little red button in the Q.C.E. office and the propaganda machine burst into action. First of all, Jack Stanaway began pumping out multiple Press statements on the election of the Lord Mayor, and every day there were other Press statements by people remote in the A.L.P. organisation. One day I noticed that even Charlie Rowland from Baroona had a few words to say in the Press. He is quite a decent fellow and a reasonable alderman, but he is not known for making lengthy Press statements. Surprisingly, in the best Shakespearean language, a statement appeared in the Press from our old friend Charlie Rowland, from the country of the honourable member for Baroona. That is an indication of how the A.L.P. propaganda machine works when it sees what it believes to be a threat to its organisation by an amendment of the City of Brisbane Act as set out in this clause.

The second thing that happened was that the A.L.P. open-line committee of ladies met, and they were instructed and briefed and told how to operate on the open-line programmes conducted by city radio stations each day. They did their job very efficiently. It became a drag and a bore to listen to these programmes, with people all saying the same thing and reading from the same script prepared by the very efficient propaganda organisation in the Q.C.E. office.

The third move in the campaign to defeat the clause that the Committee is now discussing was that the A.L.P. letter-writing committee came together in the A.L.P. headquarters and proceeded to pump out letters objecting to the election of the Lord Mayor under the proposed system. These letters were echoes of one another, and this soon became obvious to the decent, thinking people in the community.

Then we saw what I should say was clearly a misuse of public funds in the television programme "City '72", which was used by the present Lord Mayor, who shall remain nameless, to speak out against the proposals envisaged by this clause of the Bill. He used money provided from council funds—I understand from loan funds—to finance that programme in order to discuss the matter in the public arena on television. It was ratepayers' money, and I think it was a damned shame.

The A.L.P. then held a rather abortive mass rally—it was probably the smallest mass rally in history—in the City Square to work up public opposition to the clause relating to the election of the Lord Mayor. That rally, which possibly 80 people attended, was a "fizzer". The Leader of the Opposition found it necessary to turn up, as did the State president of the Australian Labor Party and president of the Trades and Labor Council, Mr. Jack Egerton. Even these people, with all the resources of the Trades Hall and the A.L.P. propaganda machine at their disposal, could not drum up

a rally of more than 80 people in the City Square on a Saturday morning, out of the thousands of people in Brisbane.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Committee to come to order. I indicate to the honourable member for Merthyr that, although I have allowed him some latitude, he should now come back to the clause and give the Committee the reasons why he says it should stand.

Mr. LANE: Very well, Mr. Hewitt. I should like to say something about the principles envisaged in the Bill, particularly one principle that honourable members on this side of the Chamber who cherish the democratic system hold dear. I refer, of course, to the system that operates in this Parliament and that would, under this clause, operate in the election of the Lord Mayor of the City of Brisbane.

For some doctrinaire reason based on their republican concepts and the fact that they respect most the presidential system of election, the Opposition is basically opposed to this. Honourable members on this side of the Chamber do not subscribe to the presidential system in a great metropolis such as this. We cherish our allegiance to the Queen and respect the Governor of this State, as it was envisaged we should at the time of Federation, when Queensland became one of the States of the Commonwealth of Australia. It is for this reason that honourable members on this side of the Chamber support the clause, which will bring about a system under which the Lord Mayor will be democratically elected by his fellows in the council in accordance with the true concepts of parliamentary democracy. That is why I support this clause.

I was surprised to hear the honourable member for Belyando, who has already been a victim of Q.C.E. actions, speaking in a praiseworthy manner of the present Lord Mayor and the city council, although for many years the same Lord Mayor has been a member of that very Q.C.E. and no doubt part of the "stew" that has gone on in playing that game of musical chairs that is repeatedly played on the opposite side of this Chamber.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Once again I ask the honourable member to come back to the clause.

Mr. LANE: In conclusion, I support the clause and the very necessary amendment to the definition of the word "Election". This is very necessary so that later on when we get to the meat of the Bill—I hope Opposition members will allow us to do so and will not continue on the path they have chosen to adopt already tonight by conducting a filibuster—we can really discuss the principles relating to the election of the Lord Mayor.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (7.52 p.m.): On this very pernicious clause 2 I willingly align myself with Opposition speakers. This is the first breakdown of the position of

Lord Mayor of Brisbane as we know it today, and it is the first reconstruction of the council itself. From my experience, of which I have had many years in this field, I know that 21 aldermen will not adequately serve the people of Brisbane. No doubt this clause does include the aldermen as well as the Lord Mayor.

Government Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! If I consider the honourable gentleman to be irrelevant I will rule him out of order.

Mr. DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. I am quite capable of making my own speech without assistance from the other side.

As I have said, this is the first breakdown in the reconstruction planned by this Bill, and the main attack is on the Lord Mayor himself. It is not the office that Government members want to get rid of; it is the man himself. Honourable members opposite cannot deny that this man is the most outstanding and competent Lord Mayor in Australia today. He is the one most qualified in local government, without peer in any other city in Australia.

Mr. Lane interjected.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member for Merthyr can make as much noise as he likes, but I repeat that Alderman Jones is the most competent and outstanding Lord Mayor in Australia today.

The honourable member for Merthyr mentioned an open-line radio session. If he outlined the marvellous benefit that this session, with the assistance of the Lord Mayor, has been to Brisbane we would be here all night. I happened to turn on my radio during the lunch-hour today and it was the Lord Mayor's day to be on the open-line session. Everyone here is aware of the fluency of this man and the competent way he answers without hesitation questions put to him. I have been told by the people responsible for this wonderful facility that the lines are jammed whenever the Lord Mayor is on the air because he is the only one with the knowledge and competence—

Mr. Lane: What about Mr. Knox?

Mr. DEAN: There is no comparison. I am not saying that in any insulting way, but this man is outstandingly capable and displays his capabilities in an admirable way. The Opposition opposes this clause because it is the commencement of the main purpose of the Bill. As to the proposed reduction in the number of aldermen to 21, I suggest that it is ridiculous.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I will thank the honourable member to defer such comments until the appropriate clause is under debate.

Mr. DEAN: Thank you, Mr. Hewitt.

If it were possible to have a majority of the citizens of Brisbane in the Chamber tonight, what a shock the Government would get. Those people would speak with one voice against the pernicious nature of this Bill and the detrimental effect it will have on the city. I will reserve further comment until later in the debate, and I conclude by saying that this clause is a direct attack not on the office of Lord Mayor but on Alderman Clem Jones.

Mr. CHINCHEN (Mt. Gravatt) (7.56 p.m.): I feel I must reply to the remarkable contribution made by the honourable member for Belyando. In effect he said, "We know the Lord Mayor has done many wrong things, but you, the Government, are the people who are responsible." He admitted that certain things that should not be allowed to occur happen in Brisbane, and then he said that the Government must bear the burden. That is remarkable. The honourable member must remember that after Mr. Bennett tendered his report this Government took steps to overcome the problems that then existed and, in fact, still exist. However, we must not forget that unless the council has the will to do the right thing, it will not be done.

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

Mr. CHINCHEN: It is for this reason that some of the malpractices that Mr. Bennett mentioned as existing when he tendered his report are still going on today.

Mr. Lee: You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink.

Mr. CHINCHEN: That is the whole point. If backroom deals are being entered into and demands made without being put into writing, there is nothing the Government can do about it. That is the problem confronting the people of the City of Brisbane today. One man is making the decisions by way of an unofficial policy that is being carried out by his departmental chiefs. Only those citizens who have had dealings with the council on land matters are aware of the problems. The majority of the people of Brisbane are being hoodwinked, firstly, because they do not have any contact with the Brisbane City Council and, secondly, because they are victims of an enormous propaganda machine. If a man says often enough, "I am King," the people will eventually believe him.

In his report Mr. Bennett said that he had made for defined rights and obligations instead of demand and negotiation.

Mr. Houston: Can you rectify that in the City of Brisbane Act?

Mr. CHINCHEN: I shall explain this in a moment. Mr. Bennett went on to say that the council is not free to roam at large and impose conditions on applications. He also said that many unlawful acts were committed by the council. These are allowed to

go on because some people have no wish or will to do the right thing. If a local authority or its representative agrees to negotiate unlawfully and forces people to agree to unlawful negotiations, there is nothing we can do about it. It is for this reason that I refute the claim made by the honourable member for Belyando. The Government is not responsible for these things. It is impossible to confine Alderman Jones to lawful acts. He has his own underhand methods, and they are not registered. There is no way in the world that the rights of the citizens will be preserved unless the aldermen, the citizens' representatives, exert themselves to preserve them. That is the responsibility of the city aldermen, not of this Government. It is a democratically elected local authority, and the aldermen have their rights as well as enormous responsibilities. The aldermen must ensure that they carry out those responsibilities. This provision will give the aldermen a chance to do the right thing. I do not know whether they will, but this gives them the opportunity.

The contributions of the honourable members for Belmont and Sandgate amounted to the same old thing—the cult of the individual. This is typical of all centralist forms of Government. We have seen the cult of the individual portrayed throughout the world at various times, by which an individual accepts standards of himself. People pick it up because they are obliged to do so, and then we get a concentration on the cult of the individual. If honourable members opposite are looking for honesty and decency in public affairs under that sort of system, they should realise that they are being sadly misled. We are seeking a democratic attitude in local authorities. We want public participation in all matters, not just the voice from up top. The cult of the individual will not impress those on this side of the Chamber. Democracy in the local authority sphere is vitally important. I trust that the opportunity presented to the aldermen by these two amendments will help them to ensure that democracy returns to the City Hall.

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (8.2 p.m.): It seems that I have made it at last after being gagged twice. I believe this is one of the most sinister clauses in the Bill, having in mind what motivated it as a whole, namely, the "demolition" of the present Lord Mayor, Clem Jones.

The Bill itself is a denigration of the rights of the citizens of Brisbane. Since Greater Brisbane came into existence we have been able to attract many prominent citizens to the office of Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Under this legislation, which, undoubtedly, will be carried, we will discourage people of prominence and ability and people who are prepared to devote themselves, in an executive manner, to promoting the development and progress of Brisbane.

There is no provision in the Bill that would indicate to anybody with the future of Brisbane at heart that he would with certainty have even an opportunity to become Lord Mayor of Brisbane. When the people of Brisbane go to the polls at a municipal election, they will be voting blindly on lord-mayoral activities in the city. They will have no indication that the person they consider to be the most desirable of the aldermen will become Lord Mayor. I have no doubt that the situation could arise where men who are properly qualified to hold the position of Lord Mayor will be indicated by the political parties as prospective lord-mayoral candidates. They will be contesting different wards in the election. That means that there will not be an over-all public selection of the Lord Mayor.

It will become evident, as the campaign proceeds, that certain candidates will be endorsed by their parties as their choices for Lord Mayor, and one candidate could contest one ward and another candidate could contest another ward. The people of Brisbane will not have an opportunity to give any indication, apart from a vote for a certain party, of the candidate they regard as the more suitable for the position.

It has been claimed that the Premier and Prime Minister are elected by Parliament. They lead their parties in the campaign and are selected by their parties. The successful candidate approaches the Governor to obtain a commission to form the Government. Nothing like that will occur in the Brisbane City Council under these rules. The Lord Mayor will be selected, not by the party in power, but by the council as a whole.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I remind the honourable member that the method of selection comes up for discussion under later clauses.

Mr. MELLOY: Not in the election stage, to which I am referring. The people will not know who will be the Lord Mayor. This is a sinister clause. It is much more sinister than the clause providing for 21 aldermen. The Opposition regards this clause as sinister because it is a deliberate attack upon the present Lord Mayor. It has only one purpose—to eliminate Clem Jones. The Australian Labor Party will overcome the problem of there being only 21 aldermen because, at the next election, 21 Labor aldermen will be elected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The number of aldermen is covered in clause 3. I ask the honourable member to confine himself to clause 2.

Mr. MELLOY: I repeat that this is a sinister clause. The remaining clauses are padding. They deal with superannuation, etc. The exceptions are the two salient clauses, and this is one of them. This sinister clause is designed to pull down Clem Jones because he had the temerity and audacity to stand against a Government member, and it cost

thousands of dollars to defeat him. The word went around, "If we can't beat Clem Jones in ordinary circumstances we will do it by an Act of Parliament." This is what the Government is doing. This clause has been introduced solely to eliminate Clem Jones as Lord Mayor, irrespective of the wishes of the people, the advice of the authorities and the opinion of the Press. The Government is completely ignoring public opinion, and no Government can afford to ignore the voice of the people. It will not require a Daniel to read the writing on the wall following the introduction of this Bill.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (8.9 p.m.): Mr. Hewitt—

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury): I move—

"That the Opposition be heard."

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I called the Minister.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Clause 2 contains three definitions. Admittedly, while they are only definitions, they do have an important bearing on the remaining clauses. The first definition, that of "Election", refers to the fact that at present the Lord Mayor is elected by the people of Brisbane whereas, in future, he will come from the body of aldermen. The second definition, that of "Electoral District", refers to the necessity to update the Bill relative to the Electoral Districts Act 1971. Similarly, the third subclause updates the definition of "The Minister". Whereas previously the Secretary for Public Works was the Minister responsible for the administration of this Act, that responsibility now lies on the Minister for Local Government and Electricity.

The honourable member for Redlands commented on the three descriptions. They are essential parts of the machinery necessary to implement the two principles of the Bill. It is absolutely vital that clause 2 remain in toto as part of the Bill.

I agree with the honourable member for Belyando that the administration of Brisbane is controlled by an Act quite distinct from that under which other local authorities are administered. The Bill is not directed against the Brisbane City Council or the Lord Mayor, but is for the benefit of the people of Brisbane.

In reply to the honourable member for Belmont, the City of Brisbane Act has no relationship to the Local Government Act. The honourable member for Merthyr made that clear. The three subclauses of clause 2 are vital to the Bill, and it is the Government's desire that they stand part of it.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): Mr. Hewitt—

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Hewitt—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I call the Premier.

Honourable Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 39

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

NOES, 33

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That clause 2, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

In division—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! There will be decorum in the Chamber. I also ask honourable members to remain seated to assist the tellers.

AYES, 39

Ahern	Lane
Alison	Lee
Armstrong	Low
Bird	McKechnie
Bjelke-Petersen	Moore, R. E.
Camm	Müller
Campbell	Murray
Chalk	Neal
Chinchen	Newbery
Cory	Porter
Crawford	Rae
Edwards	Row
Fletcher	Scott-Young
Frawley	Small
Gunn	Tomkins
Hartwig	Wharton
Hewitt, N. T. B.	
Hodges	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. W.	Hinze
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NOES, 33

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Dean	Wood, B.
Hanlon	Wood, P.
Hanson	Wright
Harris	Yewdale
Harvey	
Hooper, K. J.	
Houston	
Inch	
Jensen	

Tellers:

Jones, N. F.
Moore, F. P.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 3—Repeal of and new s.5; Composition of Council—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (8.23 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“On page 2, line 14, omit the word—
‘twenty-one’

and insert in lieu thereof the word—
‘thirty.’”

I move this amendment because over the last few years this Parliament has passed much legislation concerning matters of pollution, traffic hazards, health and other things that have perforce been passed onto the care of the City of Brisbane and its aldermen. I also draw attention to the numerous Press statements, multiplying in their frequency over the past two or three years, that indicate, along with other things that have been brought to the notice of this Chamber before today, the increased responsibilities that this Government has, for reasons that I have previously stated, placed upon local government bodies, including the Brisbane City Council, and in respect of which it has become the responsibility of aldermen to look after constituents.

I will cite for the consideration of the Committee the very important matter that cropped up at the beginning of this year concerning the flooding in Northey Street and other places. Such situations have arisen as a result of the lack of adequate legislation. They and the other matters to which I have referred show the ever-increasing responsibilities that are placed upon the aldermen of this city. It is with this in view that I have moved the amendment to provide for an increase in the number of aldermen, so that they can contend with the growing complexities of this metropolis.

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

Mr. BALDWIN: Not all of these complexities and problems that now confront the citizens of Brisbane could have been foreseen years ago. Nevertheless, until cognisance is taken of them by Parliament they will place more onerous burdens on the shoulders of the aldermen.

In addition to the growing complexities of metropolitan life, there are also those of social necessity and obligation. I do not think any honourable member would deny that the days when aldermen attended the City Hall and then returned to their homes to conduct their own businesses are gone forever. Nor would anyone deny that the days when council representatives were unpaid and left their employment to attend council meetings and then returned to their employment are also gone. Today, aldermen are required to devote all their time to council matters.

The Government has recognised the growth of these complexities. The children have also recognised it. They like to see their local aldermen as well as their local members of Parliament at their school functions, their sports days, their youth clubs, and so on. So I suggest that the responsibilities placed upon aldermen in both the social and the ordinance fields are grossly underestimated. In the light of these remarks, I commend the amendment.

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (8.29 p.m.): We have had a great to-do about the Government's use of the guillotine in order to have the clauses passed. The Bill contains only two key principles, and the 22 clauses are required to translate those principles into legislative effect. At both the introductory and second-reading stages the Opposition had ample opportunity to debate these two key principles. The fact that they deliberately elected not to do so is certainly no reason why they should now endeavour to delay the Government's programme by indulging in grand-standing and trying to pretend that because the Government is using the gag they are being prevented from debating the clauses in the way they want to.

Mr. BALDWIN: I rise to a point of order. On consulting “May”, which I believe is the guiding authority on parliamentary procedure, in dealing with the introduction of a Bill and the second-reading stage the singular noun is used, that is, the “principle” of the Bill. Therefore, the honourable member for Toowong is out of order.

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

Mr. PORTER: I remind the Committee that, on its introduction, the title of the Bill was amended to provide for the addition of the words “and for other purposes”, which would have given even the honourable member for Redlands ample opportunity to debate any matter that he wished to raise.

Mr. Baldwin: You brought that in to suit your own ends.

Mr. PORTER: It was brought in—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! We are now considering clause 3.

Mr. PORTER: I believe that ample opportunity has been afforded to debate the principle involved in clause 3. I certainly believe it is the Government's role to govern and to ensure that its legislative programme passes in a proper fashion through Parliament.

I have frequently heard the words "tedious repetition" used in this Chamber, but the debates at both the introductory stage and the second-reading stage of this Bill have really given the phrase a new meaning. The clause provides that the number of aldermen will be reduced from the present figure of 28 to 21. The amendment suggests that the number should be increased to 30. In other words, instead of reducing the number from 28 to 21, we should advance it from 28 to 30. I bow to the Chair to decide if this is a valid amendment, but to me it is perilously close to a negation of what is contained in the Bill.

Mr. Houston: You wouldn't know.

Mr. PORTER: Perhaps I would not. The Leader of the Opposition has given what he probably regards as a sterling performance in the two debates so far. He obviously does know, or thinks he does.

We went through these two principles ad nauseam last Thursday as well as today. We have discussed time and again the fact that aldermanic service is not equivalent to parliamentary service. Nobody on the Opposition benches has suggested that parliamentary service and aldermanic service in Brisbane are one and the same thing. Opposition members have been very careful to avoid doing so. It is the Government's view that the burden on the ratepayers of Brisbane in carrying 28 full-time professional ward representatives, the great majority of them full-time party operators, should be eased, and ease it we will—for the benefit of the people of this city. No other capital-city council in Australia has paid aldermen, yet we are asked to believe that this is completely essential to the effective running of this area of Queensland. The less we have to do with this paid, professional ward-representative system, the better off we will all be. It is nonsense to argue that because there were 20 aldermen in Brisbane when there were 225,000 people we should increase the number on a pro rata basis now that we have 800,000 people.

Mr. Chinchen: That means that we should now have 80 aldermen.

Mr. PORTER: That is so.

The plain fact, which the Opposition carefully ignores, is that when Brisbane had 225,000 people it had 205 aldermanic representatives, not one of whom was paid. Labor people got rid of 185 of them, thus reducing the number to 20. Labor decided that 20 could do the job of 205 and that, into the bargain, they should be paid.

Let us hear no more nonsense about the size of the city having a bearing on the number of aldermen and that the proposed reduction is a backward step. On the contrary, this is a forward step. It will do the best that is possible for the people of the State and of Brisbane. Undoubtedly it will ease the very heavy burden cast upon the people of the city at the present time. In view of the principle that the clause espouses, that is, to reduce the number of wards to 21, I believe that the amendment is foolish.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (8.35 p.m.): Quite often I have wondered why the Treasurer has let the honourable member for Toowong slip by at any time he has considered filling Cabinet vacancies. We must all agree, after the honourable member's performance in the past two days, that there is no wonder at all, and I feel that I must support the Treasurer in his view. It is quite obvious why the Liberal Party convention dumped him off the executive.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to come to clause 3.

Mr. HOUSTON: I was referring to the honourable member's suggestions about me.

The amendment provides for 30 aldermen. What is wrong with it? It is not so many years ago that the Minister argued that there should be as many aldermen as city members, and no argument has been advanced by the Minister or anyone else to reduce the number to 21. The Minister said, "We had a look at it and we thought 21." The Minister has made many statements in this House that are not factual and has used certain arguments to suit the occasion.

Mr. Chinchen: Why did you decide on 30?

Mr. HOUSTON: I made that decision along with my colleagues.

Mr. Chinchen: Why?

Mr. HOUSTON: I ask the honourable member to close his mouth and open his ears.

At present, there are 29 State seats in Brisbane and four other seats with some area in Brisbane. Any commission of any ability could readily divide Brisbane into 30 wards so as not to overload aldermanic representation. If the Government wants 31, the Opposition will not oppose it. The bill for this will be paid by the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Chinchen interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: Who gave the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt the right to be "Big Brother" to the Brisbane City Council?

Mr. Knox: It is our responsibility.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am interested to hear the Minister for Justice say that the Brisbane City Council is his responsibility.

Mr. Knox: I said it is this Legislature's responsibility.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is this Legislature's responsibility to tell the Brisbane City Council and the people of Brisbane what they want and should have?

Government members have repeatedly said in this Chamber that they should legislate in the interests of the people. I have agreed, but I have also said, "Who determines what is in their interests?" One Government member after another has said, "We determine what is in their interests." As a citizen of this city, I do not need any Government member to tell me what is in my interests. I abide by majority rule, and the Government is not ruling by majority vote. As I said in my second-reading speech, more people voted against the Liberal Party than for it. In fact, more people voted for the A.L.P. candidates in this city than for all other candidates put together. In addition, the Government did not raise this issue during the election campaign. It deliberately hoodwinked the people of this city.

A Government Member: We did not.

Mr. HOUSTON: You did.

Let me deal with what the honourable member for Toowong said. Apparently he is the Liberal spokesman. He is certainly one of the main architects of this Bill. He said that, in 1925, 20 aldermen and the Lord Mayor constituted the council. That is true. What he does not realise—or is he asleep all the time—is that development in the Brisbane area is completely different from what it was in 1925, and that the responsibility of men in these positions has increased since then. In those days there were few bitumen roads, and very few people had motor-cars. There were not many traffic laws and regulations, and facilities such as parking stations and sewerage were virtually unknown. All of these things have developed since that time. There were no problems with flooding and drainage. Such problems were unknown to aldermen of those times.

The situation today is completely different. Brisbane is today a great complex, and a great city. I have heard honourable members opposite decry, till I am quite sick of hearing it, what is going on in Brisbane. I am proud to live in Brisbane. Honourable members opposite criticise the city square. That is one of the city's greatest concepts.

A Government Member: The roof of a car park.

Mr. HOUSTON: Now we are hearing from a member who did not know where Brisbane was till he was elected to Parliament. I do not know what he is complaining about.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to confine his comments to clause 3.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am, Mr. Hewitt. The whole point is that the Opposition wants more aldermen in the Brisbane City Council, and the Government says that there is no need for any more. But not one logical reason has been advanced why there are too many aldermen now. As I said during the second reading, there is a reason, but the Government has not stated it. The Government is endeavouring, by means of the commission to be set up, to reduce the number of seats and produce a number of wards that will be to the Government's liking.

Mr. R. E. Moore: How could we do that?

Mr. HOUSTON: How did you do it with the State electoral boundaries? Of course, we know how it was done there. As a matter of fact, honourable members opposite have no doubt already had a look at the new boundaries. It was quite remarkable to hear the Minister read out Alderman Padman's change of heart. Someone must have told him, "If you don't behave yourself, your seat will be one of those abolished." That is the real reason why he has changed his mind. Let there be no doubt about that. The Government has gone carefully into the wards and has decided that it can win 11 or 12, which will be sufficient to give it a majority.

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: I advise the honourable member not to start believing his own propaganda. I respect a man who has a point of view and sticks to it, but I do not respect someone who puts out propaganda and then starts to believe it himself, particularly when it is completely wrong.

Mr. Lee: You have been looking in a mirror.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, and I saw the honourable member for Yeronga through it.

The honourable member for Mt. Gravatt said that it was the 1967 Bennett report that made the Government decide that the Lord Mayor had too much power and the aldermen did not have enough.

Mr. Chinchin: The Q.C.E. said that, too.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right. In the 1970 council election the honourable member campaigned very strongly for the C.M.O. candidate in his area, and one of the strongest points in his campaign was that Alderman Jones was a dictator. And how did the people vote in that election? What did they think of the honourable member's advocacy? In Mt. Gravatt Alderman Jones received 10,949 votes, and the honourable member's candidate received only 7,222. It should be borne in mind, too, that this is an electorate that is recognised as a blue-ribbon Liberal seat. In spite of that, the people of Mt. Gravatt would not accept the honourable member's arguments.

The honourable member for Mt. Gravatt says that his Government has a mandate to do certain things and knows what is best for the people. But when he went to the people on those issues at the 1970 council election, the people of Brisbane cast his candidate aside. Many of the honourable member's party campaigned in this area against Lord Mayor Jones and Labor aldermen on the issue of the Bennett Report and the other things that it is claimed were going on in this great city of ours. Many Government members campaigned against Labor aldermen on the issue of the city square and other things. In every electorate except Toowong the vote for Lord Mayor was higher than that for the alderman. In all but five electorates Labor aldermen were returned. How can honourable members opposite talk about a mandate?

I have only one more thing to say to the Minister. He said that the Lord Mayor had discussed the whole proposal with him. I asked the Lord Mayor about that and he gave me authority to say that it is completely untrue; that the only time that he and the Minister met was at a social function where they were paying their respects to the retiring Director of Local Government, Mr. McNamara, and the Minister spoke to him right on midnight. The Lord Mayor said to me, "Please do not state publicly what state the Minister was in." That is my reply to the Minister on behalf of the Lord Mayor. If the Minister has a better story, he can put it up.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (8.46 p.m.): The reason for the reduction in the number of aldermen from 28 to 21 has been well and truly canvassed on both sides of the Chamber, so I think it would be only wasting the time of the Committee to proceed further on that subject. However, there are two matters that the Leader of the Opposition raised to which I should like to reply.

First, the honourable gentleman said that the Brisbane City Council will bear the cost of these elections. That is true to a degree, but only to the extent of an estimated \$35,000 for the printing and distribution of the rolls. If the City Council had to collate the information and prepare its own rolls, it is estimated that the cost to the council would be somewhere between \$200,000 and \$300,000. The State Electoral Office is saving it that expense by charging the council only the essential costs of the actual printing of the rolls. The use of the computer will make this relatively simple with the information available to the State Electoral Office. Consequently, as I said, the Brisbane City Council will pay only \$35,000 for the actual mechanical preparation of the rolls.

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. I did not refer to the cost of the rolls. I referred to the salaries of the aldermen. I said that the council would meet the cost, not the Government.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Minister to accept the honourable member's explanation.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I accept it. However, I wish to reiterate that it will cost the City Council only \$35,000 and that the State Government is saving the council a large sum of money by having the information available to put through the computer.

I come now to the second matter raised by the Leader of the Opposition, that is, the discussion between myself and the Lord Mayor relative to this Bill.

Mr. Davis: Do you remember it?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I remember it very clearly. It took the Lord Mayor a fair while to recall it, and that has been proven already.

Mr. Houston: Was it at a social function?

Mr. McKECHNIE: It was. I am in the habit of behaving myself at social functions, and I can carry on an intelligent conversation at any time of the night under any circumstances.

Mr. Burns: Is that why you always take a cab home?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Allow me to correct the Leader of the Opposition's statement. To begin with, he said that I discussed with the Lord Mayor all the ramifications of the Bill. That is not so. What I said was that I had discussions at another time and in another place. I did say that the Lord Mayor and I discussed matters relative to the number of aldermen that would be acceptable to him in the City Council. That was at a social function, it was late at night, and I was in complete control of my faculties.

Opposition Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. McKECHNIE: If any member of the Committee can prove that I have been "full" at any time in my life, he is welcome to try. I enjoy a beer or two, but I never take liquor to excess.

An Opposition Member: Who was "full"?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am not saying who was "full", but I was not.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I shall not allow a debate on sobriety. Clause 3 is under discussion.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The point is that I did discuss certain matters with the Lord Mayor including the number of aldermen, and, as the Leader of the Opposition said, he asked that I keep it out of the media.

Mr. Houston: I did not say that.

Mr. McKECHNIE: What did you say?

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. I did not say anything of the sort. I have never said that the Lord Mayor had said to me or that I said that the thing should be kept quiet.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the Minister to accept that explanation.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I accept it, but the point I still continue to make is that the Lord Mayor and I had the discussion. We discussed in detail—it was not for a matter of moments but over a long period—

Mr. Houston: For how long?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I would say three-quarters of an hour.

Mr. Houston: At a social function?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Yes. We discussed it at considerable length and it was on the understanding, and at the Lord Mayor's request, that I did not reveal to the mass media the details of that conversation.

Mr. Houston: You cannot remember it.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I assure the Committee that I have not and will not disclose the request that the Lord Mayor made to me.

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (8.52 p.m.): Never have I heard such a remarkable performance as has just been given by the Minister, who, after two speakers from this side of the Committee, wishes to close the debate on a very important clause in this Bill. He can debate this matter of public importance in the middle of the night, but considers that we in Parliament should be denied the same privilege.

Mr. Houston: Between midnight and a quarter to one.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes, between midnight and a quarter to one, and then he gets up and tells the Committee that because two Opposition members have spoken that is enough—and it is now only a quarter to 9.

I feel very strongly about the alteration in the number of aldermen who are to represent the people of Brisbane in the City Council. Because of this I support the amendment moved by the honourable member for Redlands to increase rather than reduce the number of aldermen.

During the progress of this Bill I have repeatedly asked the Minister for Local Government to explain why this magical figure of 21 was arrived at during the consideration of any move to alter the structure of the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. Lane: We told you at the introductory stage.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The honourable member for Merthyr made a complete botch of his contribution and now he has the temerity to interrupt what I am saying. He

was one who voted for the gag to shut us up, after having made a mess of his own speech. Is it any wonder that the police now say that the only good contribution he ever made to the Police Force was his resignation from it.

I have listened to the Minister speak in this Chamber. Over the week-end I read and reread his speech. I read and reread the speeches of all Government members and not on one occasion could I find any reason advanced to justify the Government's choice of 21 members except that we are going to have two zones in Brisbane, one to have 11 wards and the other 10.

Mr. Sullivan interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I hope the Minister is not coming into it because the only occasion on which he has spoken in this session was to nominate Mr. Houghton as Speaker and he was "done" like a dinner.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest that the honourable member proceed with his speech.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: As I said, the only justification is that we are going to have two zones, one with 11 wards and the other 10. So far the only argument adduced in support of the reduction in the number of aldermen has been a comparison between the workloads of members of Parliament and aldermen. When Government members are tackled about how they arrive at this figure, they go into a sort of mass hysteria and say, "We are the Government and we will tell the people of Brisbane what is good for them. We will govern Brisbane, and you will do what we tell you."

Let us consider the honourable members who represent the metropolitan area and tell the people of Brisbane what is best for them. In Brisbane the Liberal Party polled 135,450 votes compared with 175,000 polled by the Labor Party. Amongst those honourable members who are now telling the electors of Brisbane what is good for them are six members of the Liberal Party—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not convinced that the relative voting strengths of members of this Committee have any relevance to the clause under discussion.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I will tie this up with the clause; I can assure you of that, Mr. Hewitt.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I hope so.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Of the 17 metropolitan members who are telling the people of Brisbane that they should be represented by only 21 aldermen, six could not obtain enough support to have absolute majorities.

Mr. Porter: So what? What is wrong with that?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: They had to rely on preferences. Another six of them could not command the respect of a sufficient number of people in their electorates to be able to lead in the primary votes. As I have said, these members are in this Chamber against the wishes of the people, yet tell them that they will have only 21 aldermen.

Mr. Porter: How are you here against the wishes of the people?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: They are here because of a rotten, ill-conceived gerrymander and a rotten voting system.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Those comments are not relevant to clause 3.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am answering a question.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is not compelled to answer questions from the honourable member for Toowong, especially when they do not have any relevance to the clause under discussion.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I agree that the question had no relevance to this clause.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable member for Salisbury now favour me by coming back to clause 3?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The only arguments that those Government members have been able to advance in support of fewer aldermen than members of Parliament is the difference between their respective work-loads. They claim that, because aldermen have lesser areas of responsibility than those of members of Parliament, we do not need as many aldermen as members.

Mr. Porter: Do you disagree with that?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It was the honourable member for Toowong who sneeringly referred to aldermen as message boys. I remind him that for eight months of this year while Parliament was in recess the decisions in this State were made by Cabinet, and the Government back-benchers had no say whatever in those decisions. And they are claiming that they work harder than the aldermen. If the tag of message boy can be tied to an alderman who, in their opinion, is not accepting his full responsibilities, I claim that the same tag can be tied to the Government back-benchers.

Because Parliament is kept in recess for so long, it is safe to say that, of the 156 weeks in the past three years in which Parliament could have been in control, Cabinet made decisions in at least 81 of them. In spite of the fact that decisions of Parliament were made by a handful of Cabinet Ministers, the redistribution legislation increased the number of back-benchers

in Parliament. In those circumstances, how can Government members talk about aldermen being message boys, and, on that basis say that we should reduce their number to 21?

Mr. Bromley: They elected two new Cabinet Ministers—and they are not much good, either.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: As my colleague, the member for—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! We are not discussing the Ministry. We are discussing clause 3, and the size of the city council.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Mr. Hewitt, I can scarcely understand your ruling. In the debate on this Bill the honourable member for Merthyr was allowed to talk about anything from Trades Hall domination to Jack Egerton and everybody else in the A.L.P. as well as doctrinaire socialism, yet you are saying that my remarks are not appropriate to the legislation.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! It is my opinion that, at the moment, the honourable member's remarks are not relevant to the clause.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: It is my opinion that when the honourable member for Merthyr spoke he was not even dealing with the Bill.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I am not discussing the honourable member for Merthyr. I am discussing the honourable member's comments on clause 3 and I ask him to return to the clause.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I ask for the same justice in this Parliament as is given to Government members.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given the honourable member a good deal of latitude. I ask him for the last time to come back to clause 3.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Very well.

The only argument given in support of a reduction in the number of aldermen was that they have a smaller work-load. The honourable member for Redlands pointed out very clearly how this Government, over the years, has shoved responsibility after responsibility onto local authorities, particularly the Brisbane City Council. With your permission, Mr. Hewitt, I would like to refer to a classic example, namely the Traffic Commission that was instituted in 1962. Because it was a drain on State finances—it cost the State \$147,000 in its first year of operation—it was very smartly shoved onto the Brisbane City Council. I

cite also the anti-pollution laws, the anti-litter laws, and many such laws that have given local authorities added responsibility.

Government members have talked about tremendous growth in the city, the large increase in the number of houses constructed and the number of industries that the Government has been able to entice to the city. They are now saying that for a salary of four-fifths of that of a member of Parliament aldermen should represent more people in the city. That is Country Party thinking. The position has always obtained in this State whereby Country Party members represent far fewer people than metropolitan members, but they receive the same salary. At one stage there were 27,000 electors in the Salisbury electorate, but I was paid the same salary as the honourable member for Balonne who represented only 7,500 electors. The city has grown and the work-load of aldermen must have increased, yet the Government is now espousing the principle that it is good enough for aldermen, on a salary four-fifths that of a member of Parliament, to represent 20,000 while members of Parliament represent approximately 13,500 people in the city.

Mr. Lane: What about those aldermen who stood for Parliament in the last State election?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: What sickening hypocrisy. The Government says that a potential Lord Mayor could be defeated under the present system, and that his services would be lost to the city. What about the seven highly qualified, experienced aldermen whom this Bill will eliminate? The Government is trying to justify the sacking of them by claiming that their work-load is less than that of a member of Parliament.

Mr. R. Jones: Eight all told.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That is right.

Mr. Low: I take it that the Lord Mayor doesn't want 28.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I do not know whether the Lord Mayor wants 28. I am not concerned whether he wants 28 or 38. I am defending the concept of Greater Brisbane and it does not matter to me who the Lord Mayor and the aldermen are, or what they want. It is what we of the Australian Labor Party believe in—

Mr. Camm: What you want?

Mr. SHERRINGTON: No, not at all. It is the policy of the Australian Labor Party. It is not what the 17 city members on the Government side want. What they want was cooked up at clandestine meetings and by

horse-trading with the Country Party, which did not want daylight saving while the Liberals wanted the city council decimated. So that pact or bargain was made. As a member of the A.L.P., I can see the great benefit of having a local authority such as that which operates in Brisbane. At least my reasons for fighting for it are far more valid than any that have been advanced by Government members.

Under the Electoral Districts Act, the south-eastern zone has 33 Brisbane seats, and it is only reasonable to assume, under the circumstances, that Brisbane should have at least 29 aldermen. Judging by his remuneration, and alderman is only worth four-fifths of a member of Parliament so the city should have at least four-fifths of the number of city members of Parliament.

Mr. Porter: There is a good thought.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Of course it is. Even on the Government's calculation, there should be at least 24 aldermen.

Mr. Porter: That is what you are after.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am not after anything. Unlike Government members, I do not have shady share dealings and land dealings. I am not after anything at all. The only piece of land I will ever own is a little plot 6 feet by 4 feet. There is nothing I want from society, except the privilege to get up in Parliament to fight injustices that are being perpetrated on the people of Brisbane under a Bill such as this.

The argument for the reduction in the number of aldermen has no logic. I have listened to all the speeches and I have read the Minister's speech. In not one line have I been able to find any logic for his action. I believe that the Minister not only failed to prove his case but failed dismally even in presenting it. If the Bill was being presented as an exercise in jurisprudence, I believe that it would be described as an illusory argument based on supposition, lacking in fact, and uncorroborated by evidence.

Mr. McKechnie: And opposed by myths.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: Yes—and illustrated by allegory, if the Minister wants that one, too.

Mr. Porter: Give us a translation.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: As a matter of fact, I prepared a translation, because when I compiled these notes I felt that I would probably be talking over the heads of most

of the members on the Government side. The translation is that it is a pathetic attempt to justify cow-cocky logic in the statutes of a banana republic.

(Time expired.)

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 40

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 3 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That clause 3, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 4—Amendment of s. 7; Qualification of alderman—

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (9.28 p.m.): This clause seeks to delete the words “as Mayor or” from subsection (1) of section 7 of the Act. As well, it deletes subsection (2). It would be natural to expect that when it was amending the Act the Government would have taken the opportunity to rectify an anomaly that could prove to be of some consequence to a person who desires to become an alderman. Unfortunately, owing to factors outside the control of the citizen, the electoral rolls are inaccurate. As a matter of fact, some time ago a

member of the Treasurer's family found that she was not enrolled, and I think almost every honourable member has found that a person he knows well is not on the electoral roll. Particularly after a redistribution is carried out, the publication of electoral rolls is so late that it is almost impossible for anyone to check whether his name is on the roll before the next election is held.

Section 7 prescribes quite clearly that any person wishing to become an alderman must be on the annual roll for an electorate within the City of Brisbane. The actual words used in the section are—

"who is registered as living in the City by the annual roll for an electoral district last prepared under and in accordance with the requirements of the Elections Act".

It does not say anything about any additions to the annual roll, or anything about the supplementary roll. Quite conceivably a person could be living in a certain house in an area for many months, or even years.

Mr. Lee: He has a duty to enrol.

Mr. HOUSTON: He would be on the roll. The honourable member knows of people whose names were wrongly removed from the roll for various reasons. If one of them wished to be an aldermanic candidate, according to this clause he would be excluded through no fault of his own. I know that the intention is right, but the clause should be amended. As it is not competent for the Opposition to amend anything at this stage in the light of the Minister's very clear public statement that he will not accept any amendments to this Bill—that was a ridiculous statement to make at any stage—

Mr. Lee: Don't you think that was a Press statement, not the Minister's statement?

Mr. HOUSTON: When I referred to this matter previously, the Minister did not deny it. We have noted what has happened, without going into the ramifications of the application of the gag and so on.

This is a principle that should not be decided on party lines. Anyone could be affected, whether he wishes to stand as an Independent, a Calithumpian, or any other type of candidate. We have found from experience that the electoral rolls are not as accurate as they should be. If a person can prove that he has lived in an electorate and is entitled to be on the roll, and that he has taken all necessary steps to be on the roll, his claim should be acceded to. The Minister should take all necessary steps to have an amendment framed. If he will agree to do that, we will agree to postponing this provision to allow his officers to prepare the necessary amendment.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (9.32 p.m.): The answer is "No". This point is not relevant to the clause under discussion.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (9.33 p.m.): I support my leader's remarks on this clause. We are in a position similar to that experienced at the last State election relative to the electoral rolls. We have been told by the Minister—this has a big bearing on the situation outlined by the Leader of the Opposition—that this will be a combination of rolls even greater than we face in the State election. The Minister said that the Chief Electoral Officer will be combining not two but 2½ State electorates into one ward to get the master roll.

Mr. Houston: If they want to keep anyone out, they can. They could even leave Alderman Jones's name out.

Mr. NEWTON: That is so.

We must not forget what the Leader of the Opposition said, that is, that under amending legislation to the City of Brisbane Act no supplementary roll applies. Anyone who wishes to be nominated as an alderman for the Brisbane City Council must comply with certain requirements. In the recent State election, it was found, when the supplementary roll was published, that the names of two of the persons who signed the nomination for my opponent had been erased from the annual roll.

Mr. Houston: Whole streets were on wrong rolls.

Mr. NEWTON: That is so. However, the names of these people appeared in the supplementary roll.

A good deal of work needs to be done on the rolls in their present condition because, under this clause, a person can be barred. That is what we are concerned about. We have many examples of 30 to 40 people being rejected at various polling booths when trying to cast a section 35A vote. If the same thing happens with the master roll for the council elections to be held in Brisbane next year, many people will be debarred because they have not the chance, under the amending legislation, of getting their names on the supplementary roll. As the Leader of the Opposition said, this needs urgent, honest and sincere consideration because of the experience in the recent State election. If the council election was two years away and the Principal Electoral Officer had sufficient time, the rolls could possibly be put in a satisfactory condition. They are not in that condition at the moment, and something must be done urgently to ensure that people are not debarred from standing as aldermen under this legislation.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (9.37 p.m.): This matter is not relevant to the clause under discussion.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 7, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—Repeal of and new s. 13; Appointment of Mayor—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (9.39 p.m.): I oppose paragraph (4) of this clause, which reads—

“A resolution for the appointment of one of the aldermen to be Mayor in place of the Mayor then in office shall not be passed by the Council unless notice of intention to move such resolution is given to each of the aldermen including the Mayor not less than seven days before the date of the meeting at which the resolution is to be moved.”

Other members of the Opposition local government and electricity committee and I thought this proposal over carefully. The obvious course would be to limit the number of resolutions that could be passed in any one year, or from time to time. However, we considered that if we did that, we would be assenting to the principle of the whole clause, the importance of which must not be underestimated.

The Minister may tell us that some benign regulations will subsequently be introduced setting out more clearly the conditions under which such resolutions can be moved. I might say, of course, that I have not much faith in benign regulations in legislation such as that now before the Committee. However, as the clause stands, there is nothing to prevent a member of the council from moving such a resolution at meeting after meeting.

I think this illustrates the whole philosophy behind this legislation. The Lord Mayor will hold his office without any tenure or security. One of Shakespeare's characters said, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.” I say, “Sagging will droop the shoulders of the wearer of the lord mayoral robes.”

As an illustration, let us take the electorate of Merthyr, which is a Brisbane ward roughly equivalent to the State seat of Bulimba. Certain work involving resumptions is being carried on there, and it is putting the alderman under heavy pressure. Let us suppose that this alderman is elected mayor. In the circumstances it is a wild supposition, but let us make it for the purpose of this illustration. This alderman, if he becomes mayor, will have to direct and influence the council for the good of the whole of the City of Brisbane, and at the same time he will have hundreds of his own constituents breathing down his neck. He could say, “I am not going to push this thing. I will soft pedal on it.” Instantly he would become the target of contumely from other aldermen.

Now let us take the converse proposition, with the mayor representing another ward. He will still have to use his influence. I am merely taking the Minister's statement, mouthed in endless repetition by Government members, that the legislation will not reduce

in the least the power of the mayor. That is the Government's argument, and I am arguing on its grounds. This mayor, with the good of the whole freeway system at heart, goes ahead and uses his power to push the necessary ordinances through the council. The alderman for that ward then says, “I'll get him”, and lobbies among other dissidents. He could then move that the mayor be removed from office.

In a nutshell, this clause contains the whole weakness of the legislation. The Government has inserted this provision. It must therefore bear the blame for the anger of the people of Brisbane over the confusion being inflicted on them by the weakening of the Brisbane City Council.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (9.44 p.m.): This matter has been well canvassed for two days and two nights, and I do not think anything more can be said on it. I therefore move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 40

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—Repeal of and new ss. 14 and 14A—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (9.51 p.m.): I draw attention to page 4, paragraph 6, of the Bill, which provides, among other things,

that the vice mayor shall, by virtue of his office, become the mayor and, later on, that he "shall hold office as vice mayor until the conclusion of the said triennial election".

This is a piece of legislation, as was the original Act, that had to come before this Parliament. I am not conversant, nor do I make out to be, with the regulations that apply to these Acts, especially the one that has been in operation since 1937, but I think I am entitled to ask the Minister through you, Mr. Hewitt, just how the vice mayor is to be elected under this legislation. In this particular instance, it is of vital importance.

If a vice mayor is not elected, then we have recourse to all previous sections of the proposed legislation and it will then be put into the hands of the Governor in Council to appoint someone. Unless some regulation or some addition to this legislation is forthcoming, we are faced with the possibility, if not the probability, of having recourse to the Minister. This could occur following an election in which there is a dead heat in the voting, or where there is some mishap, or where someone walks out and does not vote, leaving an even number so that no-one can be appointed. Supposing a Labor majority were elected and they said, "We will veto the Act and not appoint a mayor"; then recourse would have to be had to the Minister. I should like to see this point cleared up. The Minister may not think it is important, but I should like an answer as to whether there is a regulation covering it in the principal Act.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (9.54 p.m.): This provision covers two eventualities. One is to keep the present council in office until 31 March next year, when an election will be held and a new council will take office. It makes it very clear that should the mayor resign or go out of office, the vice mayor will take over. If no move is made, the Governor in Council may do it. On the other hand, should the council retire or any other vacancy occur it is within the powers of the Governor in Council to appoint or not appoint someone to fill the vacancy. It is extremely unlikely that within four months of the date of election a nomination will be made by the Governor in Council.

Under the proposed new section provision is made for two zones, one to encompass 11 wards on the north side of the river and the other to encompass 10 wards on the south side. I think this matter has been made very clear. I therefore move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 9, as read, agreed to.

Clause 10—New ss. 14B and 14C—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (10.1 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

"On page 5, line 43, after the word 'Commissioners' insert the words—
'one of whom shall be a Supreme Court Judge'."

I ask honourable members to cast their minds back to the Electoral Districts Act 1971 during the debate on which the same type of amendment was moved. We believe that it was necessary then and we believe it is also necessary on this occasion when we are dealing with amendments to the City of Brisbane Act and the appointment of commissioners to draw up altered boundaries and name the new city council electorates.

I could rehash many of the arguments advanced in 1971 as they would still be valid, but since then we have had the redistribution.

Mr. Sherrington: We have "had" it, all right.

Mr. BALDWIN: The State of Queensland has "had" it. We know how it turned out when it was first posted, we know what happened to objections, and we saw the final result. We saw the report and we saw the

redistribution in action. Our proposal to amend the provision in 1971 has been justified by time and by the outcome of the election. We therefore feel more than justified in moving this amendment. It is all very well to speak in generalities, mixed with hope, and say that the commissioners, such as they were in the last redistribution, and such as they could be under this legislation as canvassed in the Press, will all be honourable men.

Mr. Lee: Don't you agree that they are?

Mr. BALDWIN: They might be all honourable men. The honourable member for Yeronga would not sleep in peace if I did not mention his name so that it would appear in "Hansard". If he had heard me out, he would have found that his interjection was useless.

They might be all honourable men, but that is not the point we are discussing. The principle is very old and worthy, just as it is trite and hackneyed, nevertheless it is true and binding for all time that justice must not only be done but must also appear to be done. What better way could the Government achieve that end than by having a Supreme Court judge as chairman of the commissioners. Everybody clearly appreciates the position of a Supreme Court judge within the structure of our State and our legislation.

Mr. Sherrington: There is no guarantee that they will not bring Henry Bolte up here.

Mr. BALDWIN: It would be handy for him in his retirement, I suppose.

A Supreme Court judge is appointed to his position because of his experience in all matters legislative. He is appointed because of his experience, his standing in the community, his general academic knowledge, his high moral appreciation of the problems of society and his social maturity. If ever anything was needed to leaven such an undemocratic act as this, it is social maturity.

A Supreme Court judge would have no difficulty in resisting, if not being above, party political or other pressures. He would be in a secure and reasonably affluent position. He would not, in 99 cases out of 100, seek political honours, although that has happened on odd occasions. There would be no point in offering such a person a post in the Public Service, because he would already be in a specialist position for which there is no parallel in the Public Service structure.

The Minister and his colleagues should, after grave consideration—much graver consideration than they gave to the last redistribution—accept this amendment. The people of Brisbane are cognisant of what happened under the previous redistribution. Many of them are in close contact with the activities associated with that redistribution and remember the problems that were created by the commissioners.

No-one can, with the mere wave of a hand, wipe off notorious, persistent and widespread rumour validated by subsequent

events; certainly not in matters of legislation or that affect the good not only of the people of Brisbane but also of the political party which introduced this legislation, and the good name of the public servants who have to execute the legislation once it leaves this House. If I were a public servant in a position where I could be one of the commissioners, I would be happy to have the protection of a Supreme Court judge as my chairman.

I shall leave other matters pertaining to this amendment in the hands of other Opposition members.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (10.14 p.m.): What is the reason behind this amendment? Does it imply that there are no other competent persons? Does it imply that nobody else but a Supreme Court judge is free of bias? I do not accept any such assertion. A judge is appointed because of his knowledge of law. It is not because of his ability to study demographic trends in relation to electoral boundaries. I can see no need for the appointment of a judge. Last year during the passage of the Electoral Districts Bill this matter was put forward by the Opposition and was effectively answered by the Government. The same reasons still apply. Consequently, I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 10 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 32

Aiken
Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Bromley
Burns
D'Arcy
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Hanson
Harris
Harvey
Hooper, K. J.
Houston
Inch
Jensen
Jones, N. F.

Jones, R.
Jordan
Marginson
Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Wallis-Smith
Wood, P.
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
Leese
Wood, B.

NOES, 41

Ahern
Alison
Armstrong
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chaik
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Edwards
Fletcher
Frawley
Gunn
Hartwig
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hinze
Hodges
Hooper, K. W.
Kaus

Knox
Lane
Lee
Low
McKechnie
Miller
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Neal
Newbery
Porter
Rae
Scott-Young
Small
Sullivan
Tomkins
Wharton

Tellers:
Murray
Row

Resolved in the negative.

Question—That clause 10, as read, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

Ahern
Alison
Armstrong
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chalk
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Edwards
Fletcher
Frawley
Gunn
Hartwig
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hinze
Hodges
Hooper, K. W.
Kaus

Knox
Lane
Lee
Low
McKechnie
Miller
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Neal
Newbery
Porter
Rae
Scott-Young
Small
Sullivan
Tomkins
Wharton

Tellers:
Murray
Row

NOES, 32

Aiken
Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Bromley
Burns
D'Arcy
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Hanson
Harris
Harvey
Hooper, K. J.
Houston
Inch
Jensen
Jones, N. F.

Jones, R.
Jordan
Marginson
Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Wallis-Smith
Wood, P.
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
Leese
Wood, B.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 11—New ss. 14D and 14E—

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (10.28 p.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 6, line 41, omit the words—
'one-fifth'”

and insert in lieu thereof the words—
'one-tenth.'”

Tonight we have had a shocking display by the Government through the Minister and the Treasurer of gagging. This is quite remarkable when the Committee is debating clauses that are designed supposedly to bring democracy to the Brisbane City Council and to give aldermen the opportunity of having their say. But in Parliament, where members represent electorates, last Thursday and today the Government has used its numbers to gag Opposition members. We should not forget that every member has a right to speak on behalf of the people in his electorate. Some Opposition members spoke for 20 minutes at the introductory stage, but now they are being gagged.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You hogged 1½ hours yourself today.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Treasurer could not tell the truth if it was written down for him. I spoke for well under 1½ hours.

Honourable Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I call the Chamber to order. I should be grateful if the Leader of the Opposition would direct his remarks to the Chair.

Opposition Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I called for order in the Chamber. I did not refer to any member by name.

Mr. Marginson: You called the Leader of the Opposition to order.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I am in charge of the Chamber and I ask the honourable member for Wolston to keep his remarks to himself.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am sure, Mr. Hewitt, that you understand the Opposition's feelings. We are responsible to a large number of

people in Queensland. I do not need to remind the Chamber that 48 per cent of the people support us. They are entitled to hear our views. Because of the Government's attitude and its reasoning this debate will go down in history as one of the most scandalous debates in this Assembly. It has acted in this way so that Government members may go to bed early, simply because they are becoming so old and decrepit they are too tired to sit through the full period of the debate.

The clause provides that there may be a margin of not more than one-fifth more or one-fifth less in quotas. That provision was taken from an earlier Bill, but we are now dealing with larger numbers of electors. The Minister expects that quotas will be about 19,000, and one-fifth of 19,000 is 3,800, which means there will be a variation in the City of Brisbane from 15,200 to 22,800—a difference of 7,600 electors. That is no accident. It is designed so that all Labor votes can be placed in certain areas. The Government has the results from the polling booths and there is no doubt that it will direct the commissioners as it directed them on the last occasion.

A Government Member: That is a shocking allegation.

Mr. HOUSTON: What was done was shocking.

No-one can tell me that the commissioners were so incompetent they did not know the difference between what should have been 12,000 and 16,000. The commissioners said that the electorate of Pine Rivers should have only 12,553 electors, but when the election was held it was found that it had 16,758 electors. Is that competence? The commissioners were either incompetent or they were directed by the Government.

We know very well that the Government, through the Liberal Party, made a submission to the electoral commission, but it was very careful not to make that submission public.

According to the commission, the electorate of Surfers Paradise was to have 12,623 electors, but when the election was held it was found that there were 16,439 electors.

Mr. Small: That is because of the rate at which it is growing.

Mr. HOUSTON: I do not deny that, but does the honourable member think that a competent commission would know that the figures it gave were not the accurate figures for voters in those electorates? Let us be "fair dinkum" about this. If this clause is passed, it is obvious that there will be a tremendous difference in electoral quotas. Will it not be very easy for them to get Liberal voters and put them into little groups of 15,000 in certain places. One would not have to be a genius to do that. As I have said frequently, that is the real purpose of the Bill. If the Government gets away with

this, there will be no need to get to the second stage of breaking Brisbane up, because the Government will have regulations to do what it wants to do with land development to suit its followers.

Paragraph (3) of the proposed new section 14D refers to the number of electors living in a zone as at 18 April 1972, which was the date of closing the rolls for the last State election. Numerous enrolments have been made since then. Many people have been found to be wrongly enrolled. I gave the electoral office a list of 90 people who were subsequently transferred from the Bulimba roll to other rolls. Yet hundreds of people were refused section 35A votes because they were not on any roll. The clause is inaccurate in its application. The commissioners, irrespective of who they are, will be working on out-of-date rolls and will be at a disadvantage from the word go.

The clause lays down certain considerations in making the redistribution. They are—

- (a) community or diversity of interest;
- (b) means of communication;
- (c) physical features;
- (d) density of population;
- (e) demographic trends;
- (f) developmental trends.

They are nice-sounding words. The same considerations are contained in the Electoral Districts Act, but they did not mean anything to the commissioners. Months before they handed down their findings, the honourable member for Mansfield, whom I mention because he is in the Chamber and can deny this if he likes, was able to state, "My electorate of Hawthorne has gone and I will have to find somewhere to go." I give him full credit for going out and working hard.

Mr. Kaus: That was after the redistribution.

Mr. HOUSTON: It was not after the redistribution at all. I said to the member, "If you stay around, you will have to stand against me." He said, "No fear. I could not beat you." He remembered what I did to the present honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha and he did not want that to happen to him.

These considerations are only so many words. I suggest that, this time, the commissioners do their homework instead of taking notice of the Liberal Party and the Country Party. On the last occasion, the Labor Party got caught by making a public statement before the second bite at the cherry was made, when 34 individual changes were made by the commissioners within a couple of weeks of handing down their findings. That is not a bad example of incompetence.

Mr. Davis: Will there be two redistributions this time?

Mr. HOUSTON: The clause allows for two redistributions this time. The set-up is exactly the same, and, from the Government's point of view, if it was a pretty good

idea last time, it might be a pretty good idea this time. I can assure the Government that it will not have the names of our candidates before the second bite at the cherry this time. It will have to wait for that information.

Sir Gordon Chalk: "Burnsie" knows now.

Mr. HOUSTON: The Treasurer knows full well when he refers by interjection to the honourable member for Lytton that he will not be given a chance to speak. I challenge the Minister to allow the honourable member for Lytton to follow me.

Sir Gordon Chalk: He had his opportunity.

Mr. HOUSTON: No, he did not. The Minister has been gagging the debate all the way through.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You took 1½ hours.

Mr. HOUSTON: I could speak for another 10 minutes. I shall sit down now and see if the honourable member for Lytton is allowed to speak. We will see how "fair dinkum" the Minister is.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (10.41 p.m.): The Leader of the Opposition quite correctly said that the average number of electors would be 19,000-odd. Let us say 20,000, for convenience. With a margin of 20 per cent above or below that figure, some wards could have as many as 24,000 electors. At present there is at least one ward, and I think two, in excess of 26,000 electors. In those cases the enrolments would be reduced from 26,000 to 24,000 if extended to the absolute limit. Consequently the coming distribution will be fairer than the present state.

One Opposition member tried by interjection to imply that the commissioners would be men who could not be trusted.

Mr. Davis: I said that.

Mr. McKECHNIE: The honourable member for Brisbane is proud of it. He is a defamer of character. I acknowledge his interjection quite happily if he wishes to establish himself in that category.

The Leader of the Opposition dealt with the six factors that influence the need to have some wards slightly above or below the average. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned them, and I repeat them. They are community or diversity of interest; means of communication; physical features; density of population; demographic trends; and developmental trends. I heard several Opposition members say that they are mere words and mean nothing. The Opposition wishes to add "accessibility". The matters listed for consideration mean just as much as accessibility.

Mr. Houston: They do not. "Accessibility" makes a difference.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Accessibility is tied in with communication and all the other angles. It is covered by the six items that the Leader of the Opposition referred to. It is very well covered, as it was last year in the Electoral Districts Bill. Consequently I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 11 (Mr. Houston's amendment) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (11 p.m.): I move the following amendment—

“On page 6, line 48, after the word ‘communication’ add the words—
‘and accessibility’”

Because of the many complaints we have received as candidates, and still receive as members representing electorates formed under the last redistribution, we do not use these words lightly. If the same situation applies under the redistribution of city council wards, there is no doubt in our minds, and those of the electors at large, that this is a deliberately contrived method of confusing and inconveniencing certain candidates who will be aldermen if they are elected.

I will cite what happened in the electorate of Redlands—there may be other members on both sides of the Chamber who were similarly affected—to demonstrate what can happen if proper cognisance is not taken of the problems that could arise in the forthcoming redistribution. The electorate of Redlands, on the mainland, looks like an octopus with all but two of its tentacles removed. I, as the elected member, live in the northern piece of one of the protrusions. To get to the other end of my electorate I pass through two other electorates, although I travel in a relatively straight, north-south line. I have lived in that area for the last 13 years, and near to it for a total of about 25 years. I know it very intimately and have seen it grow. It was not beyond the bounds of possibility to redistribute that electorate quite differently.

I will not go deeply into the reasons for this amendment, other than to point out that accessibility is not merely a geographical or geometrical concept in the formation of electorates. There is the matter of accessibility to electors, taking into consideration such things as where they work and where their children go to school. One of the schools in my electorate is inaccessible politically. It stands across the road from the Redlands electorate, but 95 per cent of the school population are from the Redlands electorate and 5 per cent from another electorate. There is no reason in the world why that school could not have been made accessible to the Redlands electorate by

merely moving the boundary to another road, or placing it along private properties, as has been done in some instances previously.

Accessibility is of extreme importance to many members, and more so when it becomes inaccessibility. Geographical accessibility, of course, is that which occurs along mountains, high ridges, rivers, streams and valleys, as we have in Brisbane. Certain electorates, such as Brisbane, cross streams and rivers. On this occasion I see that the Government has taken the precaution to ensure that this does not happen by having a northern zone and a southern zone, with the Brisbane River as the border between them.

Many streams and railway lines have crossovers at widely spaced positions which make for inaccessibility for both members and constituents, not only on polling matters but on other electorate matters about which they wish to inquire, in this case city council matters. The old idea of using main roads as boundaries must also be looked at in this regard, but that raises another point.

I convey to the commissioners, whoever they may be, the wish of honourable members—I suggest on both sides of the Chamber—that they look closely at accessibility when deciding the boundaries of the new electorates.

Other metropolitan Opposition members desire to record facts concerning accessibility in their electorates, so I shall give them a chance to do so.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (11.6 p.m.): I have no quarrel with the general principles enunciated by the honourable member for Redlands. However, I consider that the six considerations set out in the clause cover the matter adequately.

I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be added to clause 11 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) be so added—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 32

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

NOES, 41

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

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clause 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—New ss. 14L, 14M and 14N—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (11.20 p.m.):
I move the following amendment:—

“On page 10, line 19, after the word ‘station’

insert the words—

‘and public library.’”

The amended clause will then read that the maps shall be “publicly exhibited, in some conspicuous place at the City Hall and at every police station and library within a proposed electoral ward”, and so on. It is more a simple request than an amendment, but, to play safe, we thought we had better move it as an amendment.

I ask the Minister to consider the fact that there are more and more libraries, especially in the Greater Brisbane Area, because of the activities of the Brisbane City Council, and that far more people use libraries than attend police stations for various purposes, again, of course, because of the uplifting of the general social level of the people of this city.

A library is a very appropriate place for the viewing and consideration of such an important matter as that now before the Committee. It has educational considerations for younger people who, even though they do not vote, will be very interested in this and no doubt will bear the results in mind when they do vote, as well as for their parents who patronise libraries.

I think the suggestion has much to commend it and I do not intend to labour the point unduly.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (11.22 p.m.): I believe that the police stations will adequately cover the job. What is more, the word “library”, I feel, would be too vague a term. It could be a public library or a school library and public libraries would also include those set up by various organisations for the use of the public.

I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 13 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 32

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

NOES, 41

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

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (11.32 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 10, line 20, after the word ‘map’ insert the words—

‘and submissions from individuals and organisations.’”

We submit this amendment in view of our experiences after the last redistribution. I made a submission, I know our party made a submission, I know other organisations made submissions, and I know other parties made submissions, but never at any stage did anyone see the submissions of anyone else. It is a good thing for all of those making submissions to the commissioners to see the submissions made by others. That would engender public faith in the openness and the good intent of all persons and organisations making submissions.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Did you do that in your day?

Mr. BALDWIN: That is entirely irrelevant, Miss Victoria.

This is worth while in the period in which objections are called. On the information I gained from discussions with many persons and organisations, I know that had they seen the other submissions they would not have made further objections or would have changed the basis of their objections. We must never

underestimate the educative aspect of this to the community in general. Such submissions are no doubt stored away in the pigeon-holes of Public Service departments. They may or may not be released, at some future date, to certain groups doing research. They will then be aired for public view, at a time much later than when they could serve a more urgent and immediate purpose.

Mr. R. E. Moore: In 75 years.

Mr. BALDWIN: This is how it goes, under this Government.

Mr. Davis: The rumour is around town that the maps have already been drawn.

Mr. BALDWIN: Perhaps that is so, and going on past experience, we would not be surprised.

Nevertheless, the submissions are usually made with good intent. Most of those I know about had sound bases and were worthy of public display. If we are to keep faith with members of the public, they should be given the right to scrutinise them and satisfy themselves that all is being done, to the best of public and departmental ability, to ensure that fair and just redistribution will be the end product of such great expenditure of public money and the time and effort of interested persons and parties.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. BALDWIN: As the honourable member for Brisbane said, this has already been done in the case of the Federal redistribution. For the reasons advanced, I see no reason why the Government should not accept this amendment, and I appeal to the Minister to do so.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (11.38 p.m.): The effect of the amendment would be the duplication and distribution to police stations throughout the metropolitan area of voluminous evidence. I cannot accept it.

I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

Aiken
 Baldwin
 Blake
 Bousen
 Bromley
 Burns
 D'Arcy
 Dean
 Hanlon
 Hanson
 Harris
 Hooper, K. J.
 Houston
 Inch
 Jensen
 Jones, N. F.
 Jones, R.
 Jordan

Leese
 Marginson
 Melloy
 Moore, F. P.
 Newton
 O'Donnell
 Sherrington
 Wallis-Smith
 Wood, B.
 Wood, P.
 Wright
 Yewdale

Tellers:
 Davis
 Harvey

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 13 (Mr Baldwin's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided.

AYES, 32

Aiken
 Baldwin
 Blake
 Bousen
 Bromley
 Burns
 D'Arcy
 Dean
 Hanlon
 Hanson
 Harris
 Hooper, K. J.
 Houston
 Inch
 Jensen
 Jones, N. F.
 Jones, R.
 Jordan

Leese
 Marginson
 Melloy
 Moore, F. P.
 Newton
 O'Donnell
 Sherrington
 Wallis-Smith
 Wood, B.
 Wood, P.
 Wright
 Yewdale

Tellers:
 Davis
 Harvey

NOES, 41

Ahern
 Alison
 Armstrong
 Bird
 Bjelke-Petersen
 Camm
 Campbell
 Chalk
 Chinchin
 Cory
 Crawford
 Edwards
 Fletcher
 Frawley
 Gunn
 Hartwig
 Herbert
 Hewitt, N. T. E.
 Hinze
 Hodges
 Hooper, K. W.
 Kaus

Knox
 Lane
 Lee
 Low
 McKechnie
 Miller
 Müller
 Murray
 Neal
 Newbery
 Porter
 Rae
 Row
 Small
 Sullivan
 Tomkins
 Wharton

Tellers:
 Moore, R. E.
 Scott-Young

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (11.49 p.m.): I move the following further amendment to clause 13—

“On page 11, line 8, after the word ‘consider’ insert the words—
 ‘and make reply to.’”

This amendment is put forward as a result of the Opposition's experiences in the recent electoral redistribution. It was known to me and to many others that a number of objections and suggestions were made to the Commission. I and many others with

whom I checked received a note of acknowledgement and in most instances that was the last we heard of the matter. In one or two cases, however, it was not the last we heard of it. Overt action was taken on some objections, which no doubt pleased the objectors, who were candidates in the election.

What is more important is that we have no way whatever of knowing whether, in fact, objections and suggestions have been considered. As this paragraph provides that the commissioners “shall” consider, I want to know, as would everybody else who submitted an objection or suggestion, not only that the objection had actually been considered but the grounds upon which it was either accepted or rejected. This would not only keep faith with the public, which is something that the Government is so alacritous to prove, but it would also make the people feel they were part of this very important and gigantic electoral machinery. For our own experience and guidance in future cases as well as for the general education of those pursuing investigations for educational purposes in the field of government, I and many others would like to know the reasons for what is done.

These things do not only have benefit or drawback in their actual implementation but also have benefit in the uplifting of the educational experience of those people in this State who are interested in taking an active part in its elective processes. We hope, too, that this experience will assist these people to avoid mistakes in future submissions or objections, and perhaps give them the pleasure of knowing that they have been acknowledged as having made some worth-while contribution to the basically important democratic process of building sound electoral machinery.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (11.53 p.m.): The amendment, if accepted, would mean that—

Mr. BURNS: This sort of farce, with the Minister always “getting the nod” will have to stop. I was on my feet long before the Minister was.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member taking a point of order?

Mr. BURNS: I am taking the point that invariably you have looked towards the Minister and given him the “nod” immediately after there has been only one speaker from this side. It is about time we had some real democracy here.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member has no valid point of order.

Mr. BURNS: I am not sitting down until I get a “fair go”.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I call the Minister.

Mr. BURNS: I am not resuming my seat until I get some action from you in relation to what—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I order the honourable member to resume his seat.

Mr. BURNS: I will not resume my seat.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I again order the honourable member to resume his seat.

Mr. BURNS: I will not resume my seat.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member under the provisions of Standing Order 123A. I again order him to resume his seat.

Mr. BURNS: I refuse to resume my seat. I was on my feet before the Minister was.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member for Lytton to resume his seat while I am on my feet. I have already warned the honourable member under Standing Order 123A, and I again ask him to obey my call to order. I warn him for the last time under Standing Order 123A, and call the Minister.

Mr. BURNS: I am not coming to order, Mr. Hewitt, because I think the way you have handled the debate tonight has been grossly unfair.

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

Mr. F. P. Moore: "Rafferty Hewitt's Rules" again!

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Mourilyan will contain himself for the moment. I have ordered the honourable member for Lytton to resume his seat and maintain proper decorum in this Chamber. For the last time I advise him that he has been warned under the provisions of Standing Order 123A. I again call the Minister.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I believe it is your duty, Mr. Hewitt, to protect the rights of members of the Opposition just as it is to protect those of the Government; but all night you have deliberately ignored members of the Opposition who have risen to speak. I believe you are not properly exercising your functions as Chairman in this debate.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! That is a reflection on the Chair. I advise the honourable member that when I call the

Minister I have no knowledge of his intentions. He is the Minister in charge of the Committee, and when an honourable member comments on a clause the Minister has the right to speak to the clause if he wishes to get the call.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I take a further point of order. All night you have been receiving your instructions from either the Premier or the Deputy Premier.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no substance in that point of order. I ask the honourable member to resume his seat.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (11.58 p.m.): The purport of this amendment is to ask the commissioners to reply in writing to every person who sees fit to give evidence or make submissions to them. This would give rise to an intolerable situation and would not in any way alter the opinion of the commissioners. It would merely serve to delay the proceedings; consequently, I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

[Wednesday, 6 September 1972]

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 13 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 32

Aiken
Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Bromley
Burns
D'Arcy
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Harris
Harvey
Hooper, K. J.
Houston
Inch
Jensen
Jones, N. F.
Jones, R.

Jordan
Leese
Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Wallis-Smith
Wood, B.
Wood, P.
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
Hanson
Marginson

NOES, 41

Ahern
Armstrong
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chalk
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Edwards
Fletcher
Frawley
Gunn
Hartwig
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hinze
Hodges
Hooper, K. W.
Kaus
Knox
Lane

Lee
Low
McKechnie
Miller
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Murray
Neal
Newbery
Porter
Rae
Row
Scott-Young
Small
Sullivan
Tomkins
Wharton

Tellers:
Alison
Bird

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 13, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14—New ss. 14O, 14P and 14Q—

Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands) (12.9 a.m.): I move the following amendment:—

“On page 11, line 16, after the word ‘Minister’ insert the words—
‘who shall convey to Parliament.’”

A similar amendment was moved at the time of the redistribution legislation last year, and the reasons for and against it were stated. The chief reason then advanced by Government members for not accepting that amendment was lack of time. It was said that the redistribution would have to be completed by a certain date, that Parliament would have to be recalled, and all the rest of it. Those reasons are not applicable on this occasion. In addition, there is the further reason that Parliament should act, through the news media and “Hansard”, as a clearing house for the public, and make known to the public of Brisbane, who are directly concerned, and to the public of Queensland, who are concerned in principle, Parliament's findings on the report of the commissioners.

It is quite likely that the Minister, or some other Government member, in speaking against this amendment will claim that

it is sufficient for the commissioners to make a detailed report and the Minister to implement it. In the light of the last redistribution, that is clearly not so, at least in the opinion of the Opposition and 48 per cent of the people of this State.

Another question for consideration, which was raised last year and which I now raise again, is this: who is sovereign in these matters—the commissioners, the Minister, or Parliament? There is only one answer to that question. Parliament, as the sovereign body of this State, has the duty and responsibility, and must find the time and will, to make the findings of the commissioners available to the public through the House. Every effort should be made to do that, and it is for the reasons that I have mentioned that I move this amendment.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (12.14 a.m.): The amendment is not acceptable to the Government, for the reasons that were advanced during the passage of the Electoral Districts Bill last year. Time is just as pressing today as it was then. I cannot accept the amendment. I therefore move—

“That the question be now put.”

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 40

Ahern
Alison
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chalk
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Edwards
Fletcher
Frawley
Gunn
Hartwig
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hodges
Hooper, K. W.
Kaus
Knox
Lane

Lee
Low
McKechnie
Miller
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Murray
Neal
Newbery
Rae
Row
Scott-Young
Small
Sullivan
Tomkins
Wharton

Tellers:
Armstrong
Porter

NOES, 32

Aiken
Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Bromley
Burns
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Hanson
Harris
Harvey
Hooper, K. J.
Houston
Inch
Jones, N. F.
Jones, R.
Jordan

Leese
Marginson
Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Wallis-Smith
Wood, B.
Wood, P.
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
D'Arcy
Jensen

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted in clause 14 (Mr. Baldwin's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 32

Aiken
Baldwin
Blake
Bousen
Bromley
Burns
Davis
Dean
Hanlon
Hanson
Harris
Harvey
Hooper, K. J.
Houston
Inch
Jones, N. F.
Jones, R.
Jordan

Leese
Marginson
Melloy
Moore, F. P.
Newton
O'Donnell
Sherrington
Wallis-Smith
Wood, B.
Wood, P.
Wright
Yewdale

Tellers:
D'Arcy
Jensen

NOES, 41

Ahern
Alison
Bird
Bjelke-Petersen
Camm
Campbell
Chalk
Chinchen
Cory
Crawford
Edwards
Fletcher
Frawley
Gunn
Hartwig
Herbert
Hewitt, N. T. E.
Hinze
Hodges
Hooper, K. W.
Kaus
Knox

Lane
Lee
Low
McKechnie
Miller
Moore, R. E.
Müller
Murray
Neal
Newbery
Rae
Row
Scott-Young
Small
Sullivan
Tomkins
Wharton

Tellers:
Armstrong
Porter

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 14, as read, agreed to.

Clause 15, as read, agreed to.

Clause 16—Repeal of and new s. 16; Triennial elections—

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.25 a.m.): This clause introduces a new principle into city council elections, and I am wondering whether it will be extended to the elections of other local authorities, too. The Government has decided that those people who previously were returning officers or presiding officers for local authorities, particularly the Brisbane City Council, are no longer qualified to act as returning officers. A returning officer must be a person who is acceptable to the Crown and one who has been a returning officer for a State election. Special permission may be given by the Minister to other persons to be returning officers.

What is wrong with allowing the Brisbane City Council, a responsible body, to appoint its own returning officers? I hope that the Minister will provide a better explanation than those offered by him earlier tonight. Why is it virtually mandatory, unless the Minister grants special permission, that a returning officer under this legislation shall be a person who has previously been a returning officer for a State election?

Mr. R. E. Moore: They would have more experience. That's why.

Mr. HOUSTON: In reply to that interjection, I point out that at the last State election men without any previous experience as returning officers were appointed to such positions.

Mr. Lane: Not many.

Mr. HOUSTON: It does not matter if there was only one. The point is that some people with no previous experience were appointed as returning officers. In the main, they did a particularly good job. Owing to the lateness and vagueness of some of their instructions, they were certainly frustrated in many ways, and it was found that those with the longest experience made the biggest "boo-boos".

Mr. R. E. Moore interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: Keep quiet. If you want to go to bed at all tonight, just keep quiet for a while.

Mr. R. E. Moore: I don't worry about bed; I can go all night and all day.

Mr. HOUSTON: I know you have a constitution exceeding that of any other male.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: The point is that at the recent State election many people were told that they could not exercise a section 35A vote. My investigations revealed that in many instances the returning officers responsible for the particular electorates in which that occurred were experienced officers. There is no great problem in allowing the Brisbane City Council, through the Town Clerk, to appoint its own returning officers, irrespective of whether they are acceptable to the Government. For that reason, I ask the Minister to give us his expert opinion. The Minister need not apply the gag, because I do not intend to divide the Committee on this clause.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (12.31 a.m.): Formerly, the State electoral returning officer for the electorate which was the equivalent of the council ward served as the returning officer in council elections. This arrangement is to be changed as there will be 28 State electorates wholly within the city of Brisbane and five electorates partially within and partially outside it, and there will be only 21 wards. As far as possible it is envisaged under the Bill that the State electoral returning officer, or one of them, will act as the returning officer for a ward.

Mr. Houston: Why?

Mr. McKECHNIE: This has been the procedure in the past. These are responsible men who are accustomed to handling State electoral procedures, and the city ward elections are following these procedures as closely as possible. But the situation could

arise where a State returning officer for one of the Brisbane electorates is not available. Every effort will be made to see that one of the 33 State electoral returning officers will be available for each of the 21 wards. It is almost certain that all of the 21 wards will get 21 State returning officers from the 33 electorates. In case it should happen that none is available—every effort will be made to get these returning officers—provision is made for the Minister to appoint a responsible person to act in that capacity.

Clause 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—Amendment of s.18; Extraordinary Vacancies—

Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (12.33 a.m.): All day I have listened to talk about bringing democracy into the Brisbane City Council, but I find in clause 18 that the concept of democracy is entirely missing. As a matter of fact, it might be a good idea to bring some democracy into this Chamber at the present time. The clause deals with extraordinary vacancies and states in part—

“Where an extraordinary vacancy arises in the office of Mayor, the Council shall, at a special meeting called by the Town Clerk for the purpose and held within two weeks of the occurrence of the vacancy, appoint an alderman to be Mayor in his stead and the alderman so appointed shall, subject to this Act, hold office as Mayor until the conclusion of the next triennial election.”

If the council fails to do this within the specified time, the Governor in Council may make the appointment and the appointee shall be deemed to have been appointed by the council under subsection (1).

I point out to the Committee that we could well have a situation in which a party with 11 aldermen is the ruling party in the council and is opposed by 10 other aldermen. It could well happen through a peculiar set of circumstances—death, accident or some other means—that the numbers of the ruling party in the council could be reduced from 11 to 9. Overnight, that party would in fact become the minority party in the council. Under the Bill, the council would then be obliged to appoint a new mayor within two weeks of the occurrence, that is, before the party that held the majority had an opportunity to replenish its numbers at an election.

The situation, which was outlined earlier in the day, could then arise. This city could be denied the services of a potentially excellent mayor because the vacancies in the council could not be filled and because the council would be obliged to appoint a new mayor within two weeks of any occurrence resulting in casual vacancies. To impose those conditions on a council that has been duly and democratically elected is not of the essence of democracy.

Mr. R. E. Moore: There shouldn't be a party system at all.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The honourable member for Windsor says that there should not be a party system. The Government has gagged every Opposition member tonight and now the honourable member wants to tell the people of Brisbane that they have no right to form themselves into political parties for the purpose of contesting local authority elections.

Mr. Porter: We would be a lot better off if they didn't.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: If it happened on the Gold Coast, the council would welcome the opportunity of replacing the mayor in two weeks. It would no doubt have done it if it were possible to do so.

It is completely undemocratic and unworthy of this Assembly. A complete exercise in chicanery could be carried out because of some unfortunate occurrence that could transform the majority party into the minority party, allowing what was originally the minority party to elect the mayor.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Only until a by-election.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: That remark comes from an honourable member who supports this Bill. The clause provides that the newly appointed mayor shall hold office until the conclusion of the next triennial election. The clause does not mention a by-election. The person so appointed as mayor will hold office from within two weeks of the vacancy occurring until the conclusion of the next triennial election.

Mr. R. E. Moore: You have not read the Bill.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The honourable member says I have not read the Bill.

Mr. Chinchen: Seven days' notice, a special meeting—

Mr. SHERRINGTON: The special meeting must be called by the Town Clerk for the purpose and held within two weeks of the occurrence of the vacancy. Nothing could be more explicit than that. However, there is no doubt that the person appointed to fill that vacancy, by this devious method, will hold office until the next triennial election. I register a strong protest at the inclusion of this principle in the Bill. If the tenor of the debate this evening had continued, members of the Opposition would not even have had the opportunity of discussing it.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (12.41 a.m.): I can understand the honourable member's concern. The very thing that he mentions could happen, as it happened in this House in 1957 when a number of A.L.P. members were forced to defect, and their party was split. I can understand the honourable member's concern if a similar situation arose in the Brisbane

City Council and the A.L.P. was the dominant party. He has made his point very well, as I have made mine.

If a party breaks up, that is the doing of the party itself. In this case, relating such a situation to the Brisbane City Council, the surviving aldermen, whether it be a case of political upheaval or expulsion by the Q.C.E., will have the opportunity in the ensuing 14 days to select one of their number who will then become Lord Mayor. If a vacancy is caused by retirement or death, not political upheaval, within the specified time a by-election would be held in the electorate concerned. Assuming that the same party was returned to office, which need not necessarily be the case, the situation could then be remedied, if the honourable member thinks that it should be done in that way.

I believe that the whole situation is met in the way in which it would be met in this Parliament, except that if the aldermen do not make a move within 14 days the Governor in Council will appoint a person to fill the vacancy. I believe that that is sufficient explanation, and I now move—

"That the question be put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 18, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19, as read, agreed to.

Clause 20—Repeal of and new s. 20;
Conclusion of elections—

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (12.48 a.m.): When the Minister introduced the Bill, he told honourable members very little about it. After the second-reading debate, he did not say anything. Now, when the Opposition wishes to debate a clause, he applies the gag.

Honourable Members interjected.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: In clause 20 there is a break away from established State electoral practices. The Committee has been told 100 times that under the Bill the procedure in city council elections will be in conformity with the usual State electoral procedure. When a person nominates for a State seat and is elected, no matter how long after the date of the election the result becomes known, he is considered to be elected from the date of the election and the former member is considered to have retired on that date. In fact, if a public servant is elected but does not know until some time after the date of the election that he has won the seat, he must make sure that he has resigned his position in the State Government service before the date of his election to this Chamber. If he does not, his election can be challenged, and in fact such action has been taken against more than one honourable member in the history of this Assembly.

I have no fight with the idea of the clause because I think it might be more logical, but I think the Minister should have told us something about it. It is a most important change. The clause reads—

"A triennial election of the Council shall be concluded when the names of the aldermen elected are published in the Gazette, and on such publication the aldermen so elected shall assume office."

That is entirely different from the State electoral position. It means that aldermen carry on until the new council is appointed and we could have a situation where some aldermen were appointed days before others. When a change like this is brought in, I think the Minister should tell us something about it.

Mr. Lee interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: Are you going to do it in the State?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Yes. Cabinet carries on until the new one takes over.

Mr. HOUSTON: Thank you very much! Now Parliament is taken into your confidence.

Mr. Knox: Your shadow Minister knew that.

Mr. HOUSTON: When did Cabinet make this decision?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Cabinet did not make the decision at all; it has always applied.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am talking about ordinary members. This applies to the council but not to the State. Why the difference?

Sir Gordon Chalk: The council has no Cabinet.

Mr. HOUSTON: I misunderstood. I thought the Treasurer said that Cabinet had made a decision to change. Of course we know that Cabinet Ministers carry on. It is not that we do not know what is going on, but I think the Minister should explain to the Committee, the public and the candidates why there is a difference.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (12.52 a.m.): The Leader of the Opposition has posed a question, but he has answered part of it himself between interjections. He asked a somewhat more pertinent question when he said, "Why should the existing council carry on until appointment of the new council is published in the Gazette?" Council, unlike State Parliament, does not have a Cabinet as such, and consequently it is necessary for the whole of the council to carry on, acting in the same manner as Cabinet does within our State Parliament. Therefore, it carries out the duties as if it were a Cabinet until such time as the names of the new aldermen are published and they officially become the council.

Mr. Houston: Why couldn't you do that in the State Parliament?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Cabinet does it.

Mr. Houston: Why can't it be done for ordinary members?

Mr. McKECHNIE: There is no need. Because the city council does not have a Cabinet in the same sense as Parliament has, and because it is a smaller body, the whole council carries on in the same way as Cabinet does in the State sphere.

Having answered that query, and as there are no further questions, I move—

"That the question be now put."

Question put; and the Committee divided—

AYES, 41

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 20, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 21 and 22, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

THIRD READING

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (1.2 a.m.): I seek leave of the House to move the third reading of the Bill.

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

AYES, 42

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (1.6 a.m.): I call "Not formal" to the third reading of the Bill.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (1.7 a.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a third time.”

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (1.8 a.m.): I propose to move that the title of the Bill be amended to read—

“An Attempt to annihilate Lord Mayor Clem Jones and so make possible Liberalisation of Land Exploitation and Profiteering in the City of Brisbane Act.”

It is quite obvious that this whole exercise has been conducted with steam-rolling efficiency; so much so, that the Government decided that in the second-reading stage only certain matters could be debated and, at the Committee stage, whenever a second Opposition member attempted to speak to any clause, the gag was applied. The real purpose of the Bill is to try to get rid of Lord Mayor Clem Jones because the Government could not defeat him in the State election. Secondly, by means of a redistribution, the Government hopes that its political friends will win enough seats to be able to form a council. This would allow the Government in the re-drafting of the town plan—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition should move his amendment when the title of the Bill is before the House rather than on the third reading.

Mr. HOUSTON: I have moved this amendment to the title of the Bill. I am merely following the procedure adopted by a previous Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question is—

“That the Bill be now read a third time.”

Motion (Mr. McKechnie) agreed to.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (1.12 a.m.): I now move—

“That the title of the Bill be agreed to, and that the question be now put.”

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. I take it, Mr. Speaker, that you would not allow anyone in this House to make you break your word given to a member. You clearly indicated to me that I would be allowed to proceed with the amendment to the title of the Bill. This move by the Minister is in conformity with the smart-alec tactics that have been used throughout the debate, and it makes me more determined than ever to discover the real reasons behind this whole rotten episode.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: I wish to move an amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question is—

“That the title of the Bill be agreed to, and that the question be now put.”

Mr. HOUSTON: The two motions cannot be moved together. You cannot put a double-barrelled motion. What are you trying to do? Only one motion can be moved at a time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question is—

“That the title of the Bill be agreed to.”

Mr. HOUSTON: I wish to move an amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable member is now in order.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (1.14 a.m.): Thank you very much. I move—

“That the title of the Bill be amended to read, ‘An Attempt to annihilate Lord Mayor Clem Jones and so make possible Liberalisation of Land Exploitation and Profiteering in the City of Brisbane Act.’”

I make it clear that if anyone develops land and complies with the rules as laid down at that time, I have no fight at all with him. After all, it is the right of any citizen, I believe, to own land.

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

“That the question be now put.”

Mr. HOUSTON: How many members are allowed on their feet at the one time? When I stop speaking, the Treasurer can get to his feet.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! For the information of the Leader of the Opposition, the Treasurer is quite in order. A motion can be moved at any time that the question be put.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! For the information of the Leader of the Opposition, that is provided in Standing Order 142.

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable gentleman will resume his seat.

Mr. HOUSTON: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable gentleman will resume his seat.

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. Is it not customary—

Sir Gordon Chalk: There is no debate on it.

Mr. HOUSTON: There is debate on it.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The question is—

“That the question be now put.”

As many as are of that opinion say “Aye”; to the contrary “No”. I think the “Ayes” have it. Are you going to divide the House?

Mr. HOUSTON: I rise to a point of order. You have read only part of Standing Order No. 142, Mr. Speaker. Let me read the whole of it. It says—

“At any time during a Debate in the House or during the proceedings of a Committee of the Whole House, and

whether a Member is speaking or not, any Member may move 'That the Question be now put'; and, if Mr. Speaker or the Chairman is of the opinion——"

Sir Gordon Chalk: That is right.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is the question I am asking Mr. Speaker. Are you of the opinion, Mr. Speaker, that the question has been sufficiently debated? The Standing Order says that, if you are, "such Motion shall be put forthwith without Debate".

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: The point is that it is for you to decide.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HOUSTON: I moved the amendment only about a minute ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! It is for me to decide whether or not the question has been debated sufficiently.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is what I am asking you.

Mr. SPEAKER: It has.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (1.20 a.m.): I move—

"That the title of the Bill be agreed to."

Question put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42

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

NOES, 32

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

The House adjourned at 1.25 a.m.