

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 9 AUGUST 1973**

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

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

RESIGNATION OF MR. D. J. SHERRINGTON

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that a vacancy exists in the Standing Orders Committee consequent upon the resignation of Douglas John Sherrington, Esquire, from that committee.

APPOINTMENT OF MR. E. MARGINSON

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

“That Evan Marginson, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Wolston, be appointed a member of the Standing Orders Committee to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Douglas John Sherrington, Esquire.”

Motion agreed to.

PAPERS

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

Report of the Auditor-General under the Supreme Court Funds Acts, 1895 to 1958, for the year 1972-73.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamations under—

Metric Conversion Act 1972.

Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act Amendment Act 1973.

Rice Industry Stabilization Act 1973.

The Sugar Acquisition Act of 1915.

Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1971.

Orders in Council under—

The Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act of 1959.

Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966-1970.

The City of Brisbane Market Acts, 1960 to 1967.

The Fauna Conservation Act of 1952.

The Fisheries Acts, 1957 to 1962.

Fish Supply Management Act 1972.

Meat Industry Act 1965-1973.

The Milk Supply Acts, 1952 to 1961.

Plague Grasshoppers Extermination Act 1937-1971.  
 The Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Acts, 1926 to 1966.  
 Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962-1972.  
 The Soil Conservation Act of 1965.  
 Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1973.  
 The Wheat Pool Acts, 1920 to 1957.  
 Forestry Act 1959-1973.  
 The Stock Routes and Rural Lands Protection Acts, 1944 to 1967.  
 The Barrier Fences Acts, 1954 to 1965.  
 Rural Fires Act 1946-1970.

Regulations under—

The Agricultural Bank (Loans) Act of 1959.  
 Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966-1970.  
 The Brands Acts, 1915 to 1965.  
 The Fauna Conservation Act of 1952.  
 The Fruit Marketing Organisation Acts, 1923 to 1964.  
 Primary Producers' Organisation and Marketing Act 1926-1973.  
 Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962-1972.  
 Sugar Experiment Stations Act 1900-1971.  
 Wheat Delivery Quotas Act 1970.  
 Primary Producers' Assistance Act 1972.  
 The State Transport Acts, 1960 to 1965.  
 Racing and Betting Act 1954-1972.  
 Stamp Act 1894-1971.  
 Succession and Probate Duties Act 1892-1972.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### COMMONWEALTH AID FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**Hon. Sir ALAN FLETCHER** (Cunningham—Minister for Education and Cultural Activities) (11.6 a.m.): The widespread publicity given over the last few days to the categorisation of schools for the purposes of Commonwealth per capita aid makes this a matter requiring comment.

I have previously gone on record that it was not illogical to expect some change in aid for private schools in view of the Commonwealth Government's repeated statements that support should be on the basis of need rather than a per capita basis.

However, I find it quite impossible to see either the logic or the consistency of the proposed classification of schools if needs has been used as the basic yardstick.

Adequate finance is essential to the operation of any school. The reduction or withdrawal of financial aid for some schools seems quite unjust. A reduction in such financial aid even for well-established and affluent schools will undoubtedly cause serious difficulties. To deprive schools which, by all known measures, are not wealthy is a very considerable problem. The recent publication of the list of Category A schools by the Commonwealth makes it clear that some schools have been badly classified by the Australian Schools Commission. This can only be the result of anomalies in the method of classification.

What is patently obvious to those with a proper knowledge of local circumstances may be quite unknown as a result of the manipulation of a set of figures from a statistical form. The Interim Committee seems to have based its classification of non-State schools on an index which is described in vague terms in the report and concerning which precise details are unavailable. It appears from the published results that the index is too simple a device to use as a yardstick of a school's degree of need.

Some of the apparent anomalies in the classification suggest that the index over-emphasises certain factors. At least one of these seems to be the pupil-teacher ratios at the schools. A favourable teacher-ratio seems to have placed schools in the wealthy categories and little cognisance appears to have been taken of what has caused this ratio. In some cases it may be geographical location combined with size of school. In others it may be the necessity to provide a spread of secondary subjects that has caused lower pupil-teacher ratios. The same ratio, or even lower, would probably apply in many of our own smaller country State secondary schools.

I welcome the increased aid to many Queensland schools, and I admire the splendid work of the Interim Schools Committee. It does seem obvious from the published lists, however, that the task of classifying schools according to need is a much more complex one than anticipated. The local circumstances of each school need to be more carefully and individually considered before the drastic step of reducing financial support is taken. At the very least, a system of appeal needs to be set up to allow blatant anomalies to be rectified.

This State Government recognises the need to support, on a per capita basis, all non-Government schools providing education for

Queensland children. Our long-trying and well-proven system of meeting a proportion of the costs of educating children in these schools will be continued in 1974. This per capita grant is given on the understanding that these schools are solely responsible for their own programmes and development.

PROPOSED CEMENT-GRINDING COMPLEX,  
PARKER ISLAND

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (11.10 a.m.): I refer to a lengthy tirade by the honourable member for Lytton during the debate yesterday on Matters of Public Interest. The honourable member launched an attack upon the Minister for Health and the Air Pollution Council in relation to a proposal to establish a cement-grinding complex at Parker Island. It will be recalled by honourable members that Mr. Burns recently stated that he based many of his comments regarding medical matters upon information obtained from movies and similar unreliable sources.

In his speech yesterday, the honourable member indicated a reliance upon newspaper comment and speculation, and upon such an unstable foundation he mounted an attack upon everyone remotely connected with the matter, using the most extreme and immoderate language. This, of course, is completely in harmony with the honourable member's behaviour and character, but it should, I feel, be the subject of passing comment.

To put the matter of the proposed grinding mill at Parker Island into its proper context and to reveal the utter untrustworthiness of the honourable member's statement, I propose to read a letter from the Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd., addressed to the secretary of the Air Pollution Council of Queensland on 14 June last, as follows—

"Following the recent announcement by this company of the proposed installation of a Cement Grinding and Despatch Plant on a site at Parker Island on the Brisbane River and the subsequent statements concerning this matter in the local Press, it is now evident that some disagreement or incorrect reporting has resulted as to the designation of such a milling complex.

"We therefore request that you seek from your Council a ruling as to whether this particular plant will be classified as Scheduled Premises.

"If the ruling is that it will be declared as Scheduled Premises, this Company is aware that as soon as sufficient detail and plans of the proposed installation are to hand and local authority approval gained, we must lodge with your Council an official Application for Approval, pursuant to Section 27 (2) of the Clean Air Act 1963.

"Basically, the plant being considered will consist of the following:—

(1) Equipment to receive, handle and store clinker, gypsum and flyash by sea, road or rail. All materials will be manufactured or won in other places.

(2) Enclosed storages for the above materials.

(3) A milling complex for grinding the above materials into cement.

(4) Bulk-storage facilities for cement.

(5) Bulk-despatch facilities for cement.

"No burning process will be necessary on this site with the possible exception of a small air heater to improve dust collection operation. (This may be done electrically.) The only gas discharge from the plant will be the air exhaust from dust collecting systems.

"If the plant is not classified as Scheduled Premises, we would advise that we will still be approaching the Department of Air Pollution Control to seek the approval and advice of the Director and his Engineers.

"At this time we would also seek classification of the use of such a site for the receipt, storage and despatch of bulk cement. Again no manufacturing process will be involved and the gas discharged will be air exhaust for dust collecting systems."

Following receipt of this letter, the Acting Director of Air Pollution Control, in his June report to the Council, made this comment—

"The Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd.

"A letter dated 14th June, 1973, has been received from the above Company and circulated for your information.

"According to Regulation 16 of the 'Clean Air Regulations, 1968' a cement works is described as 'producing or grinding up to x tons of cement clinker per year', and this new cement grinding plant is by definition scheduled premises, by my interpretation of the legislation."

It will thus be seen that this whole proposal is being treated with the care and attention that it merits, and that the wild extravagances of the honourable member for Lytton have no justification whatever. It must be deplored that such terms as "cement project screened by lies" should, upon the basis of his extravagances, receive wide Press publicity. It is, I feel, high time that the quality of the honourable member's statements should be properly assessed and appropriately reported.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

LIBRARY STAFF, JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

**Dr. Scott-Young**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) How many vacancies exist in the library staff at the James Cook University?

(2) How many resignations have been received since January 1 from the professional library staff at the university?

(3) Is the library being strangled by financial limitations brought about by certain professorial departments building up their own departmental libraries?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Two as at August 7, 1973."

(2) "Three, including one which will become effective on September 28, 1973."

(3) "No. I am informed that the University has no departmental libraries. All library materials, including those purchased from research funds, are bought and catalogued by the University library. Some departments have borrowed library materials on a long-term basis. These materials are available to all staff and students."

### SPILLAGE OF LOAD, OVERTURNED SEMI-TRAILER, BREAKFAST CREEK

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the photograph in *The Courier-Mail* of August 7, showing a load of steel wheel rims spilled when a prime mover and semi-trailer capsized in Kingsford Smith Drive, Breakfast Creek, on the previous morning, resulting in three people escaping serious injury?

(2) Will he take action under the Traffic Act in view of the grave risk to public safety, especially in the closely-congested city area and, if not, what is the reason?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The vehicle had been driven from Adelaide to Brisbane with the load and had been checked at the Gailles weigh-bridge. Evidence of insecure loading or overloading has not been established by initial police investigations. On the matter of insecure loading on vehicles, this question was discussed in December, 1972, by the Traffic Advisory Committee. I am

informed that as a consequence the chairman of that committee wrote to the Master Carriers' Association and the Transport Workers' Union drawing attention to the provisions of the law in relation to the proper securing of vehicle loading. In addition on March 12, 1973, the Commissioner issued instructions to police throughout Queensland to give particular attention to insecure loadings on vehicles and to initiate action where evidence of an offence is established."

### AERODROME LEASE, MORETON ISLAND

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

(1) What period has been granted for the lease of approximately 34 acres of land on Moreton Island for the construction of an aerodrome?

(2) What rental or other charge per annum is being paid for this lease?

(3) Will the original "Eagers Track" be restored when the runway is completed or before?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The Honourable Member apparently refers to Special Lease No. 36221 held by Brian Alexander Cheras for a term of 30 years from April 1, 1972, over portion 44, parish of Tiffin, having an area of about 40 acres."

(2) "The rent of Special Lease No. 36221 is \$50 per annum for the first ten years of the term. The annual rent for the two remaining periods of ten years each shall be as determined by the Land Court."

(3) "A track from the town of Koorringal to the ocean beach intersected Special Lease No. 36221 and following his representations in the matter, Mr. Cheras was informed that my Department would have no objection to his providing an alternate track at his own cost, provided that destruction of vegetation was kept to a minimum. The original track was not a dedicated road and in itself was vacant land. I understand construction of the airstrip is proceeding and no doubt the relocation of the track referred to is having attention at the same time. The situation will be followed up as necessary."

### ACCOMMODATION AT PIMLICO HIGH SCHOOL, TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) Is he aware that there are now almost 1,700 students attending the Pimlico High School, Townsville, that through lack

of adequate accommodation the school has at least eleven floating classes, that staff accommodation is inadequate and that there is a great need for an administration block?

(2) In view of this position, will he call for a thorough investigation to ascertain the immediate building requirements of the school over and above the proposed block of six classrooms which is to be built next year?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I am aware that there are problems concerning accommodation at the Pimlico High School. In many schools the idea of a home room for classes has been abandoned in favour of a home room for teachers so the situation regarding 'floating' classes is not necessarily bad. It is not unreasonable to expect students to move from one room to another for different lessons. However, an attempt to provide additional temporary classrooms is being made, and as soon as adequate supplies of building materials become available permanent classrooms will be provided. I am aware that staffroom accommodation is inadequate, but this is to be rectified. There is a need for a new administration block but it is not as urgent as some of the other requirements."

(2) "An investigation of the situation is not necessary since the principal and the regional director have reported the matter fully and the Department of Works has undertaken to effect improvements as soon as possible."

USE OF JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY  
BUILDINGS FOR SENIOR HIGH  
SCHOOL, TOWNSVILLE

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

In view of the number of students presently attending the three high schools in Townsville and the apparent inability of the Government to provide adequate accommodation to relieve classroom pressures, will he give earnest consideration to acquiring the Pimlico buildings of the James Cook University when they are vacated and establishing a senior high school, by drawing Grades 11 and 12 from the three high schools and making provision for night classes for adults?

*Answer:—*

"The suggestion that the Pimlico buildings of the James Cook University of North Queensland be made available to the Department of Education for development as a senior high school was made to me by the Director-General of Education several months ago. Negotiations are

proceeding with the Vice-Chancellor with a view to gaining access to these buildings as soon as possible. When the date on which the buildings are likely to become available is known, a decision will be made concerning their use."

GRANT TO MEET DROUGHT-RELIEF  
COMMITMENTS, BUTTER PRODUCERS

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

Following the devastating action of the Commonwealth Government in reducing the consumer subsidy which provides Australians with choice butter at below-cost prices for an era and thereby reducing producers' returns by some five cents per pound butterfat, will he institute action to seek from the Commonwealth Government a sufficient grant to enable butter producers to be relieved of some of their drought-relief commitments to this State, which they now will have difficulty in repaying as a result of Commonwealth action?

*Answer:—*

"The Answer to the Honourable Member's Question lies in the Question itself. The Commonwealth Government has clearly indicated its lack of appreciation of the major contribution primary industries makes to this country's gross national product. I would not be sanguine as to the result of any approach in the present climate for assistance to the dairy industry. However, I will keep the situation under close review."

VISITING SPECIALISTS, MACKAY BASE  
HOSPITAL

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

(1) Do the following specialists visit the Mackay Base Hospital on a regular basis—

(a) a psychiatrist, (b) an obstetrician, (c) an orthopaedic surgeon and (d) a chiroprapist?

(2) If not, has the hospital ever had such services and, if so, when did regular visits cease?

(3) What efforts are being made by his Department to assist the hospital to obtain the services of visiting specialists in the fields mentioned and other medical specialist services not now available at Mackay?

*Answers:—*

(1) "(a) No, (b) yes, (c) no, (d) no."

(2) "In addition to the specialist obstetrician, an orthopaedic surgeon visited Mackay up until March, 1972."

(3) "It is the responsibility of the Mackay Hospitals Board to engage professional staff. The availability of medical specialists appears to be related to the varying size of various communities. As they become available with the increase in the size of communities their appointment to hospitals is usually encouraged. The Department has no pool of specialists from which it can direct personnel to vacant positions."

#### RENTAL FORMULA, HOUSING COMMISSION

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

(1) What is the basis for the determination of rentals charged by the Queensland Housing Commission for (a) new houses, (b) old houses where major repairs have been carried out, (c) old houses where new stoves, hot water systems, etc., have been installed and other minor repairs have been carried out, (d) houses where local authority rates have been increased and (e) old houses at the time of a change of tenancy?

(2) Does the commission have a policy of increasing its rentals in accordance with general rental levels in the various localities in which its houses are situated and, if so, is this in contravention of its aim to provide rental houses for the workers in the community at as low a rental as is possible?

*Answers:—*

(1) "(a) The elements in the rent comprise amortisation of capital cost and provision for maintenance, insurance, local authority rates and charges, vacancies and defaults and administration; (b) and (c) where these works involve additional capital expenditure the rent is increased in respect thereof. Repairs such as prepainting maintenance and repainting itself charged to the maintenance provision do not affect the rent payable; (d) where the local authority increases its rates and charges the rent is adjusted correspondingly; (e) on change of tenancy the elements in the rent are adjusted to the current figures and any additional capital items not previously covered are brought to account with a minimum rental of \$11.10 per week for a three-bedroom house or \$10.10 for a two-bedroom house."

(2) "General rental levels in privately owned houses in various localities have no bearing on Housing Commission rentals but they do highlight the very favourable rents charged by the Commission. Irrespective of the rent calculated in (1) and as the Honourable Member would know,

any tenant of a Commission house in needy circumstances may apply for reduced rental where there is a low family income. A tenant earning \$60.50 per week—the State minimum wage—is not required to pay more than \$12.10 per week. If the income is below that figure as in the case of a deserted wife the rent could be subject to further substantial reduction."

#### STATION MASTERS, RAILWAY DEPARTMENT

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

(1) How many men are classed as station master in each of the different grades in the Railway Department?

(2) How many of these are currently listed as surplus in each of the different grades?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Special 'A', 1; Special 'B', 4; Special 'C', 7; First Class, 16; Second Class, 35; Third Class, 50; Fourth Class, 82; Fifth Class, 149. Total, 344."

(2) "Surplus—Fourth Class, 1; Fifth Class, 1. Total, 2."

#### ALLEGED DRUG-RUNNING, NORTH QUEENSLAND

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

Following upon the report in the *Sunday Sun* of August 5 of drug running in North Queensland, will he make a statement to this House in connection with these allegations?

*Answer:—*

"Investigations to date have failed to substantiate the allegations contained in the article. However, these investigations are continuing. The drug problem is being given constant attention by the Police Department. It is not proposed to make public the methods used to combat the problem."

#### APPLICATIONS FOR WIDOWS' PENSION BY UNMARRIED MOTHERS, ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS

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

(1) Is he aware that up to August 1 many islands and communities were not aware of the granting by the Commonwealth Government on July 1 of full

widows' pensions for unmarried mothers, and will he take the necessary action to have all relevant forms delivered and ensure that applicants are assisted in applying correctly?

(2) As September 30 is the last date on which applicants may apply to receive pensions retrospective to July 1, will he stress the urgency upon all concerned?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "Information relative to Support Mothers' Benefit from the Department of Social Security has been included in interim advices as early as July 6, last, however, full details were supplied to the Department on August 3, with relevant documents. As the Honourable Member indicates there may be some lack in communication, the Director is taking urgent action to further circularise all islands and communities, with appropriate forms, to encourage persons eligible to make application to determine entitlements and, of course, any assistance required will be readily available."

SUPPLY OF COLD-ROOMS TO ABORIGINAL  
COMMUNITIES AND TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDS

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

(1) Further to my Questions of October 25 and December 6, 1972, relative to cold-rooms on the Torres Strait islands, what was the completion date of the installation of these facilities at Saibai and Yam Islands?

(2) Have these units proved successful and have they been inspected by his departmental officers?

(3) Are more units to be provided and, if so, when and for what islands?

(4) Will he consider siting cold-storage units more conveniently to the delivery point of fish and other sea foods?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Refrigeration units were put into operation at Yam Island on January 23, 1973, and Saibai on February 9, 1973."

(2) "Units are giving satisfactory refrigeration and are inspected by departmental technical staff."

(3) "Quotations have been invited for supply of further units, the number to be determined consistent with funds available and their allocation will be decided in consultation with island representatives."

(4) "Units were installed as close to beach landings as possible, consistent with—(a) Avoidance of discomfort to people due to engine noise during night running; (b) availability of suitable land; (c) protection of machinery from ingress of sand and salt spray. Sites chosen were decided in consultation with the respective council who must, of course, be involved in any change and associated costs."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COMMONWEALTH AID FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**Mr. HOUSTON:** I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: In view of his statement to the House this morning on the subject, will he have a detailed assessment made of Queensland's private schools and send his recommended amended list to the interim committee of the Australian Schools Commission?

**Sir ALAN FLETCHER:** Our assessment is, in part at least, already in progress. There will certainly be conversations between the Federal Minister and me as well as between my department and the Federal department on this matter, as it is quite important.

PROPOSED NATIONAL COMPANIES ACT

**Mr. CHINCHEN:** I ask the Minister for Justice: Has he received from the Federal Attorney-General any details of the national Companies Act proposed by the present Federal Government and is he concerned about its real purpose?

**Mr. KNOX:** The short answer to the first part of the honourable member's question is "No." We did receive some information from the Federal Attorney-General along the lines that he intends to introduce in the Federal House this year legislation for a national Companies Act. On being asked in my presence what the Act would contain, he said he was not in a position to give this information because it had not been settled.

All that I can say is that if this is the way that open government functions, there is a lot of confusion and misapprehension in the community at the moment on what is intended. Without having disclosed what is intended in the legislation, the Federal Government is now approaching the States and asking them to hand over the relevant powers so that it may bring down an Act. I have had discussions with the Victorian Attorney-General on this subject. He is able to speak for himself and that State, but, so far as Queensland is concerned, we do not intend to hand over constitutional authority to allow the bringing down of a national Companies Act of the type envisaged by the Federal Attorney-General.

## VALUATIONS, MORETON BAY ISLANDS

**Mr. DEAN:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: What progress has been made in valuing on islands such as Russell, Macleay, Lamb and Karragarra, in Moreton Bay?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The House will recall that the Department of Local Government, as a matter of urgency, had the islands in question included in the Redland Shire. It was also a matter of urgency that valuing of properties on the islands should proceed. I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that I now have the valuations in my possession, and that in the last few weeks they have been posted to the Redland Shire Council and the landholders on these islands. The honourable member will recall that there were 18,640 subdivisions on the various islands. A random sample of 100 sales revealed that the average sale price was \$1,832.

I appreciate the work that the Department of the Valuer-General did, as a "crash" programme, in having these properties valued. It meant working a considerable amount of overtime, and it was also necessary to recall valuers who had retired to assist in the work. I have been studying the figures, and, broadly speaking, I can give the honourable member some information on the valuations. I would say at the outset that the valuations are based on those pertaining as at 31 March 1968, which is in line with the valuations for the Redland Shire.

I know that this is a matter of considerable importance to the people of these islands, and I advise the House as follows:—

Island	Number of Valuations	Value
Garden .. .. .	1	\$ 3,410
Karragarra .. .. .	215	135,330
Lamb .. .. .	617	409,500
Macleay .. .. .	2,475	1,199,710
Perulpa .. .. .	87	41,110
Russell .. .. .	5,091	2,944,050
	8,486	4,733,110

Honourable members will note that the figure of 8,486 is considerably below that of 18,640 subdivisions, which I mentioned in the House. However, many of these are still held by companies, and some people had more than one block and have only one valuation. That explains the difference in the number of blocks concerned.

**Mr. Harris:** Does that include the pieces under water?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I will answer that question shortly.

The valuation levels on the respective islands were—

Island	Valuation Levels
Russell .. .. .	\$100-\$1,200
Macleay .. .. .	\$100-\$ 900
Lamb .. .. .	\$100-\$1,300
Karragarra .. .. .	\$250-\$ 800
Perulpa .. .. .	\$100-\$ 900

In answer to the interjection by the honourable member for Wynnum, I point out that low wet lands do exist on certain islands, and that the valuation of individual allotments of low wet land vary from \$20 to \$50; on an acreage basis the valuation is as low as \$20 an acre.

## SAND MINING, TUGUN BEACH

**Mr. HINZE:** I ask the Premier: Has a meeting taken place with the mining companies involved in the problem on the South Coast? If so, has any agreement been reached with them?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can say, for the information of the House, that we had a meeting this morning on this very important question relative to a dredging lease that has been granted for all time and has caused some discussion and debate on the Gold Coast during recent days. We met Mr. Farrell and Mr. Neumann, representatives of one of the companies, this morning, and we have, I think, arrived at a satisfactory solution of a once-only operation over their dredging claim on the basis of working ahead of the pumping-in of sand that will, I understand, be undertaken by the council at a later date. It may be some six to nine months before the operation of pumping-in sand can be commenced, and the operation of taking out minerals would be carried out ahead of that.

I believe that the companies concerned have adopted a realistic attitude in this matter. I think it is a fair one from their point of view, and I think it is one we can all accept as a solution of a very difficult problem. After completing a once-only operation ahead of the pumping-in of sand, they will surrender their lease to the Government. I am sure the people of the electorate represented by the honourable member, as well as the people on the coast generally, will acknowledge that this is a fair solution of the problem.

## PROPOSED NEW POWERHOUSE

**Mr. HINZE:** I ask the Minister for Health: In view of the statement by the honourable member for Lytton that he is concerned that Brisbane will suffer smoke and dust nuisance from a new cement works, will he ensure that, in the debate on the proposed new powerhouse, the Government makes

special provision for the honourable member for Lytton to vote against any proposal to site it at Ipswich because of the pollution it will add to the Brisbane-Ipswich corridor, which he is so concerned about?

**Mr. TOOTH:** I accept the point taken by the honourable member. However, I must remind him that it is not within my province to allot speaking times during debates in this House.

STATEMENT BY MR. CLYDE CAMERON, M.P.,  
ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

**Mr. LANE:** I ask the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs: Is he aware that yesterday Mr. Clyde Cameron, M.P., Federal Minister for Labour, addressed the Trade Union Congress at the Brisbane Trades Hall and pledged support for militant, direct action by workers against employers as being his prime duty as a Labour Minister? Will he inform the House whether, on his frequent visits to Queensland, Mr. Cameron has ever indicated a balanced approach towards industrial relations by having equal consultations with registered employers' organisations and whether Mr. Cameron has ever called on or consulted him or his departmental heads during such visits?

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** Unlike his predecessor, the present Federal Minister for Labour has not extended me the courtesy of calling on me during his visits to Queensland. As to the first portion of the question, I think the Federal Minister's partisan attitude to matters in the industrial sphere is too well known from his utterances for me to elaborate on what he has said.

COMMONWEALTH AID FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: Consequent upon his answer to the Leader of the Opposition on the matter of school assessment, is there any possibility that the Queensland Government will change its policy relative to per capita assistance? In view of the problems arising from the change in policy by the Federal Government, can he attempt to persuade the Federal education authorities now to revert to the former, more equitable policy?

**Sir ALAN FLETCHER:** I would be very sorry if what I said in answer to the Leader of the Opposition in any way conveyed the impression that I approved of the system of categorisation of schools. I

had hoped that my statement conveyed the impression that I did not approve of this. I think we should nail our colours to the wall and reaffirm our view that boys and girls in Queensland are entitled to a free education if they attend our State schools and are also entitled to a per capita grant to help their parents to get them through their education in whatever other school they care to attend. Having treated them fairly on the basis of a per capita grant, I think it is our view—it is certainly mine—that, irrespective of what sort of a school it is or how expensive it may be, that is their business, since they are paying the cost. Anything I said about getting information about the schools that are now listed would be from the point of view of hoping to correct anomalies or grave injustices. We most certainly hope—and we will do as much in this matter as we can—to persuade the Federal Government to adopt our point of view on the almost impossible task of categorising schools and being just in respect of how that is done.

REZONING PETITIONS, BRISBANE CITY  
COUNCIL

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: After a petition against rezoning has been received by the Brisbane City Council, how long has the council got to notify the petitioners of the result of the petition? If no notification of the result is received, what redress have the citizens?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I should like to answer only half of the question. Yesterday I received a petition containing some 1,400-odd names, and it is this petition to which the honourable member is probably referring. It has already been lodged with the Brisbane City Council.

I ask the honourable member to put the remainder of his question on notice.

FORM OF QUESTION

**Mr. N. F. JONES** (Everton) proceeding to give notice of a second question concerning Bjelke-Petersen Enterprises Pty. Ltd.—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! For the information of the honourable member, this is the last question he will be asking on this subject. He is merely prosecuting a quarrel. I will allow the question, but the honourable member can expect it to be vetted.

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the House proceeded with Government business.*

### ADDRESS IN REPLY

#### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SECOND ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 7 August (see p. 111) on Mr. Frawley's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Mr. D'ARCY** (Albert) (12.1 p.m.): During the past few days beach mining at Currumbin has been featured in the Press. This morning, the Premier assured the House that he had had negotiations with the company concerned. This particular mining claim, which was issued in 1940 by a Labor Government, has been the subject of debate in this House. We have been misled grossly by Government members. We have been told continually that the claim was granted by a Labor Government in perpetuity. Most Government members who have made this claim do not understand what a mining or dredging claim is. This particular claim is a dredging claim and, as such, is not granted in perpetuity. It is granted for as long as the holder continues to meet the conditions of the claim.

**Mr. Ahern:** In perpetuity.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** No, it remains in force only as long as the holder continues to meet the conditions. Has the honourable member for Landsborough read it, because I have this morning.

**Mr. Ahern:** Yes, and it can continue in perpetuity.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** It can go on for ever, but not necessarily.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr. Lickiss): Order! Will the honourable member for Albert please address the Chair?

**Mr. D'ARCY:** One of the conditions is that the company or person concerned must hold a miner's right. The longest that anybody can hold a miner's right is 10 years. In other words, it must be renewed every 10 years.

**Mr. Ahern:** They have renewed it.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** The point is that it must be renewed by the mining warden. However, the period before renewal is limited to 10 years in this particular case. The Government has allowed this company to continue

operations. It is as simple as that. There was no need for the Government to renew this claim.

No mining claim has been issued in this State since 1948. In this particular case, all that is needed is a change in legislation, and the Government has had 16 years to do that. There are many ways of getting around this problem. The Government has put its head in the sand and has refused to look into it. It is as simple as that.

The Government has refused to take up the cudgels on behalf of the people of Queensland and protect their beaches. In this case the Government has refused to take a stand on behalf of Queenslanders. Regardless of what the Minister for Mines and Main Roads might say, the Government has refused to pay regard to the use of beaches by the people of Queensland, and the washing away of beaches because of sand-mining. Fancy any State Government saying that it cannot do anything about a mining claim that was granted in 1940. That is ridiculous! This particular issue should cause the Government to be ashamed of itself.

I should now like to deal with education. The Government has screamed during the past few days about what it has done in this field. It must be remembered that the Federal Government has had to inject \$650,000,000 into education in Australia and that Queensland will receive a large proportion of that amount, simply because the Queensland education system has lacked lustre. Financially, it has been the poor cousin. The Federal Government is at last looking at the problem and doing something about it.

In particular, I should like to mention one small problem confronting schools and teachers. The Government supplies, in most cases, basic school needs such as buildings and teachers, but a problem constantly faced in schools is the maintenance of hygiene. Recently the Government built new toilet blocks at the Coomera State School, but I have received a complaint that the Government, in a letter from the Minister for Education, refused to supply soap and other necessities for the maintenance of hygiene. I know that when I was teaching we would make applications to the State Stores Board for annual supplies, and would receive enough soap to last about a week. That indicates the way in which the Queensland Government treats hygiene in schools. No wonder there have been cases of hepatitis in schools, such as there were at the

Musgrave Hill State School, in the last 12 months, when the Government does not supply soap, crystals, or other cleaning materials. This is the situation being faced in so many schools. It frustrates head-teachers, and it is high time that parents and citizens' organisations no longer have to supply the necessities for maintenance of hygiene in State schools.

Probably the most significant issue in the finances of the State is tourism. As an industry, it is one of the fastest growing, but it is one that has been neglected by the Government. It has been used by the Government as a milking cow and nothing else. The Government is not interested in the tourist industry as such. The Minister for Tourism, whose portfolio also includes Sport, Welfare Services and Prisons, said on one occasion that tourism was the fourth most important industry in Queensland, and then he said that it was the second most important. We have all heard the Minister's famous statement that dusty roads in Queensland are a tourist attraction. Mr. "Safari" Herbert has certainly not presented a good enough case for tourism in Queensland. He has been a lacklustre Minister for Tourism, and one who has not given the State proper representation in this field.

The Minister's latest statement on the establishment of a casino in Queensland must surely go down as one of the greatest misrepresentations of fact of all time. He was quoted in the Press as saying that a casino in Queensland would not help the State's tourist industry, because most of the people patronising the casino in Tasmania were Tasmanians. That must surely be a lot of rot when one looks at the facts of the Tasmanian situation. Whatever else may be said about the casino in Tasmania and the social problems that it may create, it cannot be said that it has not been of great benefit to the tourist industry in Tasmania. It has in fact been the greatest boon to tourism that Tasmania has ever experienced. That will be confirmed by any Tasmanian Cabinet Minister. So significant has been the increase in air travel to Tasmania that, if figures are used by the Federal Government in determining priorities for the upgrading of airports, the Hobart airport will be the next to be improved, probably at the expense of the Brisbane airport. The casino has been the catalyst that has generated a great boost in the Tasmanian tourist trade. Apart from the casino itself, accommodation houses and other tourist facilities have also benefited.

The lack of knowledge of tourism in this State, and the lack of incentives in the tourist industry, must surely be the greatest deterrents to all who may consider entering the industry in Queensland.

(Time expired).

**Mr. ALISON** (Maryborough) (12.10 p.m.): In speaking to the motion before the House, I wish first to congratulate the honourable member for Murrumba, who moved it, and the honourable member for Ipswich, who seconded it. They both contributed much to the debate, as, indeed, we have come to expect from them.

Personally, I take this opportunity to again pledge my loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and also to associate the people of my electorate, the city of Maryborough, with that pledge.

I congratulate His Excellency the Governor of Queensland, Sir Colin Hannah, and Lady Hannah on the way in which they have carried out their duties. His Excellency is a very hard-working Governor and obviously is very anxious and very sincere in his efforts to do all he can for the people of this wonderful State. Last year the people of Maryborough had the privilege and the honour to act as hosts to His Excellency and Lady Hannah when they visited our city. Lady Hannah is a very gracious lady and it is a pleasure to talk to her.

Over the past 12 months His Excellency has done much for the State. I look forward to having him continue as our State Governor because, in that position, His Excellency is not only nominally head of the State of Queensland but also, I believe—as do the vast majority of Queenslanders—plays an effective part in our democratic system of government. It is based on the British system which has evolved over the centuries. We have also inherited from Great Britain our system of law and justice. They are certainly the best systems of government and justice in the world, and I pledge that I will continue to fight to uphold this democratic system.

I know, as do many other people, that there are forces at work in our wonderful country today, working mainly behind the scenes, seeking to undermine, to white-ant—in fact, to abolish—our system of government and our system of law and justice. Most of these people will not come out in the open and declare their final intentions

but rather work behind the scenes, either through the A.L.P. or some other masquerade, and we must be ever vigilant. We must continually remind the people of our State, and for that matter the people of Australia, just what is going on and that all is not what it seems to be in certain quarters.

I believe that all my associates on this side of the House have an obligation to fight constantly to retain our democratic system of government and our British system of justice and to continue to warn the people in our electorates, indeed the people in the whole of the State, that they must not be duped into thinking that they would be better off under some other system of government and some other system of justice.

When they voted on 2 December last year, the people of Australia gave the Federal A.L.P. Government a mandate to do certain things. I believe that was very clear, and we must accept this if we do believe in our democratic system of government. However, I also believe that since the people of Australia put the A.L.P. into power, they have had one hell of a shock administered to them, because all is certainly not what it seemed to be at the time.

I challenge honourable members opposite to come out in the open for once and declare just where they stand as regards socialism, for a start. I ask them, "How far do you want to go with socialism? How far do you want to go with Communism, for that matter? Are you in favour of abolishing the States and leaving the people of Queensland at the mercy of two or three people in Canberra?" What do honourable members opposite think about moves in the A.L.P. to abolish Anzac Day? Why do not honourable members opposite come out in the open and declare themselves? Just how far do they want to go in changing our democratic system of government? How far do they want to go in changing our system of justice? Do they want to have one law for union leaders and another law for the rest of the people? I am sure that if we could get the answer to these questions it would be most illuminating to the people of Queensland.

The Premier, Hon. Joh. Bjelke-Petersen, has been reminding the people of Queensland, and for that matter the people of Australia, just what this is all about. He has been personally vilified; he has copped all sorts of abuse from different sections of

the community. However, he has carried on, and he is doing a wonderful job. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would suggest that if there were an election tomorrow for the office of Prime Minister and the names Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, Robert Hawke and Gough Whitlam were on the ballot papers, our Premier would win the election on the preferences of Bob Hawke.

Over the last year or two we have had industrial anarchy developing apace. A few years ago I was one who said, "We will not have that sort of thing here." But we have it right here and now in this State and city. Unfortunately many influential members of the A.L.P. and the trade unions want industrial anarchy. They want to see our combined economic system of free enterprise and Government controls, with some Government-owned enterprise, collapse. They are doing their damndest to see it collapse. They do not want to correct our present problems. They want to kill our economic system so that they can offer to the people as an alternative either Socialism or Communism, depending how red or pink a person is.

In his Opening Speech His Excellency commented that a start would be made on the first stage of the planned upgrading of the Brisbane suburban railway system, which includes electrification. He qualified his statement by saying, "Depending on the availability of Federal funds". I have been following this matter of the provision of Federal funds for the upgrading of the suburban transport system in Brisbane. Different statements have emanated from Canberra. In one statement made a month or two ago it was said that Queensland would get the money, but to the best of my knowledge the Minister for Transport in Queensland still does not know whether he is getting it or not. What a ridiculous and untenable situation. How on earth can any State Government prepare its Budget unless it knows where it stands with regard to Federal funds? The State should have access to Federal funds without strings being attached to them. I will develop that argument later on.

I did not read it myself but I heard that within the last few days Mr. Crean had indicated that following the Federal Budget, which he would bring down very shortly, he would bring down a budget every quarter. How on earth does he hope to run the financial affairs of the country in that way? How on earth does he think the States can budget on that basis when they are dependent upon the Commonwealth Government

for about 40 per cent of their funds? What sort of budgeting is that? Fluid budgeting? What absolute rot!

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt** interjected.

**Mr. ALISON:** Every business, let alone a Government, must budget well ahead. Certainly we are operating on a 12-month system, and it is as good as we can get at the present time. Certainly fiscal and other adjustments are made as the year progresses. How on earth can anybody know what he is going to do, let alone a State Government, if there are to be quarterly Federal budgets? Under such circumstances the States could not be expected to carry out their proper roles.

It is most unlikely that we will get the necessary funds for the upgrading of the Brisbane suburban railway system because of some of the extravagant schemes and hand-outs to which the Federal Government is committed. It looks as if that Government is going to take over exploration for natural gas and various minerals. It proposes the nationalisation of the medical services and health schemes and, no doubt, we will hear more about that as the debate develops. There are to be massive hand-outs to all and sundry, including the Aborigines. As I see it, the best way to help the Aborigines is to help them to help themselves. They should be helped to get onto their feet.

**Mr. Bird:** The A.L.P. is turning them into bludgers.

**Mr. ALISON:** That is right. I suppose the Federal Government sees potential votes there, and for that reason is making the hand-outs.

We should let the Aborigines make their own decisions on how they want to live. If they want their traditional way of life, let them have it, and let them have their land to live on in that way. If they want to live in the white man's cities, towns and villages, let them do that. But for goodness sake do not let us patronise them and give them hand-outs in the form of social-service payments or anything else. Let us help them to educate themselves so that they can make their own decisions in their own way. If the Aborigines wish to live our way of life, they must be taught that they have responsibilities as well as rights and privileges. Certainly let us help the Aborigines to become assimilated into our community, but do not let us patronise them. Do not forget that

"whites" as well have rights. I get a bit fed up with hearing all the time about "whites" versus "blacks".

I digressed from my remarks on the Brisbane suburban rail system. Improving the suburban railway system must aid travel within the environs of the city. However, rail travel is not the only method of travel in Brisbane. Another important form of public transport is the taxi-cab, but over the last year or two when I have had to use taxis quite regularly I have found the service shocking. This must have an effect on tourists who come to the city and wish to travel around it; it must upset the residents of Brisbane as well as business people and others. As I say, I have used taxis extensively over the last two years and I am still waiting for a number of them.

I have spoken to many drivers and others in the industry in an endeavour to obtain answers to the problems. The Minister for Local Government talks to taxi drivers and I think it is good idea; the information one gets is surprising. However, apart from that, if any one is trying to find answers to problems in a particular industry, it is a good idea to talk to people in the industry, not simply tell them what he thinks is good for them. By talking to them he at least gets their side of the story.

As I said, I have spoken to many drivers and, as a result, I suggest that the problem is a many-sided one. Blame cannot simply be put fairly and squarely on the shoulders of taxi-drivers, as honourable members opposite try to do. In my opinion there is no single answer to the problem. As to the inner city and the Valley, the first problem is traffic congestion, which holds up taxi-drivers for lengthy periods. Another problem is that owners are not using cabs at peak periods. One hears the opinion expressed that there are not enough cabs, but I believe that the main cause for the poor service is the lack of drivers, and there are, of course, reasons for that, the main one being the very poor financial return to them.

My information is that about one-quarter of the taxis in Brisbane are not in use at peak periods, and I have good reason to believe this. I am not blaming the owners, because it seems to me that they just cannot attract drivers. Therefore, it gets back to the financial return to drivers, who are finding more remunerative occupations.

I should like to refer now to the "task" report printed in June last year. It was put out, I think, by a firm of management consultants. I have not read it completely, but have tried to pick the eyes out of it. In one section it states—

"The number of cabs at present licensed to operate in Brisbane is adequate to ensure a satisfactory level of service at all times other than peak periods."

It goes on—

"At cab ranks in both the city and suburbs, service within five minutes was observed to be the rule rather than the exception, while service in response to telephone bookings is equally satisfactory."

In my opinion, that is a lot of rubbish. If this refers only to the suburbs—I do not think it does; it seems to refer to taxi services generally—I admit I have not had any experience with taxi-cabs in the suburbs. If it is referring to taxi services generally, then it is absolute rubbish. My experience is that outside peak periods a person is lucky to get a cab within 10 minutes.

The report continues—

"Some delays do occur at peak hours but even then the majority of users whether waiting at ranks or ordering by telephone obtain service within five to 10 minutes."

I do not know where these gentlemen obtained this information, or whether they worked it out in their office or tried ordering a cab at various times of the day, but I suggest that in peak periods anyone who obtains a taxi within 20 to 40 minutes is doing well. This is the rule rather than the exception.

**Mr. Davis:** They should be making sure that the owner is associated with the cab.

**Mr. ALISON:** That may be so, but I do not think it is one of the main problems.

The report refers to the commission of 40 to 45 per cent that is paid in Brisbane by the owners to the drivers. On the information available, such a rate of commission would yield an average income to the driver of only 88c an hour. Is it any wonder, then, that drivers are looking to other occupations for their income?

The report also refers to earnings of drivers, and points out that, in terms of commission rates, hire drivers in Queensland are significantly worse off than their counterparts in other States. Because I do not know what the situation is in the other States, I accept that comment at its face value. The report contends that the low profitability of taxi operations does not permit a higher

commission rate to be offered to drivers. I think that that statement follows naturally, and I would go along with it.

Last January fees were increased by 1.23c a kilometre, so that the rate is now 12.5c a kilometre. On 1 August a total of 100 new taxi licences were issued at \$12,000 each. That was a step in the right direction, and I commend the Minister for Transport for having taken it. I am pleased that he did not bow to pressure from some quarters and issue 1,000 licences. The issue of such a large number of licences would only create additional problems and further reduce the earnings of drivers as well as owners. The after-hours surcharge of 10c from midnight till 6 a.m. was increased to 20c, and it now applies from 6 p.m. till 6 a.m. The radio surcharge, too, was increased on 1 August.

I suggest that an owner whose cab is not on the road for a certain minimum number of hours, particularly during peak periods, should be called upon to show cause why his licence should not be cancelled. Drivers will now be required to keep log books, and, although the introduction of this system is not very popular with some owners and drivers, it is a desirable one. Any driver or owner who carries on his business properly and has his cab on the road for a reasonable number of hours has nothing to fear.

I simply cannot understand the current going price of \$16,000 for a taxi licence. Anyone who invests his money, whether it is in a company or in a cab, is entitled to a return of approximately 8 per cent on his investment. Such a return on \$16,000, and on the sum of \$3,500 as an allowance for the time of the owner—assuming he puts in 50 hours a week—would give a monetary return of \$1,560. If he works 50 or 48 weeks a year and earns approximately \$100 a week he should be receiving over all the sum of \$6,760. It is quite obvious that such a return is not available in the taxi-cab industry in Brisbane at the present time.

**Mr. Jensen:** What about the goodwill in his cab?

**Mr. ALISON:** I doubt whether there is any goodwill in a cab. An owner who is not working but is leasing his cab should expect a return of \$30 a week, but, again, such a return is just not in it.

Compared with 15c a kilometre that taxi-drivers in New South Wales earn and, near the bottom of the scale, 13.1c a kilometre that those in Western Australia earn, drivers in Brisbane receive only 12.5c a kilometre. It seems to me that, in addition to the increases that the Minister has allowed since 1 August, other increases in the rate per kilometre will have to be made to enable

drivers and owners to attain a reasonable working level. Such a further increase would ensure the desired number of drivers as well as, in turn, a better taxi-cab service in Brisbane than at present. It is absolutely essential to permit drivers' incomes to be sufficiently attractive to ensure that there is no shortage of drivers and that a maximum number of cars is operating at all periods. I commend the Minister's moves in this field to date.

I shall now deal with the careless, irresponsible driving that can be witnessed anywhere on our roads in Queensland, whether in Brisbane, in provincial cities, or in country areas. In his Opening Speech, His Excellency made no reference to any amendments to the Traffic Act, but I believe it is generally known that amendments relating to drink-driving are to be introduced. I strongly favour such a move. We have pussy-footed around for long enough with penalties for drink drivers, if and when they are caught.

I am strongly of the opinion that action should be taken against careless drivers. I am sure that all honourable members have seen drivers doing "U" turns wherever they like; we have seen them passing on hills and intersections, going through dangerous intersections at 30, 40 or 50 miles an hour, cutting in and out of traffic lanes, and so on. I do not agree that the young drivers are always to blame. As passengers in a vehicle, when a dangerous manoeuvre is performed by another vehicle, we often hear the driver say, "There goes another young driver."

**Mr. Jensen:** They would represent a big percentage of careless drivers.

**Mr. ALISON:** I do not agree.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. ALISON:** That does not mean to say that the majority of them are young people.

It could well be that the penalties contained in the law are sufficient to punish the law-breakers in the proper way—the careless, stupid and irresponsible drivers—but the real problem lies in the lack of policing. There are not enough police to go round. They are too busy on other important duties to chase up traffic offenders. I believe we should appoint traffic wardens, perhaps as an extension of the system of appointing only parking-meter attendants. Traffic wardens certainly would not need the intensive training given to policemen, but they should certainly be well versed in the provisions of the Traffic Act and associated Acts, as well as procedures generally relating to traffic. They should have the power to issue on-the-spot traffic tickets and they certainly should be mobile. It would

be useless to have them on the beat; they would require a motor-bike or a car to enable them to apprehend offenders.

In the light of the intensive training that policemen now receive in the various aspects of the law and so on, I believe that they are wasted on traffic duties. Traffic wardens would relieve the police and, at the same time, crack down on irresponsible driving. I hope that some such system can be implemented.

**Mr. Bromley:** I agree that we should have traffic wardens at school crossings.

**Mr. ALISON:** I would go further than that.

I shall now deal with local government, and the part it plays in the three-tier system of government that we have in our wonderful country. The Queensland State Government is well aware of the importance of local government. The Governor, in his Opening Speech, referred to further relief being given to local authorities from road-maintenance costs. As from 1 July last, the State Government took over full responsibility for maintenance costs incurred on main roads. The three-tier system is important for orderly government. It is the type of government under which people have easy access to their respective elected representatives, and also to the Government officials controlling those functions which can best be carried out at certain levels of government. However, there are some notable exceptions and I refer to spheres of activity taken over by the Federal Government from State Governments during the past 10 to 20 years.

The three-tier system has a built-in series of checks and counter-checks against abuse of power such as is taking place now in the Federal sphere. We should not forget that, originally, the Federal Government was set up by the various State Governments. As the nation of Australia developed, it was realised that certain functions of government and administration could best be carried out by an amalgamated Government, namely, a national Government representing all the people of Australia. At the time the powers and functions of the national Government were set out in what was no doubt thought to be clear language.

This three-tier system of government is essential for the good government of the country. It is a government that is directly answerable to the people; an over-all government that has its functions and powers apportioned at each respective level so as to get the best results to the people—to each individual citizen, for that matter—with the minimum of delay and the maximum of efficiency, with every opportunity to each individual citizen to have access not only to

each respective elected representative, but also to the Public Service as controlled by each tier of government.

This type of government is more aware of and more responsive to the wishes of the people, and is certainly closer to the people. The elected representatives and the public servants at each tier are accordingly much more likely to—and indeed they do—possess a personal knowledge of the people in the areas they administer, provided that each tier of government in the Federal system is permitted to exercise its functions. In my opinion, this is what this great debate on centralism versus federalism is all about.

I am afraid that many people are confused on this issue. We certainly hear some rather confused debate in this House on it. The safeguarding of State appeals to the Privy Council comes into it and certainly plays a big part. But that is not the “gut” issue. Reference has been made to State rights versus Federal rights, government from Canberra versus government from Brisbane, and so on. But the real issue that we must get across to the people is what is the best form of government for the people of Australia, and, do not forget, for the individual.

**Mr. B. Wood:** I said that yesterday.

**Mr. ALISON:** I shall deal shortly with some matters the honourable member raised last Tuesday. To me, the State Government's prime responsibility is to make it clear that this is the issue as it affects each particular person.

On Tuesday, the honourable member for Barron River said, in effect, that there was no difference between having a Government department in Canberra and having one in Brisbane. He went on to say something to the effect that distance or size is no object in Government administration. What a ridiculous comment to make! Of course there is an optimum size if there is to be efficient administration, and there is an optimum in the business that can be done by the people who are being administered by the government department doing the administration. The honourable member displays his naivety and lack of experience in this matter by making such a bald statement.

**Mr. Chinchin:** Shift the Government to Peking.

**Mr. ALISON:** The honourable member pre-empted me. I intended to follow this up. If, as the honourable member for Barron River suggests, we can do away with State Governments and still get just as good administration of State functions as are now carried out in Brisbane, why not shift the seat of Government to Peking, Moscow or anywhere else? I know that is going to the extreme, but it follows as a natural corollary to the honourable member's argument.

The honourable member for Barron River also made the comment—and I was indeed shocked to hear it and certainly hope that all State public servants heard it—that he gets a quicker response from Federal departments under the new Federal Government than from State departments. What a shocking thing to say about our State public servants, for whom I have nothing but praise. I enjoy the utmost co-operation from them. Certainly, at times, a delay may occur in some matters because a particular problem might be involved or certain formalities have to be complied with. I repeat that I receive full co-operation and prompt replies from them, regardless of what the honourable member for Barron River might say.

Reverting to the subject of what is the best government for the people of Australia—

**Mr. Frawley:** This Government, of course.

**Mr. ALISON:** That is right.

The State Government must make the facts clear to the people of Queensland and, as far as we are able to, the people of Australia. We must convey to them the real reason why Gough Whitlam and the A.L.P. want to get rid of the States. It is not that Mr. Whitlam thinks that central control from Canberra is best for the people of Australia or best for the individual or, for that matter, that it is what the people want. It is that, with the States out of the road and only local government to contend with and to stand up to a central Government, the way is clear to impose a socialist doctrine on every aspect of our way of life.

Even a Liberal-Country Party central Government in Canberra, with local government but no State Government, is still not the best government structure in Australia. That applies regardless of who is in power in Canberra. Indeed, the trend in many parts of the world today is to decentralise power. At the present time, in the United States of America, the move is to whittle down the powers of the President—to cut him down to size—and to give increased power to the States. Much the same thing has happened in Canada, and I even believe that in Russia, with its vast area, certain problems are being encountered and, believe it or not, tentative moves are being made to decentralise power.

If we must talk about socialist and Communist countries, the wall around East Berlin comes to mind. This wall is surely a tragedy. If the Communist way of life is so good, why is it necessary to build a wall around East Germany to keep the people in?

The day before yesterday the Karmel Report was released. So far as I am concerned, it could not have come out at a better time than in the midst of a controversy over the most desirable type of government. The

report is an excellent example of the remote, bureaucratic control from Canberra that I am talking about. It was wonderful timing by Professor Karmel, and he should be congratulated on it. The report is an example of what should not happen. Money for education should be allocated to the States with no strings attached, as each State is in a far better position to understand the problems of its schools than some person in Canberra who has probably never even visited that State. The States certainly understand State problems, whether they be in matters of education, health or anything else, better than people in Canberra do.

I have read everything that I have been able to obtain on the Karmel Report and, from what I have been able to gather, none, with the exception of Professor Karmel and the Federal Minister for Education, knows the basis of the formula used to decide which schools most need financial assistance. From all accounts, the various schools were not asked for very many details, and the information they were asked for was apparently fed into a computer and out came the cold, hard answers. Apparently no account was taken of the problems that schools in various regions might be having, or the numerous other factors that should have been considered. No-one knows precisely the factors that were used, but, as has frequently been said in the Press, it certainly could not have been an investigation in depth.

If the Federal Government was "fair dinkum" in wanting to assist those schools that are in greatest need, very much more information would have been sought. I understand that letters were written to schools, and some of the information sought concerned staff wages, class sizes and equipment. They are the only three items, from what I can ascertain, on which information was sought. I suppose there are others, but one does not have to exercise his brain too much to realise that, with schools that are having financial difficulties, many more factors are of importance than the three I have mentioned.

I understand that virtually no inspections were made. Some of the schools were asked for details of their greatest needs, but no account was taken of their financial position. They could be virtually sitting on great sums of money, but they were not asked questions on that subject. How on earth can anyone work out the needs of a school—or a business or private person for that matter—if he does not know the state of its bank account?

The Karmel Report is a good example of the outcome of an investigation carried out from Canberra. It is an excellent indication, which could not have been released at a better time, of what students could expect if there were only one Education Department

in Australia, centred in Canberra. It is an excellent example of socialist thinking. In effect, it says, "Don't worry about the rights and problems of the people. Don't talk to the people. Don't ask them what their problems are. 'Big Brother' in Canberra knows what is best. Just sit up, shut up, and take your medicine."

**Mr. Jensen:** Who wrote this for you?

**Mr. ALISON:** Unlike the honourable member for Bundaberg, I do all my own speech-writing. If he would like me to assist him at any time, I should be only too pleased to help.

I should now like to refer to a couple of comments made by Mr. C. D. Fisher, headmaster of the Brisbane Church of England Grammar School. First, he said—

"The small school, the country boarding school, which has a need for more staff, has been given foolish categorisation."

That is an understatement.

He continued—

"The index used has proved to be a very inadequate instrument."

Mr. Fisher was being very restrained.

He went on to say—

"This goes to show how greatly unsatisfactory it is to attempt detailed administration from Canberra."

I should like to refer, too, to some comments of Brother Boulton, who I understand is Queensland president of the Independent Schools Association. First, he said that the Federal Government must disclose the "exact nature" of the resource-use index that lay behind the categorisations.

He then went on to say—

"Some of the very small, struggling country schools have been put into Category A.

"They are not well-established schools, yet they have been caught out with low pupils-to-teacher ratios.

"This is not a measure of their affluence. It is a measure of their struggle.

"It means these schools are having trouble getting their pupil numbers."

The solution is for the Federal Government to give up the portfolio of Education and let the States handle entirely the matter of Government assistance to private schools.

Australia is far too large a territory to be governed by one centralist Government and, say, 60 or 70 local governments or regional councils, as is apparently envisaged by Mr. Whitlam. He, of course, is an avowed centralist—he makes no apology for that—and he and his Cabinet Ministers are steadily

hacking away, undermining this three-tier system, even though they have no mandate from the people to do that. What has happened since 2 December last year would be the greatest hoodwinking of the Australian people in the history of this country. We have really had it put over us; it is the greatest confidence trick of all time.

It is my belief that if the Federal Government gave up the Ministries of Urban and Regional Development, Northern Development, Education, Tourism, Primary Industries, Housing, and Health, and then used for its own functions a fixed proportion of funds raised by it, and if the States were paid the balance of Federal income, based in each case on population and need for development, and if the Grants Commission was allowed to operate on perhaps a modified basis, the people of Australia would get far cheaper and more efficient over-all government.

Generally speaking, the States know best how to handle their own particular problems, and they would in fact be able to handle these problems financially, technically and physically if they had the necessary finance without any strings attached. I am hoping that the forthcoming conferences on the Commonwealth Constitution will eventually bring forth whatever amendments are needed to the Constitution to bring about this reinforced federal system of government.

Local government has a very important part to play. It should be receiving straight-out grants from State funds based on a percentage of each particular rate and charge budgeted for, with an adjustment based on actual rates and charges raised at the end of each year. It is fairly obvious that State finances must improve before this can happen.

In my opinion, it is wrong for local government to receive money direct from the Federal Government, with the State Government being by-passed, because the State Government administers local government through the Local Government Act and pays subsidies. I should like to see these subsidies increased as State finances improve. In fact, the State Government must be the structure and body from which local government receives financial aid.

The Act dealing with regional planning and co-ordination, which also affects local government, is now being implemented. Co-ordination councils are being set up and will act as advisory committees, and I am all in favour of that. It will help to beat parochial thinking in some quarters; it will assist adjoining local authorities to consider projects which go across their borders. As things now stand, some local authorities cannot see past their own borders. This will assist to overcome problems of that type. But for goodness sake do not let us set up co-ordination

councils with their own administration structure. As I understand it, that is what Mr. Whitlam wants. He wants to make direct grants to these regional councils and bypass the State Government. This, of course, is another move to white-ant the State Government and eventually, I suppose, do away with local government as it now exists and wind up with what might be termed glorified local government—regional county councils—and the Federal Government. The Federal Government seems to want to make grants to these regions and to develop county councils.

Some weeks ago I enjoyed the privilege of having some of my Liberal parliamentary colleagues visit Maryborough to have a look at what is going on there. They did a marvellous job, and I am grateful that they could spare the time to come to my city. They made sure that they discussed with as many business people and other people as possible the problems that arise in provincial areas or, shall I say, decentralised areas when an attempt is made to develop business or attract new industries.

Among the matters raised in these many discussions was electricity charges. One of the bigger businesses in Maryborough, which uses a considerable quantity of electricity, made the point that it had recently made an Australia-wide inter-firm comparison of foundries. This had indicated that the cost to it of electricity—that is, the charge for power supplied by the Wide Bay—Burnett Regional Electricity Board—was 61 per cent higher than the cost to some of its competitors in other parts of Australia, and 29 per cent higher than that of its average competitor.

The industrial electricity tariff in Maryborough for units in excess of 25,000 is 1.95c compared with 1.74c in Brisbane, a differential of about 12 per cent. I have suggested to the Minister for Local Government and Electricity that there should be one tariff throughout Queensland, even though there are a number of regions and numerous generating plants.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. NEWTON** (Belmont) (12.51 p.m.): The actions of the Premier and his Government at the start of this, the second session of the Fortieth Parliament, make one wonder whether fighting for the freedom of democracy is worth while, and whether the numerous oaths taken by members of this Parliament, by members of the Australian Labor Party which forms the Opposition, and by justices of the peace are meaningful. By its actions the Government is making a complete mockery of the present system of democracy in this State.

By his stand, and by his action in supporting the Opposition, at least one Government member has shown that he intends to see

that the democratic rights of individual members of this Parliament are upheld, irrespective of what the Premier and the Government might try to do. Because of his hatred of the Australian Labor Party and its policy of socialism, the Premier would, no doubt, goad Opposition members if he had his way. We have seen that sort of thing happen in so many overseas countries where political parties have made a stand in the interests of democracy and the people they represent. Let it not be forgotten that the Australian Labor Party got 48 per cent of the votes at the State general election held in 1972.

**Mr. Alison:** Not 50 per cent.

**Mr. NEWTON:** Under the Government's present system of gerrymandering we would have to get 53 per cent or 55 per cent of the votes to become the Government. At that general election the Country Party and the Liberal Party obtained 42 per cent of the votes. We can all recall what the Premier and his Government tried to do to upset the Brisbane City Council administration of Clem Jones and his aldermanic team. We witnessed the vote given to the Australian Labor Party in the Brisbane City Council elections held in March 1973. The Australian Labor Party won that election, receiving more votes in Brisbane than the Premier's Country Party could get in the whole of Queensland. The electors of the metropolitan area have shown by their vote for the Australian Labor Party in the Brisbane City Council elections this year that they will not support actions by the Premier and his Government which effect democratic rights in the metropolitan area and elsewhere throughout the State.

Over the past six months the Premier has condemned all announcements made by the Whitlam Australian Labor Party Government, a number of which could have been of benefit to Queensland, and particularly its people. It is a pity that so many Ministers have blindly followed the Premier's lead and have repeated, in parrot fashion, condemnations of the Federal Australian Labor Party and announcements made by the Prime Minister and his Ministers. Let me say here and now that most of these statements will be torn to shreds by the Opposition before this Parliament rises for the Christmas recess.

Because of the Premier's hatred for the Australian Labor Party and its policies in all spheres of government, we must look closely at the redistribution which is to be carried out in this State before the 1975 State general election, as announced by the Premier in the news media, and which, I understand, will affect a large portion of the southern part of the State. This will be done in an endeavour to pick up more seats for the Government and benefit principally the

Premier's Country Party. It will be just another blow against democracy and an attempt to keep the Australian Labor Party out of office. As I indicated previously, in the interests of democracy in this State, this sort of thing cannot be allowed to continue. We know with certainty that, as a result of a further redistribution under the present undemocratic system, we will have to obtain 53 to 54 per cent of the vote in order to become the Government.

**Mr. Alison:** You cannot even get 50 per cent.

**Mr. NEWTON:** Because of the Premier's personal hatred for the A.L.P. and its socialist policies, we can at least be certain that, if this redistribution is proceeded with, the people will again show by their vote at the ballot box in 1975 that they do not support the Premier or his Government in their attempt to keep the Australian Labor Party out of office in this State.

Now I want to say something on the question of home-ownership in which, of course, land plays a vital part. Let us look at the outbursts that have been made since the Lord Mayor, Alderman Clem Jones, and the Minister for Lands made a joint announcement about providing cheaper sites for home-ownership in Queensland.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** How are you going to do that?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I will tell the honourable member if he listens. Cheaper land, of course, would be of great assistance to young couples endeavouring to own their own homes. Because of the outbursts made, I am firmly of the opinion that a full and thorough investigation is needed into the land dealings that are taking place in this State and I feel that it is important to place on record the announcements made by the Lord Mayor and the Minister for Lands. I therefore quote this article from the "Telegraph" of 21 June 1973 headed, "Cheap house sites 'a long way off'"—

"A senior State Government Minister said today he thought a plan for cheap home sites was a long way off."

He was not game to put his name to it because he realised, I am sure, that the 18 to 21-year-olds who will be voting at the next State general election would be interested in knowing who said it. The article continues—

"The Lands Minister, Mr. Rae, and the Lord Mayor, Ald. Clem Jones, revealed the plan yesterday at a joint Press conference.

"They said the plan would involve: Resumption of large areas of land for cheap lots at normal interest rates over a

long term. Creation of satellite suburbs around Brisbane with controlled release of land. Taxation on profits from speculative land sales. Development of some of the 'problem areas' of Brisbane such as the Serpentine region, in order to release more land."

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

**Mr. NEWTON:** The newspaper article to which I was referring prior to the luncheon adjournment goes on to say—

"Mr. Rae said he believed he could get finance from the Federal Government for the plan but he admitted it had not yet gone before State Cabinet."

At that time I, on behalf of the Opposition, said that the Government must support the move to obtain cheap housing sites, and I still hold that view. I went on to say—

"Any stalling would be playing into the hands of the land speculators, who have been making a fortune out of young married couples and those with families."

Approximately 18 months ago speculators in Queensland were paying \$3,000 for an acre or 160 perches of land, which can be subdivided into approximately eight building blocks. However, these days, as a result of the speculators' price-fixing methods, the figure has increased to as much as \$6,000 to \$9,000 an acre.

Before the speculators had the opportunity of squealing about the proposals that had been put forward by the Lord Mayor and the Minister for Lands, the State President of the Country Party (Mr. Sparkes) condemned the scheme and said that his party would not support it as it was against his party's policy. What possible justification could Mr. Sparkes have for condemning the endeavours of the Minister for Lands to obtain cheap land for housing? His criticism appears even more astounding in the light of the serious problem that confronts the Minister for Works and Housing in his efforts to obtain cheap housing sites for the Queensland Housing Commission. The Minister has been very active in the Kingston area in search of cheap land for housing.

The next person to oppose the scheme was Mr. Postle, who, on behalf of the institute that he represents, said that it would fight any attempt by the Minister to resume land held by his members, and, if necessary, would take the matter as far as the Privy Council.

It is very interesting to note that both Mr. Sparkes and Mr. Postle were concerned not for those people who are battling to establish homes for themselves but for the multi-millionaire land developers. Those two

gentlemen have not raised their voices in protest against resumptions made by the Government for Government purposes.

**Mr. Miller:** How about land resumptions by the Brisbane City Council?

**Mr. NEWTON:** If you want to play it rough, look at what you did at Tarragindi where you sold land by auction. Compare the prices; there is no difference at all. And both of you have been in it.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Wharton):** Order!

**Mr. NEWTON:** At the commencement of my speech I urged a full-scale investigation into land dealings.

All of us will recall what occurred on the day when the Premier flew in and the Minister for Lands flew out. One newspaper carried the headline, "Joh slaps Wally down to earth." Under that headline the "Sunday Sun" of 24 June 1973 made this interesting comment—

"After five weeks of globetrotting Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen stepped into business swinging yesterday . . . and the first to cop an uppercut was Wally Rae, his own Minister for Lands."

But the Minister for Lands did not hesitate to have something more to say about the matter. According to "The Sunday Mail" he made this statement before flying out of Brisbane for South-east Asia—

"Yesterday, Mr. Rae said he would accept a reprimand if one came from the Premier.

'I am loyal to the Premier and the party,' he said.

But he thought that once Mr. Bjelke-Petersen was told in detail of his proposals, he would approve.

'I don't think there can be any real quarrel with the principle of providing reasonably-priced land for young couples starting out in life,' he said.

"Mr. Rae said there was nothing socialistic in his proposals which had stemmed from a humanitarian viewpoint.

"He said the price of much residential land was getting too high for young couples.

"It was up to the Government to see that a home was within the financial reach of the people."

The Government was, and, indeed, still is, committed to a similar scheme introduced by Sir Thomas Hiley in 1961. But something has gone wrong. The Government has fallen down on the job with this land-purchase scheme under the State Housing Act introduced by Sir Thomas Hiley on 21 February

1961. This is what Sir Thomas Hiley said at that time, as reported at page 2189, volume 219 of "Hansard"—

"The third principle of the Bill, and perhaps the most interesting one, is aimed at something which caused me a great deal of concern almost up to Christmas last. I suppose it would be right to say that in the past two to three years there has been seen the greatest degree of activity by subdividers that this State has ever witnessed. Subdivisional practice is infinitely more rigorous than was the case a generation ago. In those days, almost the only work that was performed was survey work and the scratching of rough soil tracks. Little or nothing was done in respect of drainage or kerbing and channelling, durable roads and for treatment of some of the subject land.

...

"But, if the quality of estate preparation has infinitely advanced, the trend in prices has been even more marked. I do not believe—and the Government do not—that the average young person today can afford to pay £700 and upwards for a perimeter building block. I know nothing of the profits which have been made by the subdividers although I suspect that in their good times it was a richly rewarding field; but I have been struck by the obvious high level of what can be termed promotional expenditure.

...

"Accordingly, the Bill now proposes to give the Commission wider powers to deal with the sale of land as such. There are impressive safeguards against this power being used to feed those who wish to speculate in land. I am determined that we are not going to promote some cheap allotments for somebody to buy up and immediately sell at a big profit."

If we take the price of land in 1961 of £700 or \$1,400 for an ordinary allotment and compare it with the price being charged today for an ordinary allotment of \$5,000 to \$8,000, we realise that the assistance that was required in 1961 is still required today. Land prices are escalating continually because land speculators operating through private price-fixing rings are setting inflated prices for land in Queensland today.

Since Sir Thomas Hiley's retirement, the Government and the Minister in charge of housing have failed to continue this scheme. The Housing Commission cannot compete with land speculators in purchasing large parcels of land. It is paying land speculators up to \$5,000 for ordinary building blocks. It cannot pay more than \$7,000 for a block of land without the Minister's approval.

Recently I had a case involving a Housing Commission home at Acacia Ridge.

**Mr. Chinchin:** That is not in your area.

**Mr. NEWTON:** It does not matter where it is. I am interested in housing. I once worked for the Housing Commission. I would not care if a house was being built in Mt. Isa or Thursday Island. If I was in the area, I would still have a look at it because I am interested in building.

Although the detailed costs were not available, the price of this three-bedroom house at Acacia Ridge was \$14,600. At present, the maximum advance obtainable from the Housing Commission or a co-operative building society is \$12,000. A house can be purchased through the Housing Commission on a deposit of \$500 if it costs up to \$12,000, but the purchaser has to find any amount by which the purchase price exceeds that amount. As the total cost in this case was \$2,600 above the \$12,000 maximum, the Housing Commission is being forced to pay between \$5,000 and \$7,000 for building sites.

**Mr. Chinchin:** What is Jones charging—\$4,000 a block!

**Mr. NEWTON:** Irrespective of what Alderman Jones might be charging, he has been quite honest with the Minister for Lands and is prepared—

**Mr. Chinchin** interjected.

**Mr. NEWTON:** The honourable member read the statement. Surely he is not blind. The statement by the Premier, and by other Ministers who are not prepared to disclose their identity, indicates what Alderman Jones intends to do.

This also affects the co-operative building societies. I am proud to be a director of one of them. At present we have 25 registered groups, and next month we will start the 26th. In interviewing applicants, we ask them whether they have a piece of land, how much they paid for it, and their present financial position. We have been informed that they, too, are paying from \$5,000 to \$8,000 for a block of land, which they are paying off. In some cases we have been told that a deposit of \$2,000 was lodged and that the balance owing has to be paid before a dwelling can be erected on the land. If we approve a loan, the builder buys out the hire-purchase agreement to make sure that everything is in order before he starts construction. People who are being encouraged to build three-bedroom homes are not able to do so because they have to pay between \$5,000 and \$8,000 for an ordinary building site. This is out of all proportion, considering that the maximum loan available is \$12,000. If this problem is not overcome, the result will be that people will have to build smaller houses.

An average three-bedroom, high-set, chamfer-board home, the type covered by the co-operative building society to which I belong, costs \$17,000.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** How many square feet?

**Mr. NEWTON:** Possibly nine squares. That is about the average. Because of the price of land, the area of the house has to be reduced, and that is a bad thing for a house in which a young family will live. As I say, the cost of a home today is about \$17,000, and, in order to do business with my organisation, a borrower or shareholder must have \$3,500. He has to find \$3,000 as deposit and \$500 for other items that I have complained about time and time again, such as legal fees, fire insurance, inspection and valuation fees, and entrance fees. This applies to permanent building societies, too.

If the existing legislation is to be amended, I should like the Minister for Works and Housing to give consideration to a number of things. The first matter to which I refer is the latest move by lending authorities, in the case of funds that are Government guaranteed, to dictate certain terms. They state that the finance being made available must be allocated by a certain date. They are even stating when the first repayments must be made, and indicating the areas in which the money must be used. I do not care whether the money comes from banks or insurance companies. In any case, it will be made available by the top organisation of the bank or insurance company in the State or Commonwealth, and, in the case of banks, approval has to come from the South for the lending of funds to co-operative building societies.

There is also the problem today of groups that have become uneconomic because a number of people have been able to pay out their loans. These groups are no longer economic, and they have to be carried in some way by the co-operative building societies. This is another problem that needs consideration.

My organisation has a number of groups, which means that it is necessary to employ staff. The Act has not been amended to assist us since 1957. In 1964 the wage for a senior male was \$39.60, and, for a senior female, \$30.55. The present rates are \$72 and \$60.62 respectively. Problems are also being experienced with premises. In 1957 my society was paying a rental of \$10 a week for premises. We are now paying \$40 a week. The lease of the premises expires in October of this year, and we feel that we will be hit with a rent increase which could be as high as \$20, to make the total rental \$60.

Let us now look at other matters that have not received consideration since 1957. Inspection fees need to be adjusted. The fee for a single inspection in 1957 was \$4.20, and it is still that amount today. In 1957 the fee for inspection and valuation of a house already built was \$16, and it is still that amount. Management fees need adjustment. In 1957 the fee for value land site

identification, check plans and value plans was \$16.80, and that is still the fee. The rate for fines for default also needs to be adjusted. Nothing has been done about that.

Loans being made available today do not meet today's requirements. The maximum loan was increased to \$10,500, and within a short time of that increase it was further increased to \$12,000 but, because of the problem presented by the price of land, it is still not enough. The maximum advance should be increased to at least \$14,000 to give co-operative building societies a chance to continue the role they have played in the provision of housing in this State.

**Mr. Hodges:** How many of these societies would be uneconomic because of pay-outs?

**Mr. NEWTON:** I should say about five or six.

**Mr. Hodges:** Is there a big demand for payouts?

**Mr. NEWTON:** There has been in some groups. The original policy was a very good one. It meant that, in every group formed, if nobody paid out his loan, instead of having to run for 30 years, it would have run for only 27 years. Borrowers were told that was the way they would get a long-term advantage under co-operative schemes.

**Mr. Hodges:** And it would keep the society more bouyant.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is correct.

**Mr. Hodges:** That indicates that people want to buy their own homes.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is correct. That is what I am trying to encourage. The whole of my speech today has been directed to the encouragement of home-ownership. However, it must be remembered that it is necessary first to get a site on which to build a home.

Form P, as it is known, makes provision for exemption from stamp duty for co-operative society members when the amount of the loan is under \$10,000. Although the maximum amount was increased from \$10,500 to \$12,000 the exemption limit has remained the same. Because of the Minister's responsibilities in the field of housing, this is one matter that he should be looking at closely. If it was possible to provide exemption up to \$10,000, it should be possible to extend it to \$12,000.

**Mr. Hodges:** I shall be bringing in some amendments shortly that I think you will appreciate.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I am putting my view on record so that the Minister can have a look at it.

One sees a great deal being done relative to permits, and this is a matter I have often raised with the Federation of Housing Societies. We hear very little from them relative to co-operative societies, and that is why I have taken advantage of this opportunity to raise the matter today. It will not assist me personally, but it will assist my society and also the young couples who come to it seeking advances.

**Mr. Hodges:** Since I have formed the one committee, we have achieved quite a lot of understanding and co-operation from both organisations.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I hope so and I hope that when the Minister introduces an amending Bill, it will cover matters other than those I have mentioned today.

Some people are now approaching co-operative societies for finance to enable them to purchase second-hand homes, and honourable members are aware of legislation on this subject that has already passed through this Chamber. However, my society thought that, provided a home was not more than 10 years old and we could advance 80 per cent of the valuation, not to exceed \$12,000, we might be able to do something for these people.

**Mr. Hodges:** Why limit it to 10 years?

**Mr. NEWTON:** Once a home is in the 15, 20 or 25-year age bracket, people say that it is not a modern home and it is necessary to spend quite a large amount of money on it to make it even a semi-modern home. They are trying to avoid laying out a second amount of finance. Of course, because of the difficulty in obtaining a site on which to build a home, many young couples now have to take out a second mortgage. The Opposition is definitely opposed to second mortgages. It is bad enough having to take out a first mortgage.

**Mr. Jensen:** They usually have to get it from a hire-purchase company.

**Mr. NEWTON:** That is so, and they have to pay 12 or 14 per cent interest. When the Commonwealth bond rate was reduced about 18 months or two years ago, the banks and insurance companies did not reduce the interest rate on loans for home building. Today some people in our groups are paying as much as 6½ per cent, while others in the groups who received money through the Home Builders' Account are paying as little as 4 per cent.

As I understand it, the private lending authorities got together and considered the bond rate. They themselves decided that they were not going to reduce the interest rate. Although they decided they were

not going to reduce the interest rate, they do not hesitate to write to us every time the bond rate goes up. As a result, the shareholders or borrowers have to be called to a meeting, where it is necessary for them to decide that they will increase their rate of interest from, say, 6½ per cent to 6¾ per cent. At the annual meeting, where they have an opportunity to say something, they ask, "Everywhere else pressure has been applied for the interest rate to be reduced in accordance with the reduction in the bond rate. Why is it that our interest rate has not been reduced?" This puts the directors of co-operative building societies in a very sticky and difficult position.

There is another matter that should be looked at. Because of the present vast development, consideration should be given to extending the 25-mile limit which is the present restriction on lending areas. My society is a very big one. To my knowledge there is no building society operating in the Redland Shire area. If the 25-mile limit did not apply, we could probably extend our operations further into that area, and perhaps even further afield. We have never hesitated to extend our operations, even if it might mean going into some other co-operative housing society area. If we have the money available, it is our policy to lend it to those who want it. I should be pleased if the Minister for Works and Housing would have a look at that point, too.

I cannot understand why this Government rejected the cheap land scheme offered to it by the Federal Government.

**Mr. HODGES:** I rise to a point of order. The Government has not rejected the scheme. We are still negotiating with the Federal Government.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** There is no valid point of order.

**Mr. NEWTON:** I am pleased that the Minister rose to his feet. We will prove that the Government has been talking parrot-fashion in condemning our colleagues in the Federal sphere. Every announcement by the Federal Government has been thrown overboard by this Government. I am pleased that the Minister for Works and Housing has had the decency to rise and tell us that the Federal Government's cheap land scheme has not been entirely rejected by this Government. On the basis of the offer of \$5,000,000, at a rough calculation that would provide 2,000 homesites. There might be some argument about the interest rate, but we must remember that it is not money coming out of Consolidated Revenue; it is loan money.

It is a pity that the interest rate could not be reduced to the extent of the good deal the Government got under the new

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The State gets that money at 4 per cent, and I will have something to say at a later date about the interest rate at which it can lend it. It is very important that something be done to provide cheap land for home-ownership. Because of the present situation, the whole of the home-ownership scheme in this State should be looked into.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. WHARTON** (Burnett) (2.45 p.m.): I first of all wish to compliment the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech on the manner in which they outlined the work of this Government in the past and enunciated some of the programme to be introduced in the coming session, which will be so beneficial to the State. I do not want to detract from the speeches of any other honourable members who have spoken, but I have noted that Opposition speakers are all very ready to echo the sentiments of the Federal Government. The further they go along this path, the further down the hill they will go, because the Federal Government's attitude at present is greatly disturbing to many people in this great State of ours and in the Commonwealth generally.

I want to reiterate my loyalty, and that of the people of Burnett to Her Majesty the Queen. There is no question that we believe in loyalty to those who are loyal to us. We have a great respect for Her Majesty and her representative in Queensland, Sir Colin Hannah. He has been to my electorate and, indeed, has travelled throughout the State during his term of office. I thank him for the excellent manner in which he has discharged his duties since assuming his high office.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You said that about the last two Governors.

**Mr. WHARTON:** And I will say it again because it is important. It would not hurt if I read it again for the benefit of the honourable member, because he would not know the meaning of the word "loyalty". I object to being criticised for affirming my loyalty. I reiterate it every time I take part in the Address-in-Reply debate. If the honourable member does not want to do so, that is his business. He is loyal to nothing but the A.L.P. and its Communist attitudes.

I wish to refer particularly to matters affecting the Burnett electorate dealt with in the Governor's Speech. I am very pleased that a welfare centre is to be established at Gayndah and that the Monduran Dam will be completed in 1973-74. This project has been a great exercise in Commonwealth-State relations. With the assistance of the previous Federal Government, the State Government has been able to finance the building of this

dam, and what a sad state of affairs it will be if we cannot get the water out of it. This appears to be the situation with which we are faced at present. We have a dam that cost several million dollars. The present stage is to cost something like \$22,000,000, and for the overall scheme we need a further \$30,000,000. The State Government has undertaken to supply \$12,000,000 if the Federal Government will provide \$18,000,000, and we are waiting patiently for this to happen.

It is easy for the Federal members in the area to say, "Yes, the scheme has been started; you obviously have your foot in the door and you will get more funds." But where are they? We have a magnificent workforce waiting there for these further funds from the Federal Government. It will not cost \$18,000,000 this year. To complete the project, it will cost only \$3,000,000 or \$4,000,000 in the first year and a couple of million dollars each year over 8 to 10 years. I think it is high time for some action by our own members. I know the honourable member for Bundaberg stood up at one committee meeting and said, "Do not worry for a moment; the A.L.P. Government will see that you get these funds eventually." But we are still waiting.

**Mr. Jensen:** You have not spent the funds from 1971 yet.

**Mr. WHARTON:** The money is going out. Of course, the honourable member would not know. However, he promised these things and told us not to worry. But we are starting to worry.

**Mr. Jensen:** Leave it in my hands. I will look after it.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I think we can forget about the A.L.P. because it has forgotten about us.

I want to deal now with decentralisation and regional development.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I know that the honourable member for South Brisbane would like to listen to me on this occasion.

**Mr. Bromley:** I always listen to you.

**Mr. WHARTON:** It is the Country Party's belief and policy to sponsor decentralisation and regional planning and do everything it can to achieve these objectives, and I hope that one day a Country Party Minister will have decentralisation and regional planning within his portfolio.

**Mr. Wright:** For 16 years you have been talking about it.

**Mr. WHARTON:** We have made a great deal of progress in that time.

**Mr. Wright:** What have you done?

**Mr. WHARTON:** There are none so blind as those who will not see. The honourable member simply will not acknowledge the good work that this Government has done.

In responsible regional development it is essential to have the assistance of the local authorities. When the Regional Development Bill was introduced there was a tendency to neglect the authority, wishes and interests of local government. However, this tendency no longer exists, and I am pleased to see that local authorities in the regional areas will be consulted and will even be represented on the development boards, thereby having a say with the State Government in regional planning and development.

In my own electorate there is a group of very keen local authorities, who are very interested in the affairs of the inhabitants of their shires.

I do not wish to be critical of the honourable member for Bundaberg, but I venture to suggest that his quarrel with the Woongarra Shire Council arose over a matter that had nothing to do with him. I do not make a habit of condemning local authorities in other members' electorates.

**Mr. Jensen:** You are frightened to condemn them.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I have no fear of condemning the honourable member on this issue. He has never heard me condemn the Bundaberg City Council, which is in his electorate. That council is doing a very good job, and, irrespective of the politics of its members, it is a live-wire and civic-minded body, and one that deserves commendation. I would expect the honourable member for Bundaberg not to condemn but to commend the Woongarra Shire Council. It knows its business and looks after the needs of the people in its area. If it wants good representations in this Government, it knows that it will receive it from me. We do not need the honourable member for Bundaberg poking his nose in where he is not wanted.

**Mr. Jensen:** I have to because you will not do anything about it.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I will do the right thing by both the Government and the people. I am a people's man, and I will do the right thing by them. I will also do the right thing by my local authorities, which are elected by the people. I certainly cannot be charged with fiddling around in another honourable member's electorate and achieving absolutely nothing. The Woongarra Shire Council, together with others in my electorate, has set

an example to the remainder of the State in local government. I am not frightened to back up the council's attitude.

**Mr. Jensen:** I'll be asking some questions about it.

**Mr. WHARTON:** The honourable member can ask all the questions he likes. They will be quite irrelevant.

**An Opposition Member:** What about you people buying into the affairs of the Brisbane City Council?

**Mr. WHARTON:** I did not come into the business of the council.

Over the years this Government has achieved a great deal in its policy of decentralisation, but there is more to be done.

**Mr. Bromley:** The Premier is also Minister for State Development, but he hasn't done anything.

**Mr. WHARTON:** He has done a great deal for this State. It is making tremendous progress under his leadership. He is making every endeavour to implement regional development and to look after the people throughout this great State of ours.

**Mr. Casey** interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** The matter to which the honourable member has referred has nothing whatever to do with the Government.

**Mr. Casey:** I will be telling you all about it next Thursday.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I will be glad to listen to the honourable member next Thursday. Incidentally, he will not be at the R.N.A. Show viewing, as I will be, the agricultural and industrial wealth of this State so that he can assess the needs of the people with a view to suggesting what can be done to give them further help. Instead he will be sitting down in his home.

We have done a great deal for the State by developing irrigation schemes, land settlement, and reforestation, and by improving education, mining, transport, main roads, health, tourism and industry. In all of these ways we have helped the State and we are continuing with our progressive policies. However, we have to do a little more in the country areas, where the population is declining, and to do this we must implement progressive Government policies.

I believe that my electorate could benefit if a little more help were given to a few people. If some Government money spent on printing in Brisbane could be channelled into rural centres, more men could be employed there. We need a little more finance for ambulance centres that employ

only one officer. If it was forthcoming another man could be employed, and that would assist in other ways. I believe that we should do something special for the one-man ambulance centres, although I appreciate that the Government has increased the subsidy payable on funds raised by ambulance centres. Centres that raise extra funds certainly benefit from the increase, but obviously the small centre does not gain a great deal. There must be some way by which we can assist the one-man centres so that they can employ two men. It is a difficult job today to run a one-man centre. Obviously the officer must have time off, and, even though present-day wages and conditions—I accept that they are necessary—make it difficult, we should make every effort to staff stations with more than one man so that proper service can be given to the people.

**Mr. Davis:** Do you buy locally?

**Mr. WHARTON:** I do and I am very pleased to do so. In my area service is excellent and the goods are of high quality. I do not complain about what other people gain in other areas. I am quite happy with the service I get in my area and I am proud of it.

**Mr. Davis** interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** Opposition members are wasting a lot of my time with their irrelevant interjections.

Bargara is becoming a thriving seaside resort. However, restrictions are placed on hours of trading. Shops in centres like Redcliffe and the Gold Coast can open all day Saturday, but at Bargara they are bound to a five-day week. I know that the honourable member for Bundaberg may say that this is a part of Bundaberg, but it is not.

**Mr. Jensen:** When we get rid of your council we will take over all of that area.

**Mr. WHARTON:** The honourable member will be trying, but we might take over his area. I think that would be the logical thing to do. Trading hours should be varied in Bargara because it is a seaside resort. If it is good enough to have different trading hours in other seaside resorts, it is good enough to have them at Bargara. There are quite a number of motels and a hotel-motel at Bargara, and many business people who are establishing enterprises want trading hours that are more applicable to a seaside resort.

Other centres on the coast in that area are booming. Decentralisation is being effected by land sales in many places, and it is hard to buy a block of land on the coastline between Burnett Heads and Rodds Bay. The area is being developed quickly, which should attract people.

I repeat that it is a great shame that the subsidy payable to the dairy industry was reduced. If the industry had been helped a little, it would have remained viable. The removal of the subsidy has seriously affected the industry. I spoke yesterday about the loss of 5c a lb. in dairy returns. Dairy farmers will find it difficult to meet their drought relief debts. They will be embarrassed and, in turn, the State Government will be embarrassed in trying to recoup the greatly appreciated drought-relief assistance which was afforded. On top of this, the Federal Government wants to lift the margarine quota and give its manufacturers an open go. It has absolutely forgotten the dairy industry, and I think we can forget about Labor.

The sugar industry is a great industry in my electorate. Very little cane has been harvested this season because of the wet, and both the mills and the farmers are incurring heavy losses. As a Government, we cannot control the weather but assistance could be afforded to overcome the effect of revaluation on this industry. The Australian Labor Party has completely forgotten the sugar industry. In fact, it has forgotten all primary industries.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** They do not like it, but it is true. They do not like the facts. The sugar industry has suffered under the Labor Government because of revaluation, inflation, restrictions and rising wage costs. That Government has forgotten the tobacco industry and the grain industry.

**Mr. Wright:** Are you saying that all of these things have happened since 2 December last year?

**Mr. WHARTON:** A good many of them have. Inflation has increased by 12 per cent, and the subsidy has been wiped out.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. WHARTON:** Opposition members cannot argue these particular points because they know in their own hearts that the A.L.P. has let our primary industries down. I am concerned because the honourable members for Bundaberg and Isis will lose their seats. There is no doubt about that. If the people understand the situation, they will not stick with them. The A.L.P. has forgotten the people in that area. It has forgotten the businessman and, as is traditional with that party, it has forgotten the worker who is paying higher prices than ever before. He is going on strike and possibly getting more money.

**Mr. Wright:** You are supporting big business.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I am not supporting big business at all. I am talking about the ordinary working people who are paying higher prices. Even though they are getting higher wages, they are not receiving value for their money because of the wishy-washy Whitlam-whirling inflationary attitude. Opposition members complained about the rate of inflation before 2 December, but it has doubled since Labor attained office. Opposition members know this. They do not like it, but they cannot do much about it. While they continue to echo the sentiments expressed by the A.L.P. Government in Canberra, they are injuring themselves and the hard-working people of this country who have been forgotten by the A.L.P. We should forget the A.L.P., too. The rate of inflation is a very important matter, and I have just indicated how it affects all of us.

**Mr. Lee:** It doesn't worry the A.L.P.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I accept that interjection. It does not seem to worry the A.L.P. It could not care two hoots about it. The Federal Government is shovelling money out in bucketfuls in Canberra and is penalising the primary producers and workers in Queensland. It is also penalising the businessman—the goose that laid the golden egg—and he will not be able to employ people much longer. But that does not worry the honourable member for Bundaberg and other Opposition members. I am sure about that. They are not concerned about inflation. On the other hand, the Country Party sees inflation as a real threat to the nation. It is one of the nation's most dangerous enemies.

**Mr. Wright:** Who wrote this for you?

**Mr. WHARTON:** Mr. Speaker, I appeal for a better audience. We have no problem so worrying or stubborn as that of inflation. It is not just an economic phenomenon. It is a social evil. Inflation strikes at those least able to cope with it. It sabotages the national economy. It white-ants the security of the elderly, the retired.

**Mr. Wright:** You got this out of a book.

**Mr. WHARTON:** It would not matter where it came from. It impairs the exporters' competitiveness—especially the rural producer whose main markets are overseas.

Inflation strikes at those least able to cope with it. It white-ants the security of the elderly and the retired. It is damaging our standard of living. It drains the pay packet, and shortens the reach of money.

**Mr. Davis:** If the cow-cookies are doing so badly, where are all the cheap farms?

**Mr. WHARTON:** In reply to the honourable member for Brisbane, I am talking about inflation, the fight against which must

be stepped up. This is a Government exercise, but it is not being carried out by the Federal Government because they do not care about it. Inflation has got completely out of hand. If something is to be done about solving the problem, a Liberal-Country Party Government will have to be returned in Canberra and the present Queensland Government will have to remain in office.

**Mr. Wright:** Anyone can be a critic. What do you suggest?

**Mr. WHARTON:** The first thing to do is to throw out the A.L.P. Government in Canberra, because it has the wrong policies. That would be a start. There would then be a good Government in Canberra, and things could be frozen for a while.

**Mr. Wright:** Freeze wages?

**Mr. WHARTON:** Exactly, and prices. We would hold the situation, and then have a good look at it.

**Mr. Wright:** Mr. Porter says you can't freeze wages and prices.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I am making this speech, and I know what can and cannot be done. All I am saying is that this can be done. It is necessary to consider the whole system in operation at present, including the functions of the industrial tribunals. I do not mind people enjoying decent wages, but they have to be kept in proper perspective. I am happy to pay wages as long as they are reasonable and just for all concerned. The A.L.P. Government is running away with itself. It is a "social service" Government, attempting to introduce the welfare State in which no-one has to work. The people will soon price themselves out of jobs. I want to see full employment, with workers enjoying decent wages and conditions. But at present the situation is getting right out of hand.

**Mr. Jensen:** What do you say about the tariff cuts that were made to help farmers?

**Mr. WHARTON:** I have been keeping a close watch on the situation, but I have not yet seen very many savings passed on.

**Mr. Hanson** interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I do not know what to say about Q.U.F. But I do know what to say about the honourable member for Port Curtis, who made a stirring speech in the House last year about what the Labor Party did for the dairy industry. I draw the attention of the House to what I have said, as recorded in "Hansard", about the dairy industry. I remember the honourable member for Port Curtis saying what a great fellow Mr. Chifley was. He was, because he introduced subsidies to the dairy industry,

but he also sold butter at a higher price overseas and put the rest in the pocket of the Treasury.

**Mr. Hanson:** He didn't do that.

**Mr. WHARTON:** Of course he did, and the honourable member knows it. The Country Party Government stabilised the industry, but the present Federal Government has taken all that stability away.

I should now like to make some comments on Budget items.

**An Opposition Member:** We want to cut down expenditure.

**Mr. WHARTON:** It is good to hear an Opposition member saying that expenditure should be reduced, and it is also very good to hear him say "we". But we on this side of the House are the only ones who are trying to beat inflation. We are doing our best within this State, but every time the Federal Government makes a move the State is involved in extra expenditure for which it has not budgeted.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Bundaberg will have an opportunity later to speak in this debate.

**Mr. WHARTON:** It is my submission that the gift duty exemption figure should be lifted from \$4,000 to \$10,000, as it is in the Federal sphere. It is not a good thing to have State and Federal gift duty exemptions that vary. There also needs to be a higher exemption figure for land tax. Opposition members do not like what I am saying. I am glad to hear that, because it shows that they do not represent the people who matter in this country.

**Mr. Wright:** You are saying that some people do not matter?

**Mr. WHARTON:** Not at all.

Land valuations continue to increase. Although I protest vehemently against that increase, one has to accept it because of the effect of inflation. Having that in mind, I say there should be a higher exemption figure for land tax.

**Mr. Davis:** Don't forget death duties.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I am pleased that the honourable member reminded me, because that is the next point I wish to raise. In my opinion, probate and succession duties are an unfair tax and should be abolished. Every year we see the Treasurer trying to find an additional \$20,000,000 or so to keep the affairs of the State running smoothly. He always finds it, but it seems wrong that

people should have to take legal action to protect their rights and still, in some instances, lose their life's earnings. I am not so naive as to believe that we can wipe out probate and succession duties and not replace them with some other form of taxation. In my opinion, the difficulty could be overcome by imposing a poll tax. I do not think the cost of such a tax would be as high as the legal costs that people now have to meet in fighting what, in many instances, is a losing battle. I hope the day is not too far distant when the Treasurer will be able to do something about this.

I think I should raise now a matter of concern to primary producers. Although I do not wish to continually push their barrow, I believe that one must view things in their proper perspective.

In "Queensland Country Life"—

**Mr. Bromley:** What date?

**Mr. WHARTON:** "Queensland Country Life" of 2 August. I know that the honourable member does not read that newspaper, but he would be far better informed on matters of public interest if he did. The article to which I wish to refer reads as follows—

"In the interests of Australia, and the beef industry in particular, it is to be hoped there is no truth in rumours that the Federal Budget to be brought down later this month will disallow as a tax deduction the cost of water improvements and scrub clearing.

"It is no secret that the Federal Government is determined to put a stop to tax evasion by 'Collins Street farmers' but there are ways of doing it without removing an incentive to genuine primary producers to lift production.

"Making water improvements tax deductible has proved beneficial in cushioning the impact of seasonal adversity as well as lifting carrying capacity. In Queensland there are still millions of acres of good cattle country under scrub.

"The world is clamouring for protein. Senator Wriedt has acknowledged that the best way to control domestic meat prices is to increase production.

"So it is vital to encourage graziers to improve their water facilities and carrying capacity. There is no better way of doing it than to make money spent on such work a tax deduction. Unlike many other forms of assistance, the Treasury in the long term gets its share of the extra earnings.

"However, it is not enough to appeal to the good sense of those responsible for framing the Budget. Producer organisations must convince the Prime Minister and his advisers that the deductions will build up

stock numbers and increase the output of meat, wool and grain, which today are the most wanted commodities not only in Australia, but throughout the world."

The pig-producer now finds that he is up for another \$50 for concentrates. Meat for protein costs him \$220 a ton and fish meal \$660 a ton, so he is having a struggle. Tax deductions to encourage development and increase production are the answer, and I hope the Federal Government will not be so foolish as to remove deductions that are of assistance to genuine primary producers.

I wish now to say a few words about regional planning.

**Mr. P. Wood:** Who wrote this for you?

**Mr. WHARTON:** These are my thoughts.

**Mr. P. Wood:** You are reading from Country Party election propaganda.

**Mr. WHARTON:** I have seen the honourable member reading from "The Worker". I read in the newspapers that Jack Egerton did not want trade unionists to take too great a part in the business world because, as he said, "We couldn't do ourselves what we are asking the businessmen to do."

For years, country people and the Country Party fought almost a lone battle for decentralisation. The word was used so much that people grew tired of hearing it. They "switched off" when it was mentioned. But today there is a new stirring. City people are joining with their country friends in a new understanding of what "decentralisation" really means. I know that Opposition members do not understand what it means, but the day will come when they will appreciate that it has benefits for the Opposition as well as for the rest of Australia.

Australians right across the country are coming to realise that decentralisation does not mean just a better deal for country people, but that it holds the only real hope of tackling the frightening problems of our great cities. Country people now have new allies in their fight. We must sweep on until we win the battle against the frustrating and choking effects of centralised population and industry growth.

The Country Party sets out its strategy for a programme of regional expansion and development. We describe the regional development aspects of this Government's dynamic policy for urban and regional development. The Premier has set up a regional planning area in Townsville, and other areas will be set up from time to time. It is an imaginative, sensible and workable programme for a national approach to decentralisation in the interests of all Australians.

Opposition Members interjected.

**Mr. WHARTON:** It is very nice to be able to read something in this Chamber. I do not often do it.

Growth centres offer real prospects of effective, large-scale decentralisation, with the establishment of new regional developments involving thousands of people. Thinly-spread decentralisation—building a new factory here, or a Government office block there—is a valuable means of helping country towns, and this approach must continue. But the answer to the problem of slow-growing country regions and bulging capital cities lies in decentralisation on a big scale. This must be our aim. We have to do this in the various small areas, and finally we have to do something on a regional basis.

I offer the following suggestions for consideration in the choice of growth centres. A centre to be considered for selection should have an inherent and demonstrable potential for growth. It should be judged to be capable of growing to a point at which it will become self-generating. It should be situated in a place served with transport, land, water and similar services of such a standard as to make substantial industrial growth possible. It should already have adequate public facilities, or facilities readily capable of expansion to cater for a rapid population build-up. It should be in an area providing pleasant, attractive living conditions in terms of climate and recreational and other facilities.

The most important criterion for selection of the nation's first new growth centre—an experiment that will be the focus of national attention—must be the potential of the growth centre to succeed.

**Mr. B. Wood:** All you have done is read.

**Mr. WHARTON:** The honourable member cannot even listen. I have often seen him reading a book here.

**Mr. B. Wood:** I am reading one now.

**Mr. WHARTON:** That would be the honourable member's form! If I did that, he would have something to say about it. I am always happy to listen to his contributions. I might be able to answer a point he tries to make, or I might even be able to accept something he put forward if it was worth while. If he says anything worth while, I give him credit for it.

I was dealing with regional development. No part of Queensland lends itself more to regional development than the Burnett area, including the city of Bundaberg. It is an area of great potential. As long as the local authorities are able to play their part fully, we will get the regional development we deserve in that area.

I conclude my remarks by complimenting the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, and

commending to the consideration of the House the thoughts to which I have given voice.

**Mr. P. WOOD** (Toowoomba South) (3.20 p.m.): I want to talk about two controversial reports which are making marked changes in education. The first is the Radford Report and the second is the Karmel Report.

In July 1969 a committee was formed to review the system of public examinations for secondary-school students and to make recommendations for the assessment of students' achievements. That committee was headed by Dr. W. D. Radford, and his subsequent report, presented in May 1970, was widely hailed as a landmark in secondary education in Australia.

I was one of many who enthusiastically supported the Radford Report. I have changed my mind. The Radford scheme has failed. It cannot succeed. All those teachers who had to take a part in putting it into effect know that it has failed. Most parents are disturbed by what is happening. The people who are most involved—the students—are dismayed by the system now forced upon them. I share their concern. In my inquiries into the scheme, the most generous comment I can find for it is that perhaps we should "give it a go" for a few more years. The overwhelming majority of those involved in it are opposed to it.

What was to be an enlightened step forward in education has become a dismay and a disappointment. The Minister for Education and the State Government should now recognise the failure of the scheme, which was to replace external examinations. A complete reappraisal of secondary education is urgent. It is not just a matter of patching up the system; we have to re-examine the whole philosophy on which we have based the system.

We were aware of the disadvantages of the external-examination system we sought to end, but we have replaced it with a system which is introducing education evils worse than those we wanted to end. Many people share this opinion—it is not mine alone—and I intend to quote what numerous administrators, teachers, educationists and students have said only recently. These are their views—

"The Report merely replaced one objectionable form of processing students as future job-holders by another equally objectionable one."

"Many pupils feel that one of the basic principles of the Radford Report, the reduction of exam pressures, has not been realised."

"The Education Department was taking steps to prevent 'cheating' on school assessments and reports, Chairman of the Board of Secondary School Studies (Mr. C. R. Roberts) said yesterday."

"There is more examining done now than there was previously, and every exam now brings with it that period of cramming which the Radford Report intended to eliminate."

"Deficiencies of the Radford Report are becoming more evident as time passes."

"Under the new scheme there is nothing for many but desolation and emotional strain from the beginning."

"Education is sick and if something is not done, most of the good will die."

As I say, those are the comments of teachers, administrators and students. It is a limited selection of the criticisms made of the system which has evolved from the Radford Report. Criticisms are easy to find. Today it is difficult to find any support for the new scheme of things. It is a tragedy that the report, which received such wide acclaim and offered so much promise, has in a few years become the despair of teachers, parents and students.

The Radford Report effectively argued against external examinations. It said—

"There are stresses and strains in schools and homes, amongst teachers, parents and students, whenever examinations occur. Continuous assessment will not eliminate all strain, but it should reduce it to a minimum."

That reference is at page 67. In fact, the new system has increased the stresses and strains.

The report said—

"Internal assessments will be an integral part of the teaching in a way that the external examination . . . cannot be."

The reference is again page 67. In fact, internal assessments have not become an integral part of teaching as the report hoped for. They have become a dominating part of the system and impose the same external pressures we were supposed to be ending.

The report further said—

"The judgment of the school, based on a number of assessments of a student, is likely to be more reliable than a judgment based on a single external examination."

This reference is at page 68. In fact, schools are not being given responsibility to make judgments on students. We have established a complex and confusing system of assessment which allows the school's judgments to be overruled.

The report further said—

"One positive gain would be the reduction in the pressures placed on many schools to justify themselves by obtaining 'good' external examination results."

In fact, all the old evils of the external examinations, with schools cramming to obtain good results to improve their prestige, remain.

I could go through the report chapter by chapter and find many of its fine ideals that are unrealised. The scheme has certainly ended our old system of external examinations, but it has replaced it with another system that involves more examinations, and these examinations still impose rigid conditions and limits from external sources. At the same time we have imposed a vast and irritating bureaucracy of assessment.

There have been many calls for a reassessment of what is happening in our secondary schools. Last year, for example, Dr. Radford suggested that an independent body should investigate the system's troubles in Queensland. But I believe that we ought to examine some of the fundamental principles on which we have based the whole system. I doubt the validity of some of these principles.

One of the important principles is that the secondary school has a responsibility to employers and also to the universities. We have continued a subservience to the demands of these two interests. I shall discuss the employer-interest group first.

I doubt whether there are any educators who would agree that one of the important aims of secondary education is to make it easy for employers to select their employees. Yet one of the principles of the Radford system has this aim. We are told that we must have strict comparability of assessment from school to school so that employers will be able to evaluate a certificate based on school assessment. This principle is wrong. The report states that the moderation procedures will ensure that the assessment between schools will secure for the system the confidence of parents, employers and the public generally.

I believe we have no business in organising a system that aims to ensure that employers will have confidence in the comparability of school assessments as an end in itself. However, that is what the report does. It argues that where there is competition for employment, the external examination provides a comparison between applicants. The report said that its proposal for comparability will safeguard this system. It also said that comparability between individuals, even from different schools, will be possible as it was under the old system. These principles are wrong, and they cause the same problems as those that existed under the old system—the very problems that we wanted to be done with. The requirements of moderation, with its demands for comparability, have brought in a whole new set of problems.

But what of the universities? Their demands of the Radford system are immediate and most explicit and have contributed

to the unhappy evolution of the system. But it is the fault of the system rather than of the universities. This is what has happened: this year's Grade 12's will provide the first matriculants under the new scheme.

The university has to expect that the new scheme will provide it with approximately the same number of students as did the old Senior examination. If there is a significant increase in matriculants, the university's problems are obvious.

It is clear that the Board of Secondary School Studies has had to accept university insistence on strict comparability in moderation. The university has insisted that the 1973 assessments closely parallel the Senior results for the past few years. So, we are back where we started.

We abandoned the Senior exam because it brought external demands into the secondary school—demands from the university. We agreed that this was not the best system, so we tried to substitute another. However, we have exactly the same external demands now incorporated into a more complicated and bureaucratic system.

With the benefit of hindsight, I can see that the report and the system it established are contradictory in what they aim to do. The report says—

“It is our view that secondary education should be seen as a stage that has its own objectives. Its organisation and curriculum should consider the needs of the whole of the secondary school population and equip that population, as far as the secondary school can do so, to lead effective lives in the society of which the school is a part.”

I agree with those sentiments. However, these aims are incompatible with other aims that are written into the report.

The report also says—

“Whatever the nature of internal examining, it must be:

1. Acceptable to teachers and parents by providing evidence that a sound education has been successfully completed.
2. Acceptable to tertiary institutions by providing evidence of adequate preparation for and likely success in tertiary studies.
3. Acceptable to employing authorities by providing evidence of competence to undertake particular kinds of employment.”

Since the report was published, the Board of Secondary School Studies has reaffirmed that assessments had to be made acceptable to parents, teachers, employers and tertiary institutions. I can only repeat that it was the external pressures exerted by employers and universities which led to the complaints

about the old Senior examination system. We scrapped that external examination for internal ones, but the external pressures remain.

We cannot have a system which considers secondary education as a stage that has its own objectives, as Radford says, and yet remains answerable to the demands of employers and the universities, which Radford accepts. It is the attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable that has led to the failure of the system.

The symptoms of the failure are well-enough known. The system means repeated and over-testing. It means many tests of vital importance to the student. It means students working under constant pressure. It means teachers being buried in a mound of clerical work. It means the tying of schools and students to previous examination results. It means complaints about favouritism and victimisation, and about irregularities arising from some schools. It means unhealthy competitive attitudes between students and between schools.

There have been many complaints about the implementation of the report, but few complaints about the philosophy. I argue against both. I do not believe we can enjoy a secondary education with the freedoms the Radford Report desired for students and teachers, and at the same time devise an examination system to meet the demands of the employers and the universities, as the report has attempted to do.

We must re-think our philosophy, not just patch up the system. I believe we should release schools from the constraints imposed on them by moderation and the strict insistence on comparability. Each school should work out and implement its own principles and practices of assessment. Each school should be answerable only to itself and its students for its assessments.

On leaving school, each student should take with him a statement of his progress. This statement should have with it the details of the principles and practices of assessment adopted by the school. An assessment advisory board should be set up to help and advise schools requesting help, and to collect and disseminate information about assessment practices. If we do these things, the spirit of freedom written into some parts of the Radford Report will become a reality.

The report spoke about doubts as to whether schools can do the assessing. It said—

“We can see no reason for doubting the ability of teachers in the secondary schools to form sound judgments on their students’ achievements. We consider that schools should be able to make assessments at least as reliable as present scores on Senior examination papers, and more

valid because they can take account of more performances than a single written examination. This belief is supported by a recent pilot study undertaken by the Research and Curriculum Branch.”

In view of the report’s confidence in the ability of teachers to make assessments, it is surprising that the report superimposed on school assessments its cumbersome procedures of moderation.

The abandoning of moderation, as I have advocated, leaves unresolved the matter of the selection of applicants for employment and for entrance to university or colleges of advanced education. Employers are capable of selecting their employees. It is not a function of educators to supply some sort of order of merit to make the job easier for them.

There is, then, only one major problem to be overcome. That is the selection of students for higher education. I believe that each tertiary institution should set its own requirements for entry. I will have more to say about that in a moment. This need not be, and should not be, merely a written examination. There remains the prospect that if the University of Queensland sets a written examination, then that examination will become the one for which teachers will teach, and for which students will study. That is what we are seeking to escape from.

There is no doubt that the university can have considerable influence on what happens in Queensland secondary schools, either by its own voice on syllabus requirements, or by its entry requirements. In New South Wales and Victoria the full secondary school programme is not so attached to university requirements. Victoria has a leaving certificate, followed by one year’s study to a matriculation certificate. New South Wales has a school certificate after four years, and then the higher school certificate or matriculation after five years. In these systems, the tertiary institutions do not care much what happens to a secondary school leaving certificate. But in Queensland our final examination was both a leaving certificate and a matriculation examination. The problems that caused have been carried over into the Radford system.

If we are to overcome the problems we now have, we must separate the assessment of secondary education from the selection of entrants to higher education. The Radford Report acknowledges that secondary education up to Grade 12 has more purposes than that of preparing students for study at a university. But we are in fact still tying secondary education to university entrance.

In separating secondary school assessment from selection for tertiary entrance, we have two alternatives. Both alternatives evolve as

a consequence of the imperative need to have a bridging year between secondary schools and tertiary institutions. I have shown that our secondary school programme is still directed towards the selection of applicants for tertiary education, despite our declared objective of ending this by throwing out external examinations. The alternatives are these: we could provide in our secondary schools a matriculation year, as is done in New South Wales and Victoria, or we could provide open entrance to universities and colleges of advanced education from Grade 12. I support open entrance.

It has been traditional for the university to use our secondary system as a sorting and clearing house for its own purposes. This has produced the bias in secondary education that the Radford Report was supposed to eliminate. We have to change our traditional attitudes. We no longer have the situation where we have only one university. We have three and there are five colleges of advanced education. The requirements of one tertiary place may not suit others. We must insist that each tertiary place make its own selection procedures. Why should we allow our secondary schools to be used by the university for sorting out its students? It has been traditional, that's all. Let each university and college of advanced education do its own sorting out and let the secondary schools have the freedom the Radford Report wanted. Secondary school examination results have been only rough indicators of success at tertiary level and the new procedures will only marginally improve the reliability.

The best guide to success at tertiary level is the work done at tertiary level. The first year of tertiary study should be open entrance after Grade 12, subject only to limited prerequisites such as maths in an engineering faculty. We should aim at open entrance. That should not be confused with open university.

I believe we should—

1. Abandon existing moderation procedures.
2. Allow secondary schools to develop their own assessment principles and practices, with advice available to them.
3. Allow tertiary institutions to develop open entrance for the first year of study and then to do their own selections based on the work of that year.

Of course, open entrance presents problems. Physical accommodation will be the trouble. There are no grounds of objection on principle. We cannot provide the physical accommodation in such a short space of time, but the need now is urgent to remove the ills in the secondary system. We cannot wait. Therefore, we need a short-term

remedy until such time as we can provide open entrance. As a short-term remedy—and only as that—we should allow entrance to tertiary institutions to be based on three principles: firstly, a skilled assessment on achievement to assess potential for tertiary education; secondly, a personal interview involving the applicant and members of the faculty of the tertiary institution; and, thirdly, an independently operated test along the lines of A.S.A.T., which was performed this year. Those three principles have to be considered together, and they represent only a temporary measure. This is a matter of urgency. The education and the future of tens of thousands of young Australians are being adversely affected right now, and the Government should act now.

I want to speak next about the Karmel Report that has received a great deal of publicity and aroused a great deal of controversy. I first quote the Federal Minister for Education (Mr. Kim Beazley), who said, when speaking of the Karmel Report—

“The concept of education in the A.L.P. platform is the entitlement of every child to the best care possible. Whatever his requirements, and whatever his worth to society, in the life of every child there is supreme value and an unexplored potential. This philosophy has been the foundation of all civilised advance. This philosophy has been the core of A.L.P. education thinking. This philosophy is now being put into practice.”

If we were to believe all that the Press and some Government members opposite have been saying about the report of the interim committee, we might be under the impression that the only point worthy of comment was the Federal Cabinet decision to cease, temporarily, giving aid to about five per cent of independent schools. At a time when the Government made one of the most dramatic education decisions and commitments in the history of the Commonwealth—a decision to distribute almost \$700,000,000 for schools and \$188,000,000 for teacher education, and a commitment to aid the needy and inarticulate who have suffered for so long—most Liberal and Country Party comment revolved around about 100 schools which have resources in their continuing use that now exceed the interim committee's 1979 target. Ignored is the fact that there are about 9,500 schools, the majority of which will receive significant aid from the Australian Government, in most cases many times greater than they have received before.

I listened with interest this morning to the statement of the Minister for Education concerning the categorisation of schools in the Karmel Report. I think it was a modest and reasoned statement. It was later followed by a question from the Leader of the Opposition, in reply to which the Minister said that he would enter into conversations with

the Federal Minister for Education and the Federal Education Department. In fact, when the Federal Minister for Education established the interim committee of the Australian Schools Commission, he made it very clear that he was not seeking to direct the Commission, apart from what was contained in its terms of reference. Mr. Beazley has left the Commission alone, and has not given it any instructions. It is his determination to see that areas of education of vital importance covered in the interim committee's report are left in the hands of non-political committees such as the Karmel Committee. If there are matters to be taken up that concern the committee's report, they should be taken up with the committee.

**Mr. Chinchin:** The Minister is responsible.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** The committee was working to the terms of reference set by the Australian Government. It has answered within those terms of reference, and made its recommendations. The committee ought to be able to receive, and I am confident that it would consider, submissions from the Queensland Minister for Education, because I believe his relations with the Commonwealth Government are excellent. This is a matter to be taken to the interim committee.

**Sir Alan Fletcher:** I am paying the Federal Minister the compliment of thinking that he would be interested in the possibility of a mistake having been made.

**Mr. Chinchin:** He is responsible.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** The honourable member for Mount Gravatt does not know anything about it. I will in fact support the Minister to the extent of saying that I consider there are anomalies in the interim committee's report. I believe there is an opportunity to have the matter reviewed with the interim committee, and I also believe that that committee would certainly give consideration to submissions that came from the Minister. So I would hope that the Minister would look at the position seriously and be in a position to make some recommendations to the interim committee in instances where he believes there are anomalies.

I said that the Minister's statement this morning was a reasoned, moderate statement, with very little regard to party-political argument, and I was glad to see that. But I cannot accept the sort of hysterical nonsense that has come from other sections of the Government.

There are about 9,500 schools throughout Australia. Of those 9,500, about 105, or a little over 1 per cent, will experience a suspension of Australian Government aid after the end of this year. What of the others? Every member in the House ought

to be aware of the conditions existing in the overwhelming majority of Queensland schools. Do I have to tell honourable members on the Government side about the decrepit buildings in our schools, State or non-State; about the demountable accommodation which is everywhere in our system; about the temporary classrooms that have been permanent for so long; about the dingy libraries, particularly in primary schools; about the poor facilities and poor teaching aids generally; and about the ill-equipped playgrounds? It seems that I have. Those are the conditions that honourable members opposite have tended to regard as standard or normal conditions. That is the state of education in too many schools in Australia in 1973; it is the state of too many schools in Queensland.

What is happening to Queensland?

**Mr. Frawley:** You have given Queensland away.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I made a comment on the Minister's statement this morning, but I am talking now about statements coming from this side of the House. What is this State getting out of the Karmel Committee Report and out of the Federal Government in Canberra? It is getting \$25,000,000 for State schools and \$21,700,000 for non-State schools.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Whose money?

**Mr. P. WOOD:** Queensland did not get this from McMahon or Gorton. Now we are getting it from a Labor Government, and all we are hearing from honourable members opposite is complaints. They are the most ungracious recipients of money I have ever seen.

Building grants amount to \$22,500,000 for State schools over two years and \$5,000,000 for non-State schools. Grants for libraries are broken up into many categories, but the amount for all aspects is \$6,800,000.

**Mr. R. E. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I will bet that the honourable member will be in for his share of the \$6,800,000 for the dingy libraries in his primary schools—that is, if he has ever looked at them.

What about disadvantaged schools? Recurrent expenditure, \$2,100,000; buildings \$2,600,000. That is from the Federal Labor Government. For special education—there are many aspects of it and this figure is for all aspects—\$6,700,000. You did not get that from Gorton or McMahon.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** (Mr. Lickiss): Order! I ask the honourable member to please address the chair.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** Yes. In-service education, \$1,400,000 in two years. Taking the Karmel Report alone, that is a total of \$94,000,000, give or take a few hundred thousand dollars, to be used in the space of two years. Yet all we hear is a complaint about the handful of schools where there may be some anomalies that I am confident can be rectified.

I have not mentioned the \$20,000,000, or thereabouts, which will come to the Queensland Government as a result of the Federal Government's determination to meet the cost of tertiary education. The pre-school commission has not yet submitted its report, and that also will make a great deal of money available to the State Government. About \$120,000,000 will come into Queensland education in two years, but all we hear is a complaint from honourable members on the back benches on the other side of the Chamber.

**Mr. Chinchin:** And rightly so.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** What a grudging acceptance of this amount of money!

The Karmel Report will transform Queensland schools. Already the expenditure of about \$1,000 million on education has been approved by the Commonwealth Government in all Australian States. Much of this money is already coming to the States, as our own Minister will confirm, and more will follow. As a member of the A.L.P. who is particularly interested in education, I welcome the introduction at the Australian Government level of the first needs policy, a major plank in my party's platform. I have seen the tangible result of our belief that education can be best served by an independent expert body charged with the task of examining Australian schools, not under duress caused by political expediency or pressure from powerful friends and enemies, but with a deep and fundamental belief that all Australians must have equal access to the facilities and teaching which will allow them to achieve their full potential.

Mr. Beazley, the Federal Minister, commenting on the Karmel Report said—

"The Karmel Report is a masterpiece of compassion, a compendium of common sense, a basis for preliminary action. It clears away prejudices which have plagued this nation. It is a guide to the establishment of a new education policy based on principles of humanity and a passion for a better Australia.

"It has been the aim of this Government to take education out of mindless political manipulation, and although this has been resisted by some State Governments and pressure groups, I believe that we have succeeded."

Let me examine a couple of areas in the short space of time I have left.

As to pre-schools, the Australian Labor Party was committed to the establishment of a Pre-Schools Commission to define and examine regularly the aims of pre-school education. Education for children starts at birth and is continuous.

On 19 February Mr. Beazley announced the formation of the Australian Pre-schools Committee, soon to become a statutory body. This will be the Australian Pre-schools Commission. The committee had its first meeting on 13 March and is currently preparing a report to guide the Government. It is the A.L.P. Government's intention that every child in Australia will have the opportunity within six years of attending a pre-school centre of the standard which now exists in the A.C.T. The committee is expected to present its first report in September, but basic money will be allocated in the Budget before the report is tabled so that there will be no delay in taking the first steps. It will be the Australian Government's action in pre-school education which will save the faltering system which is now developing in Queensland, a system with no teachers, no schools and no money—a system that honourable members opposite call a good system. The A.L.P. Federal Government will rescue this State's pre-schools.

Assisting the Australian Pre-schools Committee is a Child Care Standards Committee. That committee was established on 2 March and is charged with the distribution of \$5,000,000 allocated, but not spent, by the former Government. The responsibility for Child Care Centres is now with the Department of Education.

I turn now to the Karmel Report. The interim committee's report successfully translates intelligent objectives into a programme of action. It particularly recognises the plight of the disadvantaged and handicapped child. Under the platform the Government was charged with providing an effective education for people with special handicaps, including mental, physical and social.

**Mr. Lane** interjected.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** The honourable member has just walked into the Chamber. He has heard nothing that has been said. Let him go and be ignorant somewhere else.

In its report the committee recommended the expenditure of \$50,000,000 on disadvantaged schools and \$43,500,000 on special education for the physically and mentally handicapped. None of that came about under a previous Federal Government.

As to technical education, earlier this year the Australian Labor Party Government allocated an extra \$10,000,000 for capital

works. This was additional to a grant of \$36,000,000 by the former Government which had to be spent over three years. Technical education does not come into the orbit of either the Australian Universities Commission or the Australian Commission on Advanced Education, so on 31 January the Australian Government established an interim committee for this commission. It is meeting regularly and will report by the end of this year. It will be recommending programmes for the benefit of 400,000 students in technology and the arts. There are twice as many students in technical education as there are in the universities and the colleges of advanced education put together.

The Australian Government's decision to form the commission will assure the States that the Commonwealth will continue to give support to technical education and, with the formation of that committee, all areas of education are now covered by independent, expert authorities commissioned to advise the Government on the needs of all students. The establishment of these bodies, all to become statutory commissions when the appropriate legislation has been introduced, will remove for ever, I hope, the ad hoc, here-a-grant, there-a-grant system of former governments.

Mr. Lane interjected.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** If the honourable member had anything intelligent to ask I would answer him.

In tertiary education the platform will come to fruition on 1 January. The States have already agreed to the Australian Government totally funding all tertiary education including technical education. At the same time fees at tertiary institutions will be abolished and a special programme of means-tested student assistance introduced for all students. This means that the system of Commonwealth scholarships as at present existing will be replaced by living allowances for all students based on their parents' income. In a full year this programme will cost the Australian Government about \$350,000,000.

On 7 March an inquiry was started into the feasibility of an open university in Australia and a committee of the Australian Universities Commission is conducting an inquiry and will report at the end of the year. I think that is an exciting prospect. The terms of reference will enable the committee to inquire into the whole field of external studies.

Education programmes of the open university in Britain have been of great value and have heightened all education. The philosophy underlying the A.L.P. platform on open education is the production of an enlightened and constructive community. I might recommend it to some of those interjecting opposite.

On 11 January the A.L.P. Government extended to all Aboriginal secondary students the scholarship scheme which had previously been restricted to students over the age of 14. That cost \$5,700,000. Let me quote the Federal Minister because I think this summarises his views on what is happening in education. Mr. Beasley said—

"The task of this Government is to give aid to the needy, space to the crowded, guidance to the unled, opportunity to those who neither know the term nor its meaning, hope to the handicapped and equality to the unequal.

"Above all we must give every child the chance to reach his full potential, unfettered by parental poverty or indifference—free from the prison of an environment which stunts inquisitiveness and experience. We must break the barriers of indifferent teaching, authority apathy and planning systems which consider that children are manilla folders or numbers on a form. They are human beings and every one is precious.

"I believe the Government's education programme has created a climate in which such development is no longer a dream. It is now a reality."

I support the Federal Minister and he deserves the support of everyone in this Parliament. Those people who are sneering at the amounts of money and the interest and concern of educators in the Australian Labor Party will be the first to join the queue to get their share of the money when it is distributed. They will be the first in the Minister's office asking for improvements to their dingy libraries, their inadequate playgrounds and their lack of teaching aids. They will be the first in the queue and then will go out and praise anybody but the Federal Labor Government which has done this for Australian education.

**Dr. CRAWFORD** (Wavell) (4 p.m.): A contemporary American has said that in modern society we are faced with magnificent opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems. These words, I believe, apply to the altercation that is currently raging across Australia over the health services which have operated for many years and the proposals that the Federal Government, since its election to office last year, now puts before the electorate.

It is very easy in this context to indulge in hysteria and name-calling. It is quite noticeable that on television programmes those who are bereft of arguments are the most vocal and the loudest in the support of a system that at best is a theory and at worst has the potential of bringing disaster to the medical services of the nation.

A French philosopher was once asked for advice by a young man who was leaving France for the New World. His advice was

that the young man should under no circumstances involve himself in arguments involving bigotry or associate with bigots. The young man asked why, and the reply was, "If you argue with either bigots or fools you find yourself arguing at their level, and at that level you always lose."

I believe that we in Australia are faced with a situation that is of the greatest possible import to every member of the community. Whether a person finds himself able to go along with the contention that socialised medicine would bring creeping putrefaction, as it has been described by one of my medical contemporaries, to the health services is immaterial to the fact that the problems are major ones and must be faced squarely.

One thing that has always annoyed me is the fact that in the provision of medical services the decisions have been made in the past and are still being made by non-medical people and are based only on political premises. This principle, when applied in practice, gives rise to a service that is quite wrong in its implementation.

I could ask whether there is a demand for the introduction of a new system in this country. The answer to such a question is an unequivocal "No".

I intend to analyse the situation that obtained in Australia prior to December of last year and attempt to analyse the new proposals that are being brought forward from Canberra. In the final stages I shall also attempt to sum up the proposals and what they will mean to Australia when implemented.

In looking at the situation that obtained in Australia prior to December last year, we find that we had, in effect, free public beds in Queensland—as we have had for many years—and by means of the medical benefits refund system there were free public beds in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. These beds were public beds and were free to insured patients, in New South Wales and Victoria on the refund of \$105 a week and in Western Australia on the amount of \$140 a week. The money that was paid was refunded in full to the insured citizen.

It is admitted, of course, that there have been problems, as there are in every part of the world, in the implementation of medical services. Several years ago the Liberal-Country Party Government in Canberra, recognising this, set up the Nimmo Committee. Subsequent to the publication of that committee's report in 1969, the Government progressively implemented the major recommendations contained in it, with the result that various difficulties that existed in the mid 1960's have been and are still being overcome.

The problems included the actual organisation of the various medical benefits funds. It is pleasing to report that the efficiency of these organisations has been quite markedly improved over the years. It is true, also, that there was a multiplicity of these organisations. The amount of the cover given by them has been able to be increased because of the changes in the actual organisations themselves.

There are deficiencies of course—and there have been for many years—in the repatriation and pension departments of our health services. These also have been looked into progressively and many of the difficulties have been overcome.

It is true, however, that a socialised type of service creates many more problems than a service in which individual units, hospitals and other organisations at the periphery are allowed to evolve their own organisation under over-all budgetary control. It is also true—and it must be stressed—that, although finances are important in any health service, it is of the greatest possible importance to stop anybody believing that finances are the be-all and end-all of an efficient hospital service.

Many of the deficiencies in Queensland, due to the financial aspects, pure and simple, have been overcome and removed over the past few years. Although Queensland will continue to need money to spend on hospitals, the situation has changed and we are now mainly faced with the much more simple problem of attempting to improve the efficiency and the functioning of the service *per se*.

At the end of 1972 the remaining problems could be summarised as follows: First, the principle of the common fee had to be so geared that the cost of living, inflation, and other aspects of our financial scene could be taken into consideration. The Australian Medical Association has worked very hard indeed on the true assessments of all medical fees and their relation to over-all expenses in running a medical practice. The resulting A.M.A. publication was no figment of anyone's imagination, but a completely researched and well-documented volume which can stand any analysis by Government agencies. It was the result of the best possible advice being obtained from those who knew the most about financial matters. I very much doubt whether the current tribunal set up by the Minister for Social Services can in any way duplicate this expertise. It is also doubtful whether the current tribunal has sufficiently adequate terms of reference to enable it to do the job correctly.

The second type of difficulty which remained at the end of 1972 involved the treatment of pensioners. This matter still

needs revising, and will need to be revised continually irrespective of which party is in government in Canberra. Mr. Hayden has taken no responsibility in this matter at all. He has refused to accept responsibility even though I believe it would be of political advantage to him to correct the existing anomalies. I have corresponded with him on this particular matter and asked him to allow the pensioner members of our community to be embraced in the medical benefits organisations. But this he refuses to do. I believe his refusal shows a general lack of consideration for those members of our society who should be able to rely on Government help in such matters.

The third aspect of the problems that remained at the end of 1972 was bed availability, both private and public. In Queensland we have adequate public beds and an inadequate number of private and intermediate beds in Brisbane. In South Australia there is an adequate number of private and intermediate beds and an inadequate number of public beds. These matters needed to be corrected last year, and they still need to be corrected. A well-integrated service must be geared to satisfactory bed availability, both public and private, and it is interesting to note that the proposals from Canberra do not mention this particular aspect at all.

The fourth aspect that needed to be attended to as at the end of 1972 was the efficiency of individual hospital administrations. It is to be noted, in this respect, that southern hospitals have evolved to the stage where they have looked in greater detail at the method of using special consultants, expert hospital administrators, to run their hospitals efficiently. I shall mention some particular aspects of that at a later stage in my speech. A management consultant firm has now been engaged in Brisbane to look at the major hospitals here. I applaud this move because it is only by looking at the problems as they occur at the grass-root level that we will ever be able to bring all of our hospitals to maximum efficiency in both bed-usage and over-all budgeting.

The last aspect of our deficiencies as at last year was the shortage of general practitioners and the co-ordination of both general-practitioner and specialist services so that at all times full and comprehensive surveys would be available. It is extraordinarily difficult to do this when there are insufficient doctors. If we adopt a system based completely on new and revolutionary premises, the number of general practitioners available will decrease drastically for several reasons.

The proposed Federal changes involve several aspects. First of all there is the universal insurance proposal as contrasted with family insurance. A major point made

in this context is that under our present system large numbers of our citizens are not covered for medical and hospital expenses. This is just not so. In effect, at this moment, only 3.6 per cent of our citizens have no cover for hospital services and 6.3 per cent have no cover for doctors' services. Those who have cover because of their being members of the Armed Forces, pensioners and persons entitled to repatriation benefits are covered fairly comprehensively, although, as I mentioned before, there are anomalies in this area that need correcting.

To say that compulsory insurance is essential because we do not have adequate cover now is a pure fabrication. Next year, if this new legislation is implemented, we will all be issued with dog-tags and will be numbered by "Big Brother" on the compulsory insurance tax-derived basis. This will not make the cover any more comprehensive than it is at this moment. It is as comprehensive as it can be made in a country and the only way to increase the coverage is to implement a very energetic campaign and so make sure that everybody secures the benefits to which he is entitled.

The deficiencies in the system by which hand-outs are made, or any hand-out can be made, became only too evident when the Gorton Government attempted to issue free medical benefits booklets to those members of the population who were less fortunate, from either the angle of their income or their recent arrival in the country. In Queensland, only one in six of those eligible applied for medical benefits free cover. Naturally the bureaucracy complicated the difficulties with regard to the involved manner by which the "forms" had to be obtained.

But it is absolutely mandatory to accept the fact that when we are all placed on a computer in Canberra, increased efficiency will not result. I have had personal arguments with computers before now. Any honourable members present who have argued with the "Time-Life" organisation and its computer in Chicago will know the difficulty of arguing with the impersonalised service provided by a computer.

Mr. Porter interjected.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** The honourable member for Toowong mentions the Karmel Report. Certainly, as someone else said, that was conceived in haste and born in even greater haste. It certainly has gross deficiencies.

So far as the financing of the proposed Federal Labor Party scheme is concerned, at the moment less than 5 per cent of gross national product is spent on the over-all hospital and medical situation. We are told by the Minister for Social Security that a

tax of 1.35 per cent of taxable income will be the panacea that will correct all our financial ills in the future.

In effect, this 1.35 per cent tax means absolutely nothing at all, and is purely a figure that has been plucked out of the air by the so-called experts who are advising the Minister in Canberra. It will provide between \$200,000,000 and \$300,000,000 per annum if implemented in its present form. We are told that an additional similar amount will be provided from Consolidated Revenue, which is also taxpayers' money, and added to the amount raised by the 1.35 per cent tax. Even if that amount was \$300,000,000 or \$400,000,000, the total amount would still not reach the figure of over \$800,000,000 which has been initially stated to be the amount needed to implement the beginning of the proposed health service.

Medical-benefits-type organisations, if further streamlined, could, on the other hand, secure the expenditure of the Government's money and the taxpayers' money in an efficient manner which could in no way be matched by the new scheme of financing on a compulsory taxation basis. It is interesting to note in this context that costs of the Canadian and British schemes, which have escalated beyond all control over the years, have brought chaos to the finances of the schemes in those countries. It is also true to state that those two schemes are quite divergent in their general principles, although both are being copied in the over-all Labor scheme in Australia.

So far as organisation of the new scheme is concerned, once again we are confronted with a socialist tiger rampaging through the nation intent on devouring all medical services, with the one object of central bureaucratic control. This will not work in the future. It has never worked as an efficient type of control, because all modern technology favours decentralisation of medical control and allowing major hospitals and health organisations autonomy to spend their money as seems best to them in their local scenes. This is of the utmost importance in the over-all assessment of the type of control that will come to this country from Canberra if the proposed legislation is implemented next year.

It is important also to realise that the present Labor organisation seems to have the media so well organised that major Australian newspapers will not print alternative suggestions, or arguments against the Deeble Report. In this context, I challenge the major newspapers, especially "The Australian", to print the truth about health matters. One of the best articles that has recently been printed was written by Dr. W. McBride and published, of all places, in "The Australian Women's Weekly". The

article sets out, from the point of view of a practising doctor and family man, the situation as he sees it in New South Wales. It is of the utmost importance that the real issues be placed before the public, and that we remove ourselves from the overriding aspect of hysterical statements that are not allowed to be refuted.

From time to time, financial and administrative arrangements necessary to promote a first-class health service have been spelt out in this Parliament. If Labor's new proposals actually had any hope of bringing about a first-class health service, it would be unnecessary for the Minister for Social Security to undertake a \$250,000 advertising campaign. I do not think one needs to enlarge on that particular statement; I believe that its truth is self-evident.

I also mention at this time that we have heard from the Minister for Social Security some aspects of a research programme. This has not been mentioned in any detail and, in fact, I believe that it is a general "waffle" which is being used as another method of confusing the public. Research can be carried out by the medical profession only if the terms of service and employment for those doctors in their particular institutions are adequate, and if this does not occur research collapses completely.

We are therefore in the situation where we can undertake, I believe, an analysis of the over-all scene that will pertain in Australia if and when the new ideas that I have been mentioning from the Labor Party in Canberra are actually implemented. I believe that the following will occur. First of all, there will be a vast escalation of expenditure of public money. Both the British and Canadian schemes demonstrate this, as I said before, in spite of the obvious physical differences in the way in which they function. One is a capitation fee and the other is a fee for service, but we cannot escape the inevitable conclusion that socialist control means inefficient use of the pound or the dollar.

Why should the Australian economists be any more efficient at bringing about a situation in this country than the economists employed by the socialists in other countries have been? Drs. Scotton and Deeble are not medically qualified, and they, like most politicians in the Canberra scene, have no idea of what the term "quality health service" really means.

**Mr. Porter:** Isn't it true that those two gentlemen were junior economics students at the Melbourne University when they wrote this report as a thesis?

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** I understand that is so.

**Mr. Porter:** These are the people whose report has been followed.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** That is so.

If there were any necessity for a radical reorganisation of our health services, the first type of person one would appoint to such a committee would be an experienced medical practitioner. That has not been done at any time, and it is just not possible to accept the word of theoretical economists that their ideas are worth implementing. As I have said, they have not worked when they have been implemented in other parts of the world, and it has cost the earth to service the schemes when they have come into being.

Also in this context, if and when this new idea is introduced next year, it will be possible, no doubt, to buy medical services by offering every doctor in Australia a high level of remuneration, which would then be his net income if the Government paid his running expenses. This would be in accord with the principle of making all members of the medical profession public servants, and it would also cost the earth. This would occur because fees paid to the profession would have to be tied to a working week, and if any number of hours less than the average of 70 worked by most doctors now were actually worked, the Government would automatically need two or three times the number of medical practitioners that are now available. In my opinion, irrespective of how the remuneration is given to the profession and irrespective of how many come into the scheme, this would give an immediate escalation of cost to two or three times the present estimate.

It also is interesting to note that, under these circumstances, one method by which medical expenses and running expenses are kept down is the self-audit system by which the patient scrutinises his own account. If it ever came to pass that bulk billing became popular and the bills went straight to a central authority in Canberra, particularly into the computer that I mentioned earlier, we would then be in the situation that the patient would have no idea of what bills were being sent on his behalf and accounts would not necessarily receive the sort of audit they do now.

I have already mentioned that the estimate in Canberra of the cost of the initial establishment of the new scheme was somewhere in the vicinity of \$820,000,000. That would pay only for the initial establishment of the new scheme. If one considers the expenditure of that amount on the present scheme, functioning as it now does, it would pay for almost two years of that voluntary scheme.

Next let us consider the general practitioners' services. We are already short of general practitioners in Australia, and large numbers of them are already considering protesting "with their feet" and leaving this country. It is interesting in this context to note some of the aspects of a letter recently

received from Britain by one of my colleagues in response to a letter he wrote to another colleague seeking information about conditions and service in the United Kingdom. That letter states categorically that the doctor in the United Kingdom now has decided to "swing" completely with the system and not protest against it. He has no incentive whatsoever to do decent work; he never examines a patient; he never makes a diagnosis; he just bends with the system and refers the patients on.

We must remember here that in the progressive approach by the socialists to control all doctors, however far the first scheme may take that control initially it is by no means the end of the situation. Last year in Austria, the medical practitioners conducted a strike. Over the years they had progressively accepted more and more Government control, but eventually they decided that civil conscription had gone too far. Although there were three issues of importance to them at the time of the strike, there was one particular issue which they were not prepared to accept under any circumstances. It was that the Government intended to legislate to allow any doctor to be sacked from the health service without any reason being given, and without any right of appeal whatsoever. The reason for his removal could be that he was using expensive drugs which the socialists in Vienna felt were not to be used by medical practitioners.

It is civil conscription and complete repression of medical practice to interfere with the prescribing power of doctors, and under no circumstances could it be accepted by any doctor anywhere in the world. It was not accepted by the Austrian doctors, who, as I say, went on strike and subsequently won their case against the Government with resounding success.

It is interesting to note in the over-all context that Mr. Hayden's threat to discipline those who do not adhere to his scheme, as he envisages it, already has the overtones which were seen in Austria. There are many other aspects of the Austrian revolt which are worth noting, including the chaos that occurred when it was found that Government hospitals and the clinics staffed by Government doctors could not cope with the medical services of the land.

It is also interesting in this over-all examination to note that recently in the British Parliament, Dr. Edith Summerskill said that the next socialist Government in England will prevent specialist surgeons having any private patients in the hospital system. So it is very easy to see that the whole process is completely predictable, step by step, with control of the profession in every way and, in time, far beyond the initial steps taken when the so-called scheme is

introduced. Control, control and more control brings about reduction of quality of service to the lowest common denominator, namely, mediocrity.

General practitioner clinics are to be set up by the Government in opposition to general practitioner services in those areas. This in no way will enhance the quality of general practice, and it is not healthy competition between doctors as we usually envisage it. In Austria, when the doctors struck, the Government clinics in full-time service could not cope with the situation.

It is very obvious that the efficiency of doctors working in full-time Government service, imbued with the lethargy and Public Service principles which result, is well below the efficiency of doctors in private practice. We would therefore see in Australia the very quick development of a quality of practitioner, clinic orientated or not, based on referral onwards, with little examination, diagnosis, etc., as is the situation in Britain to which I have referred. With a decreased number of general practitioners, the amount of new work, much of it very trivial, would then overwhelm those remaining and preclude adequate time being spent per patient. This is the situation that has developed in both the United Kingdom and Canada.

Specialist services would be geared to the public-hospital system in the standard hospital bed, as the compulsory insurance system is not geared to provide any intermediate or private hospital service or to provide any real choice of specialist in the hospital itself. There will only be a refund of between \$12 and \$20 a day, identical with that provided for the standard bed in the public hospital, to a patient who wishes to occupy a private bed—if private beds are still available. This also means that people who wish to insure themselves for private or intermediate treatment—"intermediate" is a word the Labor Party does not like—will have to be prepared to pay very large amounts for private cover. The 1.35 per cent arrangement is, as I have said, a figure of no substance but it will, in its implementation, gravely disadvantage families in which both husband and wife work. And it will still need to be supplemented by a private insurance fund for hospitalisation if the family wish to have a choice of their specialist attendant. No matter of argument or smoke-screening can alter this concept, and I believe that a family in which both husband and wife work and have perhaps two or three young children could well be paying \$250 or \$300 a year for the cover which, especially in Queensland, they now receive for \$80 a year. This fact cannot be refuted. It will disadvantage a huge body of middle-income earners in the \$4,500 to \$8,500 wage bracket.

The over-all quality of the services that will be given under the new scheme is also worth examining. When one combines the reduction in the quality of general practitioner services, especially as seen in the United Kingdom—it will inevitably occur in Australia—with the waiting-list principle in public hospitals and the disadvantage to the public in not readily being able to see specialists, who will be driven out of consulting practice in fairly large numbers, one can readily envisage the chaos that will result.

Even Labor spokesmen recently have been quoted as saying that we either have a means test for public-hospital beds or a waiting list. If these factors are combined with the migration away from this country of doctors who will be seeking conditions of practice where, irrespective of financial reward, they can practise without Government control, we will see a rapid deterioration over the whole spectrum of medical practice. Those patients who wish to maintain a system where they have a free choice of general practitioner or specialist readily available to them will find it both costly and difficult to obtain. The public needs fair warning of all these things, as they are the predictable end products of the system.

It is most important that, in the over-all context of my remarks, we look as well at the legality of the system as it will apply to members of our community who do not wish to be part of a system in which they are told what to do by "Big Brother".

There are three important aspects of this system that should be emphasised at this time. First, there is the treatment of pensioners, for whom Mr. Hayden has shown very little concern; secondly, there is the situation in which we will be forced by the law of the land to accept compulsory insurance-benefit cover. This second aspect can be and should be challenged. I do not believe that under the Commonwealth Constitution our free society should or could be forced to accept compulsory cover based on taxation. The third aspect, and the most important of all, is the situation under the new arrangements in which Australians will be forbidden from insuring themselves for hospital cover above the compulsory cover that will be provided by the Government in Canberra.

It is constitutionally wrong for any Government to attempt to tell the citizens of the nation, "You cannot insure your health, your car, your house, or any other piece of your equipment." Such a prohibition can and should be challenged. Whether it is right and proper for the Government of a sovereign State like Queensland to challenge it should

be left to the determination of those members of the legal profession who are expert in these affairs. However, I am quite convinced that it must and will be challenged.

If we do not challenge alterations to our Constitution, which traditionally has protected us, we will find ourselves progressively losing all the freedoms that we have held dear for so many years. Perhaps a challenge can be made by an organisation within the State, and it may well be that the legislation that passed through this House last week will be useful in this respect. If we do not protect our freedoms by using all the legal mechanisms at our disposal, we are not worthy of the name "Australians."

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Cook) (4.38 p.m.):** It is interesting to note that in opening this Parliament and in informing Queenslanders of the intentions of his Government, His Excellency made only two brief references to the vast electorate of Cook, namely, to the Thursday Island jetty and to the request to the Federal Government for finance so that 400 homes and an extra hospital can be erected for Aborigines. In the previous year His Excellency's reference to my electorate was limited to the Thursday Island jetty.

The Premier claims to be a wonderful man who has the interests of the Aborigines and Islanders at heart. At the same time he condemns the Australian Labor Party. However, it is apparent from the Governor's Opening Speech that the Premier has no intention whatever of doing anything worth while for these people for whom he hypocritically claims to show great concern. The only worthwhile work that is being done on their behalf is being carried out as a result of the generous financial assistance that has been provided by the Federal Government. The Premier is only paying lip-service to the needs of the Aborigines and Islanders.

Work on the Thursday Island jetty has progressed only to the stage of a few concrete piles being driven approximately 60 yards from the shore. A lot of dissatisfaction has been expressed at the jetty's capacity. The Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs has been urged by many people to construct a much bigger wharf. However, these people have been told that it is not possible economically to increase the jetty's capacity. Does this mean that the Government is of the opinion that Thursday Island has no future—that it has reached its peak and is on the decline?

Does the Government believe that fewer ships will call at the island? If so, it is labouring under a misapprehension. Recently the "Melbidir" was forced to make a very

dangerous manoeuvre in leaving the Thursday Island jetty and finding a course through an area that was crowded with vessels. The new "Melbidir", which is highly prized by the Government, is supposedly for the benefit of these people, but the Government's attitude makes it plain that it is not really interested in our Aborigines and Islanders.

On 12 September 1972, in the Address-in-Reply debate, I mentioned the clean-up at Thursday Island after it was learnt that the Minister for Local Government intended to visit the island. I suggested at that time that the Minister should visit the island every two months to ensure that it was kept clean and so be a wonderful place for tourists to visit. I might say that the island has been kept clean although the Minister has not visited it every two months. He has made several visits since then, although I do not know how many. However, on each occasion he has advised me of his intention to visit my electorate.

The Minister's attitude in this regard was very different from that adopted by the Premier on his recent visit to Thursday Island to open a new school that was built for the Sisters of Mercy by the people living on Thursday Island and other islands. No doubt the Premier believes that the elected member for the area is of little consequence, and that it does not matter if he does not know who is visiting his electorate.

**Mr. Tucker:** Yet the Premier talks about democracy!

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** That is so. I regarded his attitude as a slur not on me but on the people who elected me. I received a vast majority of votes on Thursday Island, which is the largest centre in my electorate. In my view, the people of the island were let down by this act of discourtesy on the part of the Premier.

I think it is appropriate that I should compare the circumstances of the Premier's visit and of mine on the occasion in question. He arrived at Horn Island in his plane, which cost about \$240,000. He was met at the Horn Island wharf by the new "Melbidir", which cost \$500,000. On arriving at Thursday Island he was escorted to the accommodation provided for Government members at "Four Winds". When the ship berthed at the wharf, about 60 people sang songs of welcome to him. He later interpreted that as meaning that they were still very anxious for him to save their island from the Australian Government. On no occasion did the Premier leave "Four Winds" without a fleet of motor-cars being in attendance.

The same procedure was adopted on the return trip. The "Melbidir" was again used, in gusty, windy conditions, and ran the risk of being damaged. In fact, some damage was caused to the exterior of the ship when she returned to the berth. That is not hearsay; I was on the spot and saw what happened. There are more than enough reefs in Torres Strait for the skipper and crew of the "Melbidir" to negotiate without exposing her to unnecessary dangers when the launch that is the usual means of transport from Thursday Island to Horn Island is available.

I arrived at Horn Island by charter plane from Bamaga because there was no suitable regular service. The charter flight cost \$60. I travelled from Horn Island to Thursday Island by the normal launch service. I was told on the wharf that the supply boat on which I was to travel around the islands had been delayed for 24 hours. I then booked into the Grand Hotel. I was not allowed to use the accommodation at "Four Winds".

**Mr. Tucker:** Why aren't you allowed to use it?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I asked a question about it in the House, and I was told by the Minister that this accommodation was not for me; that it would be interfering in the trade of the people who provide accommodation there. I had to pay for my accommodation. Naturally, I do not mind this, but I think it is a very selfish and foolish attitude to allow Government members and public servants to use that accommodation while the elected member for the area is denied the same right.

**Mr. Davis:** That is typical of their nasty, snide ways.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** That is right.

I asked the Premier if there was any possibility of obtaining a seat on his aeroplane for the return trip from Thursday Island to Brisbane, because it was getting close to the opening of Parliament. He said that the only spare seat had been given to a public servant. I then contacted the person in charge of the chartered aeroplane that transported the television crew who accompanied the Premier, but I was told there was no room on it either. As I had to be in Brisbane for the opening of Parliament, it became necessary for me to charter a plane from Thursday Island to Weipa at a cost of \$140. I arrived in Brisbane on the Monday afternoon, and although I arrived too late for my party meeting I was here in time for the opening of Parliament. Imagine the remarks of the Premier, both in this House and elsewhere, had I not been present at the opening of that

school. I wonder if he would have gone to Thursday Island under the same conditions as I did. I claim that the answer would definitely be "No".

**Mr. Tucker:** Do you mean to say that he had two planes to carry his entourage?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** That is right. Today I asked a question about the cost of doing this.

**Mr. Rae:** How many does Gough have?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I do not mind in the least.

At the opening of the school on Thursday Island, the Bishop of Cairns, Bishop Torpie, blessed the building. It is a very fine school and is a wonderful tribute to the people who contributed to its cost. It was quite fitting for the Premier to open it, but even during his speech in opening it he could not refrain from ignoring the wishes of the Islanders that the border issue be allowed to die, and again tried to raise the matter. I inform the House that his action met with a cool reception. I looked in the northern newspapers for a report on the opening of the school, but not one line could I find.

During my recent visit to Thursday Island I was fortunate enough to obtain transport in one of the luggers provided by the Australian Government and was able to visit seven islands that I could not otherwise have visited because the sailing of the storeship was delayed. I sought the permission of the manager of the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs in Thursday Island to visit these islands. Under the provisions of the Torres Strait Islanders Act I must obtain permission to visit any island in Torres Strait. The manager sent out several messages but told me he had received no replies. Because I was leaving early the following morning, I asked him to forward the replies to St. Paul's, which was the first place I was visiting. On my arrival there, I learnt that still no replies had been received. I did not receive any word until, on visiting one island, I was asked, "Did you get our message?" I said, "No, I did not." I was told, "We sent a message to say you weren't to come." I said, "Had I known that, I certainly wouldn't have come ashore. To comply with your wishes, I will leave immediately." He said, "You can't go. The Director has said that we can't stop you from coming." The Director, who was in Thursday Island at that time, had sent a message to say, "You can't stop your member from coming."

In December 1971, when the Aborigines Act was rushed through Parliament, I moved an amendment to allow both the State member and the Federal member to

visit the reserves without the need to obtain permission from the council. The Torres Strait Islanders Act, which the Minister said he wanted to hurry through the House, does not contain such a provision. It is anomalous and farcical that I must get permission to visit Bamaga, yet I can visit Umagico, a small place only two miles away, with impunity. How ridiculous that is! I said to the council chairman on this island, "Your Minister and your Director made these laws against my wishes, and now they are telling you that you can't carry them out."

What utter confusion must exist in the minds of these people now that the Act is being administered by people who, in their desire to keep members of Parliament away and destroy all communication with them, have found it has "boomeranged" and returned to their feet! I am now wondering whether the Minister will introduce another amendment to the Act.

Honourable members may recall that it was a long time before the legislation to which I refer was brought before the House. It was said to be the wish of the people concerned, and they were blamed for the lengthy delay in its introduction. Of the 11 amendments moved by the Opposition, I think four concerning Aborigines were allowed. The Minister assured me then that similar amendments would be made in respect of Torres Strait Islanders, and asked me if I would allow that legislation to go through. This I did. However, as soon as the Act was published, I found that no longer did members of Parliament, either State or Federal, have the right to visit these places.

Since the last session of Parliament, I visited the islands during the Easter period with Mr. Bryant. That visit received quite a lot of adverse publicity. But let me now bring forward a little good publicity. On the notice board at every store on the islands was a notice reading—

"Radio Message  
Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs  
Radio Network

Date 13.3.73

To Representatives, Chairmen, Councillors  
and People of All Islands.

From Graham Gordon".

Graham Gordon was the Country Party candidate who stood against me in the Cook electorate at the last election. The notice continues—

"This telegram requests that you urgently discuss the question of starting Country Party branches on all islands so that the clear voice of the Torres Strait Islands may be heard through this party's organisation. I am ready to fly to T.I., Bamaga and Yorke

Islands at Easter if you wish me to assist you to start these branches on each island, but I must wait for your invitation to do this. It must be the wish of the people before this can be done. The Country Party Conference is in June in Mackay, so we will have to hurry if delegates are to attend this conference, so please post your reply to me urgently listing names from each island of all those wishing to join the Country Party and the clear view of each island on this matter. Regards to all. Time 4 p.m. Graham Gordon, 58 Ocean Drive, Slade Point, Mackay."

That message was sent through the Government-controlled radio network, yet when I sent a message seeking permission to visit the island, I could not even get a reply. I have in my hand a photograph of the notice, and when I returned from this island it was missing.

During that same trip, the chairman on another island received this radio message at 8 o'clock in the morning—

"Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs  
Radio Network

Date 26.4.73

To the Chairman, . . . Island.

From WIR, Badu.

Mr. Nona states you not to appear TV on Navy ship. Signed T. Abai, Radio Operator."

Here was another instance of a chairman being overruled by someone else. The chairman of each council is elected by the people of the island, and each councillor on the island is elected. Yet the Director, in one instance, and an advisory councillor, in another instance, overruled a council and asked it to do other things. That brings the sort of confusion that will keep these people in the dark for many years.

In my opinion, one of the most outstanding moves made by Mr. Bryant in his first few weeks in his portfolio was to go to the Postmaster-General's Department and say, "As from a certain date, you will have lock-up mail bags." That was only the first move, and I envisage that before the end of this term of office of the Australian Government many islands will be connected with the mainland by telephone. This will obviate the need for all communications, either to or from the islands, to go through the screening process now used by the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

I feel very strongly for these people. Of the 13 islands, only five have European teachers, which means that eight islands have only Islander teachers. If this state of affairs is allowed to continue, with Islander teachers teaching the children, there will never be a possibility of an Islander boy or girl going through a teachers' college and returning

to the islands as a qualified teacher recognised by the Education Department. Until that happens, the present ignorance will continue. Information is now being sent to them through a machine that is warped, that is un-Australian, and that should be eliminated completely.

The Minister for Local Government and Electricity, who was in the House earlier, has promised to set up a local authority in the Torres Strait area. If he does that, I am certain that once again the position will be obscured, because all orders and all business will go through the radio network and any measures designed to bring about a change will be very slow and tedious. There will be no visits by health inspectors; there will be no building regulations. It will be the same old story of lip-service. The Minister will say, "We have given them local authority status." However, he is not prepared to allow even the people of Thursday Island to elect their own council. The Government has appointed an advisory council, which consists of five people, three of whom are public servants who are non-ratepayers, and they advise the town clerk and his officers on the needs of the island. The question I ask is: If it is good enough to have an advisory council of five people, why is it not good enough to have an elected council of the correct number, whether six or eight, so that the people can take part in the election?

If there is to be a council, I think it should have on it a representative from the central, eastern and western groups of islands. I do not think it is possible to have a representative from each island, because there are 13 islands and it would make for a very cumbersome council. A representative from each of the three groups I have mentioned would give quite good representation.

Speaking of lip-service and the answers I have received from the Minister and his department reminds me of a ridiculous answer that I received to a question I asked this morning. The Minister said, "All homes are occupied. Some problems were encountered initially, but they have been remedied." My question related to Islanders paying rent and still not living in their houses. Would any honourable member still residing in his old home be prepared to pay rent for a new home that was still not fit to live in? I spoke to the person concerned, a well-known man on Badu Island. He felt that he had to pay the rent because the house was built for him. I think that altogether he has paid about \$180 in rent. The rent is only \$6 a fortnight, but even \$6 a fortnight adds up to a tidy sum over a period of months. When a house cannot be lived

in, nothing is really being provided. It is only a matter of words, not deeds. When I say that these people are being treated as second-class citizens, honourable members will remember some of the examples I have given today.

Manual training and homecraft studies are an important part of the education of the children on those islands. Because there are so few pupils on the islands, that part of their education is neglected. Only a small percentage of the children are going to receive a secondary education if it is necessary for them to board away from home to attend secondary school. I am seeking help from the Department of Education. I know that, if an approach is made to the Federal Government, the money needed for this purpose will be forthcoming. Manual training and homecraft classes could be given by a mobile service. Teachers could go from island to island and give the children on the various islands some degree of manual and homecraft training.

I turn now to the grave situation confronting the Minister because of staff shortages in communities under his jurisdiction. The main reasons for the staff shortage are lack of adequate facilities and poor conditions. Public servants are required to put up with isolation and inadequate accommodation. When a person wishing to enter the service interviews the Director or the Minister, he is told that accommodation is available. He is also told that his furniture will be sent to the community and that isolation leave will be granted. That applies in respect of employment at all the communities for which positions are advertised, whether it be Bamaga, Lockhart River, Edward River, Mitchell River or anywhere else. When the public servant arrives, he finds that the accommodation is not finished or is under repair, or that his furniture has not arrived. I know one officer who has now been waiting a month for his furniture. Naturally his wife has become very dissatisfied. I visited that family. They were sleeping on the floor on mattresses that had been provided for them, and they had been given a loan of a table and a few chairs. And he is a very senior officer in a community of over 1,000 people.

The main difficulty is the isolation. On the face of it isolation leave would appear to be the answer to the problem. But the fares for a man and his family to get away from that isolation pose a problem. They find it absolutely impossible to leave. They lose money by taking their isolation leave, so they do not take it. This is another sample of lip-service about good conditions, which cannot be taken because of the cost involved.

**Mr. Tucker:** It is a wonder they ever get anybody to go there under those conditions.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I think every member of the House would be shocked to know the number of people who have passed through the department since the Government took over most of these areas in 1965. I should say that the staff has been completely changed in every community at least three times in that period and at some of them the turn-over is as high as four, five and six times. On many occasions the hospitals have been without sisters; on many occasions the cattle overseer has been away for months and on many occasions no administrator has been there. As a result, a greater work-load has been put on the shoulders of the people left there. In addition they all complain that more and more paper work is required, because all of the returns have to be forwarded to Brisbane and there is always an outcry if this is not done.

Finally—

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** I am glad to hear honourable members opposite call "Hear, hear!" because the next is a gem. Whilst I was the member for Tablelands, the Honourable Dr. Peter Delamothe—now Sir Peter Delamothe—decided to close the court-house at Georgetown. I rallied a very fine bunch of people from the area in order to oppose the closure. The Treasurer will know about it because he probably saw one or two of the letters sent from all sections of the community to all Ministers. Sir Francis Nicklin was Premier at the time. The people of the district kept up the pressure to such effect that the court-house was not closed. As a result, on 26 June 1973 at 8 p.m. a new court-house at Georgetown was opened. It was opened by Mr. W. D. Longland, Chairman of the Public Service Board, and officially handed over to the Under Secretary of the Department of Justice, Mr. Skinner. On the following night, 27 June, Mr. L. E. Skinner, Under Secretary of the Department of Justice opened the new court-house at Normanton and officially handed it over to the Chairman of the Public Service Board.

**Mr. Tucker:** In other words, they were working like two blue cattle dogs.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** Yes. I received invitations three days before the opening. I kept these invitations because I thought it was a humorous situation. The people of Georgetown asked me, "Where were you, Eddie?" I said, "I sent a telegram; did they read it out?" They said, "No, they

just said you sent your apology." They were not even fair enough to read my telegram which said—

"Congratulations to all concerned and especially to those stout-hearted citizens who prevented this court-house being closed years ago."

They would not read that out, but simply apologised for my absence.

Last but not least, I come to the debutantes ball at Kowanyama. I am glad that the honourable member for Mulgrave is in the Chamber because he was one of the star performers in this matter. The manager at Kowanyama told me, "Eddie, I did not know I had to invite you. I only knew that I had to invite the Minister and the Director. I did my duty and did not know what happened after that." The Minister could not come. He did not say anything about anyone else but deputed the honourable member for Mulgrave to go to Kowanyama and receive the debts, at the ball. These incidents may sound amusing, but the stage was reached where the local people said they believed I had lost my seat.

With the injection of funds by the Australian Government on the advice of Mr. Bryant, the Aborigines and Islanders will be far better off than they have been in the past. In addition to receiving higher wages than they are currently paid, they will enjoy better education, housing and health than at present.

Although Mr. Bryant's visit at Easter was downgraded by the Press, it was a revelation to everyone who accompanied him. He and his Government are held in high esteem by the people of the islands that he visited. Although he arrived in a hostile atmosphere, he departed in the knowledge that the Islanders were prepared to give him a go. Since then he has done what the Queensland Government has not done—he has honoured his promises. I suggest that the State Government follow the example set by him.

Debate, on motion of Mr. Ahern, adjourned.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

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

"That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, 21 August 1973."

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.13 p.m.