

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 23 AUGUST 1973

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p.m. Each of the periods between 11 o'clock a.m. and 4 o'clock p.m. and between 4 o'clock p.m. and 10 o'clock p.m. shall be accounted an allotted day. All provisions of Standing Order No. 17 shall, *mutatis mutandis*, continue to apply."

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this formal?

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: Formal.

Mr. Houston: Not formal.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (11.3 a.m.): Yesterday I gave notice of this motion, which is to enable the House to sit on Tuesday nights to debate the Address in Reply. I did so in the interests of the business of the House, as we have a lengthy legislative programme ahead of us. Similar motions have been moved in the past, and the Leader of the Opposition is well aware of the procedure that has been followed on those occasions to enable the House to sit on Tuesday nights so that the Address-in-Reply debate can be concluded as soon as possible and the legislative programme commenced. I take it that the Leader of the Opposition does not wish to prevent the House from sitting next Tuesday night on the Address-in-Reply debate or to delay the business of the House. It is up to him and other honourable members opposite to make up their minds whether the business of the House shall be either expedited or hindered.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba—Leader of the Opposition) (11.4 a.m.): I am sure that no-one who listened to the Premier's brief comments would support him on this motion. He has not advanced any good reason for the motion. I do not deny the Government the right to determine the days on which Parliament will sit or the hours during which it will sit on particular days. Nor do I deny it the right to determine whether or not the House will sit at night-time. As the Government has the numbers, any decision it arrives at will normally be endorsed by the House.

This motion, however, falls into a different category. Its passage means that we will sit at night-time to deal with the Address-in-Reply debate. The important point, however, is that it in fact reduces the number of hours available to honourable members to participate in the Address-in-Reply debate, which is an entirely different thing.

An Opposition Member: And it reduces the number of speakers.

Mr. HOUSTON: Naturally if the number of hours is reduced, the number of speakers must also be reduced.

I should like to examine the history of the motion that the Premier has moved.

Mr. Lane: You are only grandstanding.

Mr. HOUSTON: I suggest that Government members listen to what I have to say, because this motion touches the grassroots

THURSDAY, 23 AUGUST 1973

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

PAPERS

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Racing and Betting Act 1954–1972.

DAYS ALLOTTED TO ADDRESS IN REPLY

SESSIONAL ORDER

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

"That the House may, on the Tuesdays allotted to the debate on the Address in Reply, continue to sit until 10 o'clock

of the operations of Parliament. If they will be quiet and listen, I will tell them something that most of them are unaware of.

The subject matter under discussion was first raised at a Standing Orders Committee meeting on 9 August 1973. The Premier raised it, as well as several other matters not related to it, and that will be dealt with at another time. It was suggested that we should sit on Tuesday nights on the Address-in-Reply debate, and that each Tuesday be regarded as a double day. I indicated at the time that although night sittings remained a matter of Government policy, we would have to look into the implications of it, which we did.

At that meeting we also discussed how the proposal would be effected. It was pointed out that it would interfere with usual procedural times, as well as the hours available for speaking on the Address-in-Reply debate. Finally, the committee agreed—unanimously I believe—that the Opposition should be given an opportunity to examine the proposal at its caucus meeting, mainly because the Government parties had already had an opportunity to discuss the matter.

On 21 August I received a copy of the following minute—

“Premier’s Department

“Subject

“Parliamentary Procedures

“1. The proposal is—

(a) That the House sit on Tuesday nights until, say, 11.00 p.m.”

It then deals with other matters that are not related to this one, and continues—

“The above proposal has been examined by officers of this Department in consultation with the Clerk of the Parliament and the following basis for implementation might be considered—

1. That the House sit ‘Double Days’ on the Address in Reply, i.e., from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and from 4.00 p.m. until 10.00 p.m.”

At the end of the minute, the following appears—

“It is also considered that the above information should be referred to the Leader of the Opposition and to the other members of the Standing Orders Committee.”

The minute is signed by Keith Spann, Under Secretary, and dated 30 July 1973. It was submitted to the Premier and came before the Standing Orders Committee on 9 August, when it was agreed that the Opposition should have a chance to examine the proposal at its caucus meeting and that it would then be referred to a further meeting of the Standing Orders Committee. However, within a few hours of my receiving the minute, the Premier gave notice of this motion.

I shall now proceed to examine the effect of the proposal, but before doing so I ask: what is the purpose of a Standing Orders

Committee? It is the practice and custom that the Standing Orders Committee shall be the body to review Standing Orders. From time to time amendments to Standing Orders have been proposed and adopted by Parliament. This has been done either by amendments to the Standing Orders or by Sessional Orders. In every instance that I have been able to investigate, all recommendations made to the Parliament have been with the unanimous approval of the Standing Orders Committee. On this occasion, however, the proposal was referred to the Standing Orders Committee, which agreed to postpone making a decision to give the Opposition a chance to study it. This agreement was not honoured. In my earlier days on the Standing Orders Committee, the then Premier would not allow any matter to be brought before Parliament unless it had the full approval of that committee—not even a compromise.

This move by the Government displays contempt of the Standing Orders Committee, which surely has the right to look at this proposal. I am surprised that the Premier, the Treasurer, Mr. Speaker and the Chairman of Committees, who are the Government members on the Standing Orders Committee, have endorsed this move to bypass that committee.

This and other proposals were debated by the Standing Orders Committee, and the decisions arrived at last year and early this year were the result of debate, negotiation and, finally, agreement. To my knowledge, virtually every proposal made to Parliament in this regard has been the result of recommendation and compromise between the Government and the Opposition of the day, and this goes back beyond 1922.

Let us look at what the motion will do. First, it will reduce the total time of the Address-in-Reply debate by at least one hour on each double day, or up to 2½ hours this session. That means that at least four members will be denied the opportunity to speak. At present, seven days are allotted to the debate, and each day we have 4 hours 15 minutes of debating time. On a single day the debate runs from 12 noon till 1 p.m. and from 2.15 to 5.30 p.m., a total of 4 hours 15 minutes. Therefore 8 hours 30 minutes would be allowed on two single days. By comparison, on a double day, the debate runs from 12 noon till 1 p.m. and from 2.15 to 4 p.m., a total of 2 hours 45 minutes, and then from 4 till 6 p.m. and from 7.15 till 10 p.m., a total of 4 hours 45 minutes, making a grand total of 7 hours 30 minutes. In other words, the House would lose one hour of debating time.

So far this year the debate has lasted three days, and today will be the fourth day. That leaves three days for the debate. If this motion is passed, next Tuesday will be a double day and one hour will be lost. It has been customary for the first Appropriation Bill to be introduced before now. I

do not know when the Treasurer proposes to introduce it but I do not think I would be far wrong in suggesting that he will do so next Thursday, because there will be a break of one week following that day's sitting. After all, if public servants are to receive their pay, the Appropriation Bill will have to be introduced shortly.

Mr. R. E. Moore: That is pretty good guessing.

Mr. HOUSTON: I realise that the honourable member for Windsor might know. At any rate, as the honourable member has confirmed it, I shall say it will be introduced next Thursday.

Following the recess of a week, we will continue with the Address-in-Reply debate on a Tuesday.

The motion contains the Latin phrase "mutatis mutandis". I was not a very good student of Latin, but my colleagues tell me that it means, "with the necessary changes in points of detail". That means to say that on the Tuesday in question, it will be possible for a ruling to be given that the day finish at 4 p.m., and we will lose another 1½ hours' debating time. The end result is that we will lose 2½ hours of debating time, as I have already said.

Mr. Hinze: You are wasting time now.

Mr. HOUSTON: This is not Address-in-Reply debate time, as the honourable member for South Coast well knows.

Normally, seven members are able to speak on a single day so that, in seven days, 49 members as well as the mover and the seconder are able to speak. In other words, under the existing Standing Orders, only 51 out of the 82 members have an opportunity to speak to the Address in Reply. That means that 31 members are unable to participate in the Address-in-Reply debate, and under the proposal now before the House four fewer will have an opportunity to speak.

Standing Order 17 permits an increase in the time allowed for the Address-in-Reply debate. If the Government really wanted to reduce the time spent on this debate it could have said, "Give us the extra three days for Government business and we will allow more members to speak in the Address-in-Reply debate by providing an extra day." Standing Order 17 provides that the House may, by resolution, without reference to any committee, allot an additional day, or days, for the Address-in-Reply debate. The Premier, in introducing this motion, could have said, "We would like to sit double days during the remainder of the Address-in-Reply debate. We realise that an hour or two of time will be lost and that some members will be denied the opportunity to speak, but we would still like Tuesday to be a double day for this debate, and perhaps we could then look at

the matter again." What I have just said is not embodied in the motion now before the House.

Seven sitting days were allotted for the Address-in-Reply debate when the House consisted of 75 members. In 1950 the length of the debate was extended from four days. There are now 82 members in the House, seven more than there were previously, yet opportunities to take part in the Address-in-Reply debate have not been increased. Naturally members like to speak in that debate because it is one of the only two debates each year during which they can speak on matters of their own choice.

Mr. Porter: What about each Wednesday morning?

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member, with the tripe that he talks, excludes others from speaking on Wednesday mornings. The debate each Wednesday is on matters of public interest. Members also want to speak on matters concerning their own electorates. They may not be of great public interest, but they are of considerable importance to those who live in the electorates concerned. In any case, more often than not only five members have an opportunity to speak each Wednesday morning, and, if the opportunity to speak is given in rotation, it takes a long time for each of the 82 members to get his chance. Again, there are some who like to hear themselves talk, and they seek the call frequently.

The issues are twofold. In the first place, I believe that the move now suggested is not desirable. It reduces the time allowed for the debate, and a loss of even one hour denies some members the right to speak.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You are barking up the wrong tree.

Mr. HOUSTON: The motion takes away the speaking time of members of this House.

The more important point is the way in which the motion has been brought before the House. The Standing Orders Committee has been bypassed, and that is a principle that I believe has to be opposed. The Standing Orders Committee is composed only of members who hold responsible positions. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Standing Orders Committee consists of yourself, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Chairman of Committees, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the Opposition Whip. I should say that they would be the most senior members of this House. This committee is not a party-political body; it is not based on the principle of Government and Opposition. Surely that committee should be unbiased, and able to meet and decide what is best for the members of this House and the interests of Queensland rather than what is best for the Government.

Without labouring the point, I object not only to what the Premier has done but also to his method of approach. If he wanted

to take this step, surely he could have given me this minute within a couple of days of the meeting of 9 August. Members of the Standing Orders Committee could then have been called together and the motion at least would have been a recommendation of that committee. Even if it had been a majority recommendation, we would have had a chance to debate it and put forward other suggestions. However, the Standing Orders Committee has been denied that opportunity.

I am speaking against the motion for two reasons: the implications of how it will operate and what it will do to the House and, perhaps more important in principle, the bypassing of the most important committee of this Assembly.

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (11.21 a.m.): I have always recognised the responsibility of the Opposition in this Chamber. I sat in the Opposition myself for 10 years, so I know something of the responsibility of an Opposition not only to see that the business of the House is conducted on a fair basis but also to bring forward matters that arise from time to time. However, the issue raised by the Leader of the Opposition this morning is, in my opinion, largely a storm in a teacup.

I do not for one moment agree that we should bypass the Standing Orders Committee. It is true that this question was raised at a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee before the House went into recess for the Brisbane Exhibition. However, other issues of much greater significance were raised at that time.

At the beginning of this week, when we looked at the amount of legislation that will be brought before the Chamber during this session, we concluded that it would be fair, from all points of view, to bring this issue forward yesterday morning in the way we did.

It is true, as the Leader of the Opposition said, that the motion now before honourable members does take away one hour on the first double sitting day; but it is equally true that the motion says, "That the House may" do so and so, and I stress the word "may". The Government is fully aware that the Address-in-Reply debate will continue on to the Tuesday after the next recess; it is equally aware that it was not intended to sit on the basis of a double day on that day. The House could have continued till 6 p.m. or later on the Address-in-Reply debate, and an additional hour would thus have been provided on that day. It is quite clear that the motion is designed to enable the Address-in-Reply debate to be completed on the Tuesday after the next recess.

All I can say is that in this instance the Leader of the Opposition could have raised the matter with either the Premier or myself.

Mr. B. Wood: Why didn't you speak to him?

Sir GORDON CHALK: We gave the Leader of the Opposition a copy of the motion. If he reads it, he will see that it includes the word "may".

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Sir GORDON CHALK: As I said, the Address-in-Reply debate will have one day to run after the next recess, and I now indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that the House will sit till 6 p.m. on that day. I am sure that the whole matter could have been cleared up if he had spoken to the Premier or to me. I do not know what arrangements were made, but, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, I do know that the major issue debated by that committee at its recent meeting has been deferred and will be considered again by the committee later.

This is not an unprecedented motion. It has been passed in this Chamber on previous occasions. Candidly, those who are responsible for the conduct and the running of the House believed that what was proposed was in the best interests of the conduct of the business of the House and would enable honourable members to deal with legislation sooner.

The Address-in-Reply debate gives honourable members an opportunity to deal with any subject they wish to raise. They have other similar opportunities. The Appropriation Bill will be debated next Thursday, and that will be followed later by the Budget debate, so honourable members have ample opportunity to speak on matters of their choice. We wish to get on with legislative matters, and already there is important legislation before the Chamber.

I believe, as I have already said, that this is a storm in a teacup, and is something that could quite easily have been overcome.

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (11.26 a.m.): I move the following amendment:—

"That the figure '10', where it twice occurs, be omitted and the figure '11' inserted in lieu thereof."

It is quite a simple amendment. Certainly it would overcome the need for much of the chitchat that has been going back and forth across the Chamber this morning. Without going into the great mathematical detail of the Leader of the Opposition, if the motion was agreed to in its original form one hour's debating time would be lost. If we have a double day on Tuesday, the effect of my amendment would be that we would sit until 11 p.m., which would catch up that hour.

What honourable member would deny that he was here to carry out the business affairs of the State? What Government or Opposition member is not prepared to sit an extra hour on Tuesday evening next week? The amendment is a simple one and it solves the

problem. So far during the Address-in-Reply debate we have heard speakers from both sides suggesting that Parliament should sit for longer periods. They have said that the recesses are too long and the hours of sitting too short. What is wrong with sitting an extra hour next Tuesday night? Nothing whatever.

As the Treasurer has pointed out, a similar motion was submitted by the then Treasurer (Mr. Hiley) in 1965. On that occasion the motion was accepted without equivocation by the Opposition, and many members of the present Opposition were in the House at that time.

The Standing Orders Committee has received considerable mention this morning. Now that honourable members are to have secretaries in their electorates, consideration may have to be given to longer hours of sitting. It may be, for instance, that we will have to sit on Wednesday afternoons. Members will have secretaries in their electorates to help them carry out work that they may now be doing on Wednesday afternoons. As well, the various party meetings could be arranged at other times.

I do not wish to labour the point. This is a simple amendment and I commend it to honourable members.

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (11.29 a.m.): The honourable member's suggestion is very practical. It is constructive and would overcome the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition, who, as usual, has set out to disrupt the expeditious, efficient and fair running of this House.

We heard a lot from the Leader of the Opposition about the meeting of the Standing Orders Committee, but, as the Treasurer has said, there are much more important issues still to be considered by that committee. This was only one small issue that was discussed by it.

Mr. TUCKER: I rise to a point of order. I seek your ruling, Mr. Speaker. Is the Premier closing the debate by rising a second time?

Mr. SPEAKER: He is speaking to the amendment.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: As I have said, the amendment moved by the honourable member for Mackay is a practical one and overcomes the problem.

I move—

“That the question be now put.”

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has moved that the question be now put.

Mr. TUCKER: I rise to a point of order. We are not going to “cop” this.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If there are any more interjections, or if this unruly behaviour continues, I will deal with the honourable member responsible. The Premier is quite in order in moving that the question be put. It is provided for in Standing Orders, and the question will be decided by the House.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. What are we voting on—the motion or the amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: We are voting on the question, “That the question be now put.”

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: If the Opposition would shut up I could find out what is happening and decide what I am going to do. They ought to be ashamed of themselves. They ought to be on the street corners, where they belong. Are we voting for the motion or the amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: We are voting on the question “That the question be now put.”

Mr. AIKENS: As far as I am concerned, Opposition members can all go to hell with bells on. They are an absolute disgrace to any civilised community and I will not take part in any vote with them.

Question—That the question be now put (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's motion)—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 42

Ahern	Knox
Alison	Lane
Armstrong	Lee
Bird	Lickiss
Bjelke-Petersen	Low
Camm	McKechnie
Campbell	Miller
Casey	Moore, R. E.
Chalk	Muller
Chinchen	Murray
Crawford	Neal
Fletcher	Newbery
Frawley	Porter
Gunn	Rae
Herbert	Row
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Small
Hewitt, W. D.	Tomkins
Hinze	Tooth
Hodges	
Houghton	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hughes	Cory
Kaus	Edwards

NOES, 30

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

PAIRS:

Hartwig	Marginson
Hooper, K. W.	Moore, F. P.
Sullivan	Aiken

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the figures proposed to be omitted (Mr. Casey's amendment) stand part of the question—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 30

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

NOES, 43

Ahern	Knox
Aikens	Lane
Alison	Lee
Armstrong	Lickiss
Bird	Low
Bjelke-Petersen	McKechnie
Camm	Miller
Campbell	Moore, R. E.
Casey	Muller
Chalk	Murray
Cory	Neal
Crawford	Newbery
Edwards	Porter
Fletcher	Rae
Frawley	Row
Herbert	Small
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tomkins
Hewitt, W. D.	Tooth
Hinze	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hodges	Gunn
Houghton	Chinchen
Hughes	
Kaus	

PAIRS:

Hartwig	Marginson
Hooper, K. W.	Moore, F. P.
Sullivan	Aiken

Resolved in the negative.

Question—That the figures proposed to be inserted (Mr. Casey's amendment) be so inserted—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 44

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

NOES, 30

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

PAIRS:

Hartwig	Marginson
Sullivan	Aiken
Wharton	Moore, F. P.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the question, as amended, be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

In division—

Mr. Aikens interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member for Townsville South continues to interject, I will send him out of the Chamber under Standing Order 123A.

AYES, 44

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

NOES, 30

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

PAIRS:

Hartwig	Marginson
Sullivan	Aiken
Wharton	Moore, F. P.

Resolved in the affirmative.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—FOURTH
ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 21 August (see p. 233) on Mr. Frawley's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (12.3 p.m.): On 2 December last year the Australian Labor Party was elected to the national Treasury benches with a clear mandate. It was a mandate from the Australian people for change—a mandate for an end to the discriminations and inequalities our nation endured during 23 years of Liberal-Country Party administration. It was a mandate for responsible, respected leadership; a mandate for fact rather than fear and fiction in politics; a mandate for policies presented in greater detail than any placed before the Australian electorate at any previous Australian election. Since then the Whitlam A.L.P. Government has honoured its obligations and its undertakings.

I wish to refer briefly to the Federal Budget introduced in Canberra last Tuesday night. I believe it is one of the great Budgets of our times—a Budget designed to begin the long task of removing the economic inequalities and injustices of 23 years of Liberal-Country Party administration; a Budget designed to adjust the priorities of the nation; a Budget designed not to provoke and promote wars but to assist the people of Australia. Of course it has been attacked by groups such as the Chamber of Manufactures and the Chamber of Commerce. But, Mr. Speaker, would you not expect this from these fatted calves of the community? There would be something wrong with the Federal Budget if the selfish interests were not opposed to it.

Just imagine the concern of the Australian Labor Government if a Premier such as the one in this State endorsed the Budget! We would be wondering where we had gone wrong. In this instance the Premier's criticism is more predictable than usual because he has a personal economic axe to grind. I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the Budget provisions increases the tax on private companies, so in all reality we can take anything the Premier says against the Budget not with a grain of salt but with a ton of salt.

I challenge the critics of the Budget to come out and say that they oppose the 92 per cent increase in the outlay on education. I challenge them to say that they oppose pension increases with the guarantee of a further increase in the autumn. I challenge them to say that they oppose finance for urban transport and hospitals. Even more importantly, I challenge them to come out and say they support the Queen Street farmers who have bled the tax system of this country at the expense of the average citizen. The critics of the Labor Budget are the selfish sections that have grown fat and

comfortable on economic inequality and favouritism. Those people will always be opposed to the A.L.P. because the A.L.P. sees Australia not as small pockets of "fat cats" to be pampered with fat concessions, fat lurks and fat perks but as a nation. This is a good Budget and it will be accepted by all those who have the best interests of the Commonwealth of Australia at heart.

Ever since 2 December the A.L.P. Government has honoured its undertakings. A record 118 Bills were introduced during the autumn session compared with an average 53 under previous Liberal-Country Party Governments. Conscription has ended as has our involvement in the Vietnam war. Eighteen-year-olds have the vote they were denied by our anti-Labor opponents. Pensions have been tied to economic need rather than political opportunism. Throughout the nation there is a new sense of national pride. The groundwork has been laid for a new Australia—a new prosperous and exciting Australia. On 2 December the Australian people voted for this new Australia. They accepted and, indeed, welcomed the verdict that their vote brought down. To be fair even the outgoing Prime Minister and his Government accepted the decision, but, in the true spirit of democracy that prevails within the Queensland Branch of the Country Party, one man refused to accept the will of the people—the one man who would know less about majority public opinion than any other in the political life of Australia today. Of course, this man was the "19 per cent" Premier of this State, Mr. Johannes Bjelke-Petersen.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member takes great delight in referring to me as the "19 per cent Premier of Queensland", seeking to imply, of course, that we are in power by a percentage of 19 per cent. The honourable member has to realise that the majority of voters in this State—

Mr. BURNS: Where is the point of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member does not like to accept the fact that 51 per cent of the people of this State voted against the A.L.P.

Mr. BURNS: Accepting the point, 81 per cent of the people of this State voted against the Premier. The Premier is Queensland's greatest political liability. He has made our State and our people the subject of crude jokes, hysterical laughter and sly innuendoes. We are labelled as "hicks". Our businessmen, students, workers and professional groups are regarded as second class. We have become a branch-manager's State and our young men and women are denied their rightful positions at the top of their fields throughout Australia and the world.

This is because we have a comic, arch-conservative spokesman who portrays us in a worse light than the worst South American banana republic. A \$5,000 imported U.S. teleprompter and a politically misused Public Relations Bureau, with an additional range of highly paid speech-writers, make-up women, cameramen and journalists, cannot hide his outlandish political attitude. During the last eight months his unfortunate denigration of Queensland has continued with a torrent of abuse and exaggerated attacks on the Federal Australian Government.

Within 48 hours of 2 December, before the Whitlam Government was even sworn in, the Premier had declared, "We will not co-operate with the new Federal Government. The people of Australia have made a mistake." At the same time he said that he did not think that the Whitlam Government would honour its promises. Fancy this Government talking of promises! This snap post-election reaction was predictable from a political leader who does not understand the definition of a fair, democratic election; from a minority Premier who is propped up in office without a mandate and on a gerrymandered set of electoral boundaries.

Since those early days of December his vendetta against the Federal Government has inflamed to the point where it brinks on political paranoia. In this isolationist, one-man campaign against Canberra, we have found him going to Her Majesty the Queen, the British Prime Minister and the United States Government in Washington. In fact, he has even gone to Mickey Mouse in Disneyland. Since 2 December the Premier's attitude has been one of stubborn non-co-operation—of stubborn, conceived confrontation—with Canberra. Instead of encouraging liaison with a Government that has declared its intention to assist the States, he has created an artificial peanut-curtain between Queensland and the remainder of Australia; an artificial curtain of his own party-political making; an artificial curtain that has made us a joke in other States and is unwanted by the majority of people in Queensland.

Mr. HOUGHTON: I rise to a point of order. Is it right that honourable members in this House should be permitted to read speeches?

Mr. BURNS: I am reading from copious notes, Mr. Speaker, as I heard someone say yesterday.

On 30 November, two days before the Federal election, he referred to the present Prime Minister as a legal lout. Yet the Premier squeals when someone criticises him. On 7 February he referred to the Prime Minister as a feudal lord. The Premier said that while he was on his visit to the Torres Strait islands a snake had been named after Mr. Whitlam. He was the last of the State Premiers to confer with the new Prime Minister. Indeed, the Premier, who in his

propaganda statements found so much wrong with the Prime Minister, actually dodged or ignored opportunities to meet the new national leader to discuss their differences. On 9 December, seven days after the election, the Premier said that there was no point in discussing the Australia-Papua New Guinea boundary with Mr. Whitlam, in spite of the fact that the Prime Minister encouraged such a meeting between them. To use the Premier's own divine words, "I have been there and know the position."

On 20 February the Premier called on the new Federal Government to prevent a war between the Torres Strait islands and Papua New Guinea. If anyone could have started a war in the islands, it was the Premier with his racist attitude.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is being carried away by his own emotions. I deny that I am a racist. The fact that I received the majority of votes cast by Aborigines at Cherbourg proves their appreciation of my close association with them over a long period of time.

Mr. Wallis-Smith interjected.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The honourable member for Cook is fully aware of the fact that the majority of the people of the Torres Strait islands support me and not him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Lytton to accept the Premier's denial that he is a racist.

Mr. BURNS: I will accept the denial, but I remind the Premier that both Mr. Gorton and Mr. McMahon have said that he discriminated against the Aborigines.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Lytton is just not going to get away with the claptrap that he is going on with. He has said that the previous Prime Minister claimed we discriminated against the Aborigines. The honourable member for Lytton knows that legislation introduced, and decisions arrived at, by this Government are based on the wishes, desires and directions of the Aboriginal councils, which are elected by the Aborigines and the Torres Strait Islanders.

Mr. BURNS: The Professor of law at the University of New South Wales, Professor G. Netheim, made the following comment about the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Acts—

"There can be no justification in 1972 for continuing with only minor modifications—a pattern of Law and Administration which still so clearly displays its roots in a 19th Century philosophy of blanket paternalistic control."

He spoke of widespread infringements of fundamental human rights, and proved the point that I have made.

When Federal Labor Ministers visited China, the Premier cried "Communists!" But when Mr. Snedden, President Nixon and Australian business leaders, such as Sir Ian McLennan, made similar visits, the Premier remained unusually silent.

When the Premier was prepared recently to vanish overseas for five weeks at Queenslanders' expense, he described himself as an ambassador for free-enterprise Australia. I remind those Government members who kick the Communist can that, at the time when the Premier was making his attacks upon the Federal Labor Ministers, Mr. Snedden was visiting Peking and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Lynch, was in Moscow. The Premier even took with him his Press secretary and cameraman, again at our expense, to send back convenient reports of his wanderings. He was regarded internationally as such small fry that he did not warrant the usual media coverage.

I ask: Is this the pattern of behaviour that we in Queensland expect from a man who pretends to be the political leader of our State? I think not.

If the Premier were intent simply on making himself the political giggle of Australia, he had already achieved this dubious political distinction long before the Federal Labor Government took office. All the Premier could do was to consolidate the personal position that he already held and to which he had few challenges except possibly those from his own Cabinet Ministers.

The real tragedy is that the Premier's antics are seriously damaging Queensland's reputation in other States. He is earning for us the image that Queensland is some sort of "hick" State or a vast northern banana republic. Thanks to the Premier, Queensland now presents the image of a State that is living in the colonialist past.

Until recently, Queensland had a proud reputation throughout the nation. However, nowadays, in many parts of Australia people laugh when they hear mention of Queensland. This State is the butt of jokes and the central theme of cartoons. This is the unwanted national reward that Queensland has inherited from "Bjelke-Petersenism".

In the National Press Club in Canberra the Premier even threatened secession from the Commonwealth of Australia. When asked if he was joking, he replied, "No, I am serious." I am told that the journalists at the club luncheon were doubled up with laughter, and I do not blame them. They claim the Premier's performance was the greatest comedy they had seen in Canberra since the former Prime Minister, Mr. McMahon, entertained them with his visions of a new Liberal Australia.

In case anyone has any doubts about national reaction towards the Premier's secession threat, I shall read certain comments and quotations. "The Australian", in

an editorial the next day that was headed, "We are Australians, Mr. Premier" referred to his tirade of vituperation in the past months and made the point that journalists in other States "were clearly treating him as a kind of endearing eccentric." In referring to the Premier's obvious concern, the view was expressed "that the threats existed only in the dark corners of the Premier's mind". "The Australian" pointed out that these activities really harmed Queensland's image. The Liberal-Country Party-slanted "Courier-Mail" referred in an editorial to "Premier-grade nonsense". Of the ideas of secession of the Premier, the Country Party president and Liberal politicians, it said—

"Just mentioning it has made Mr. Bjelke-Petersen and Queensland look foolish to the rest of Australia."

It added—

"Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's remarks sound as if they came out of South Carolina in 1860, rather than an Australian State in 1973."

The "National Sunday Telegraph" spoke of "Premier Bjelke-Petersen's nonsensical threats." The "Sun Herald" said "The Premier's statement had met with widespread derision." It was a joke, but the joke was on all Queenslanders. We have paid, and will pay, for what a Liberal executive member, Mr. Bruce Bishop, calls the "Premier's hysterical criticisms." Is it any wonder that "Sunday Sun" published an editorial entitled, "That hick brand sure sticks with us."

The over-all result of these startling outbursts by Government members was that Queensland became a national laughing stock, and for that we must all hang our heads in shame.

What does secession mean? It would divide our nation like the continent of Europe has been divided, with Australian against Australian and brother against brother, and show the world that, whatever the people of this nation decide, peaceful, democratic elections will not be tolerated or accepted by the Liberal-Country Party dictators of Queensland. We would need our own Army, Navy, Air Force and Customs Department. We would need passports and visas to visit Tweed Heads. Our Premier would not have a place on which to land his personal toy, his little plane, because the airports are under the Department of Civil Aviation and Commonwealth controlled. We would pay 10 times our current taxes if the Premier had his way. The most unfortunate result would be that the Premier would then speak for us in the councils of the world. His outlandish, weird, distorted views would be Queensland's views. We would be laughed at, derided, mocked, jeered and made the butt of the world's jokes. All of this so that the Premier's personal power and that of our State politicians and the Premier's views on what we should do with our vote would be preserved.

No doubt, today the Premier prefers to forget his secession statement. Perhaps he claims he was misreported—misreported by the entire Canberra Press gallery. But the fact is that this appearance of the State's political leader had one national result—that this State, and the people living here, were subjected to unnecessary ridicule and scorn throughout Australia.

The Premier has become completely obsessed with his vitriolic campaign against the Federal Labor Government. Administration in Queensland has come to a virtual halt while he parades around the world like some kind of medieval crusader spouting views that would be considered juvenile in one of the pre-school centres the Government promised to establish over 15 months ago.

Let me outline some of the features of this administration. Because of this party-political vendetta of the Premier, Queensland cannot benefit from the Commonwealth's cheap land scheme, even though it is supported by the Country Party Lands Minister in the State Government. Because of this party-political vendetta our Aboriginals cannot gain the advantage of Commonwealth control even though, again, that is reportedly favoured by the Queensland Minister in charge of Aboriginals, and was favoured by all States in a referendum. The Government now cannot honour the promise it made in the election campaign to appoint an ombudsman. The Premier denied that the idea has been scrapped and said that Queensland will get one ultimately. If he runs true to form, "ultimately" means never. The Government cannot honour its promise to establish a Brisbane municipal transport authority. Recently in this House the Transport Minister tried to blame the Federal Labor Government for its failure in this field even though it was not elected at the time the promise was made. This Government, 15 months ago, before the State election, promised the urgent electrification of the Brisbane suburban rail system. Immediately the votes were counted, the Premier announced that the project had a low priority.

The Government has a long list of broken promises like those of the former Liberal-Country Party Government in the Federal sphere which as far back as 1949 promised to put value back in the £. In 1957 this Government promised to introduce a Bill of Rights, and later, in 1959, it promised that we would get an art gallery, which we will not get till 1978. In 1969 the Premier promised an inquiry into rail freights, but in the last election all we got was a promise to remove Schedule IIA. In 1969 the Premier said that we would have no Sunday drinking, but we had it within 12 months. In 1969 he said that he would protect the Barrier Reef, but 12 months later he was sending Japex in to drill. In the Albert by-election in 1970 he promised a feasibility study into rebuilding the Gold Coast railway that his Government was instrumental in digging up. In 1972 the

Liberal candidate for that area was again promising this railway line. Yet with this history of broken promises the Premier has the audacity to question the capacity of the Whitlam Government to honour its undertakings. And before it was even sworn in!

In its 16 years of office, the Government has not built an inch of new railway line in Brisbane. It abandoned plans for the electrification of Brisbane's suburban rail system at a time when they were within reach of completion. It has not started construction of one new hospital in Brisbane. It has presided over a situation which has seen police morale drop to an all-time low and crime rise to an all-time high.

It complains of Federal Government inactivity on inflation, but refuses to use its own powers of price justification, yet it demands that workers must argue before a court to justify wage increases. In fact, the Government welcomes price increases and even suggests that companies increase them. In "The Australian" of 30 June this year we find this article—

" 'Increase Prices to beat Taxes' says Premier. The Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) last night gave Queensland companies his approval to raise prices."

And he talks about action on inflation! If the Premier believes in State rights—and the States have the power to control prices—we can infer from that statement that we can expect nothing at all from the Government on inflation. One Country Party vice-president, with a typical Liberal-Country Party approach to economic problems, suggested last year, without any opposition from the Government, that we should have longer hours and lower wages for workers.

This Government cannot make a decision on a casino or a proposed new powerhouse and is paralysed by inquiries into its own maladministration. According to the Minister for Health, a two-year inquiry is being held into our public hospital system. The previous hospital inquiry lasted a couple of hours and resulted in a senior public servant being made a public scapegoat to save the Minister. Two inquiries are being held—one by the Minister for Works and Housing and one by the Minister for Justice—into questioning by police of women jurors. This year there have been over 40 gaol escapes and I presume inquiries will be held into all of them. In fact, the gaol administration has reached the point where, a little more than a week ago, it released the wrong prisoner, although one was white and the other was coloured. There will be a belated inquiry into the cost of financing the powerhouse. Obviously, until just over a week ago, the Government was prepared to determine a site for the powerhouse even though it had not investigated the cost involved. All of these inquiries are secret,

the hearings are secret and the results are secret. We do not hear any recommendation or see any sign of action.

This Government has built up a ministerial propaganda machine which, in salaries alone, costs more than \$150,000 a year. With the other costs involved, the annual expenditure in this field would be at least \$300,000. Yet with the creation of this ministerial—or should I say party-political—information machine, there is more secrecy in the Government than ever before. Each Minister has his own press secretary, and the Premier has two. Yet this same Government refuses to allow even one press officer for the entire 33 members of the Labor opposition, which represents more than 48 per cent of the people in Queensland. I lay no blame on the journalists employed, but the ministerial propaganda machine in this State is being used as a weapon to suppress instead of provide information.

Recently the Premier travelled abroad with his own press secretary and television cameraman whose job was to cable, freight and telephone back conveniently concocted versions of the Premier's international wanderings. This was done at our expense and the cost must have been considerable. What about the Premier's cry to reduce unnecessary expenditure to stop inflation!

These ministerial secretaries write ministerial speeches and statements and, on occasions, their answers. I am told reliably that, regularly, Mr. Callaghan even holds mock question-and-answer sessions with the Premier in his office. Mr. Callaghan fires the questions and the Premier tries to come up with the answers. I suggest that, if the Premier's performance is as good in his office as it is in Parliament, the Government should sell the episodes to the A.B.C. as a sequel to "Steptoe and Son".

The secrecy within the Government has reached the ridiculous point where Opposition members are criticised for revealing information which should be available in the public interest. When the Labor Opposition informed the Queensland people of some of the problems in our hospitals, the Minister for Health alleged that I had some kind of espionage ring within the system. Apparently, in his eyes, it is fine to have a problem in our hospitals as long as the people do not know about it.

The Premier and the Government represent a tragic example of political contradiction. In "The Australian" last Saturday the Premier stated the need to get out and consult with the people. Presumably he tries to justify the Government aircraft on this ground. At the same time he enforces strict air-travel restrictions on all members of the Opposition, including the Leader and Deputy Leader, which preclude them from engaging in the very on-the-spot discussions and consultations that the Premier hypocritically deems necessary.

We have a Parliament that rarely meets; a Parliament that adjourns for eight months every time there is an election; a Parliament that adjourns every year for the Royal National Show, whilst the remainder of the people of Brisbane receive only one day's holiday for the same purpose. With this precedent, I suppose we can look forward to the day when Parliament adjourns for the Melbourne Cup, or a visit by some American rock-and-roll singer!

We have pollution laws that are either inadequate or not enforced, or both. In fact, we even have a Premier who a fortnight ago tried to justify giving inaccurate information to Parliament by claiming that he had forgotten that he held a quarter share in his own name in a mining lease. We are asked to believe that he forgot that, just as a housewife going to the shop might understandably forget to buy a tin of marmalade.

We have outdated Standing Orders in this Parliament that stifle debate instead of encouraging it. For a start, I believe that question time should be immediately overhauled. There is no sense in the present time-wasting system under which members read out questions upon notice one day and Ministers read out the answers the next. Surely these questions could be simply tabled one day, and the answers tabled the next. This method would save time, and create new opportunities every sitting day for questions without notice. Probably time would even be saved if questions upon notice became a Parliamentary formality, and question time was restricted to questions without notice. These are things that we should be looking at.

There should be more opportunities for urgency debates and private members' Bills. When the kids were marching in the streets and demonstrating against war and other things a few years ago, we told them to follow the democratic process. When a person enters this House, he finds that the democratic process does not work. Only this morning we saw the gag applied and applied so that the opportunities of back-bench members to enter the debate were restricted.

Certainly there should be an end to the shocking denial of democracy witnessed a fortnight ago when legislation was introduced, debated without being seen, and gagged through Parliament without consideration. That shocking piece of legislation represents a serious slur on the Australian legal system and the High Court of Australia. It was not urgent, and it was not necessary. It was shovelled through Parliament in an undemocratic manner to pander to the ego of a man who insists upon playing a party-political game of "cops and robbers" with the Federal Government. As I said, that Bill was a slur on the High Court of Australia. What it said in effect was that in the eyes of the Premier and his Government the High Court of Australia was not

competent to deal with Australian legal matters; that, instead, they must be transported 12,000 miles away to London, at great expense, to a handful of faceless British judges for final decision.

I can understand the Premier's own personal wariness of the High Court of Australia. He once tested the legal capacity of a certain judge of this court, to his personal undoing. This judge obviously summed up the Premier very quickly and ruled accordingly, throwing in such phrases as "circumvention of departmental practices" for good measure. Yes, I can understand the Premier's personal apprehension of the High Court of Australia, but it is regrettable that other Government members are prepared to join with him, as they did a fortnight ago, in legislative denigration of Australia's highest judicial body.

The Premier's publicity agents, paid for by all Queenslanders, parade him as a defender of State rights. That most certainly is a piece of propaganda. He is not a supporter of the rights of the average Queenslanders. The political argument that interests Queenslanders is not about State rights—or, should I say, politicians' rights and powers. The real argument is about the setting up of a workable health service, a modern transport system, controlling inflation and solving the problems of workers, farmers and small businessmen. The people are concerned with housing problems, and giving their kids an education equal to that provided in other States. They are interested in controlling pollution, and reducing the number of deaths and injuries on the roads.

After 16 years of Country-Liberal Government, with all these and other major problems, the Government was still concerned, in its first major Bill in this session, with maintaining archaic forms of State authority rather than getting on with projects of benefit to the State and its citizens. I do not believe that Queenslanders care whether hospitals, houses, schools and roads are built by the Australian Government, the Queensland Government or local authorities. They just want the best possible service.

When we speak of State rights, the key consideration must be the community interests of the average Queenslanders. It must be clear that Commonwealth-State uniformity or co-operation does not represent an intrusion into State rights. No-one can deny that the Premier, from 2 December, has refused to co-operate with the national Government. When the Premier refers to State rights, he is usually referring to the Premier's, or politicians', rights. He refers to the type of State rights that would allow a Government to sell out Queensland's rich mineral assets for 5c a ton till the year 2010. He refers to the kind of State rights that would allow him, with only 19 per cent of the vote, to control the destiny of the other 81 per cent and make a laughing stock of it.

Where Commonwealth-State co-operation or uniformity means more economic administration, with better results or conditions for the man in the street and his family, it should be encouraged. Certainly the vague term "State rights" should not be used to prop up bad State Government and Cabinet perks. Certainly it should not be used to preserve ridiculous interstate differences in laws and standards when those differences are to the disadvantage of Queensland and Queenslanders.

It is crazy that we have national uniformity in universities and institutes of technology but different systems in primary and secondary education. It is crazy when children are forced to virtually revise their educational outlook simply because their parents are transferred from one State to another. It is crazy that we have laws for various offences that carry one penalty in Queensland and another in other States. It is crazy that speed limits, loads and penalties vary from State to State at artificial boundaries drawn up by the British Colonial Office staff in the 1850's, and that we have different rail gauges from State to State.

Why should an Australian, just because he lives on one side of an imaginary line in Coolangatta or Goondiwindi, be different to another Australian on the other side of the same imaginary line?

It is wrong that Queensland should be denied the benefits of a co-operative, co-ordinated Government simply because of a scare campaign concocted around State rights and so-called centralism. What Mr. Bjelke-Petersen wants is a system of national administration in which the Commonwealth is subservient to his 19 per cent Government; a system in which a citizen of our State is a Queenslanders first and foremost and an Australian only as an afterthought; a system in which the States dictate to the Commonwealth and the national Parliament is merely a rubber stamp for a set of State Premiers protected by their own particular brands of Premier's rights. This type of anti-centralist, State-separationist thinking does not take into account the thinking of the average Queensland citizen. It is the protective propaganda cloak for a very small political elite, a small political elite that holds power in Queensland today because of a denial of the democratic basis of fair and just elections.

In a few short months the Whitlam Federal Government has shown more inclination towards assistance to State and local government than any other Federal Government in our history—assistance that is welcomed by Liberal and Country Party councils and aldermen and sought by some Queensland Government Ministers. For party-political reasons, Premiers such as Mr. Bjelke-Petersen prefer to misrepresent this assistance, this willingness to co-operate, as centralist interference in State rights.

Why shouldn't the Commonwealth assist primary and secondary education if Queensland children benefit as a result? Why shouldn't the Commonwealth, in conjunction with the States, help in the field of housing if it makes it easier and cheaper for families to own their own home and land? Why shouldn't the Commonwealth expect co-operation from the States on price justification if it eases living costs and helps cure the present inflation? Why shouldn't the Commonwealth be interested in seeing that Queenslanders—not only the Queenslanders of today but those of tomorrow—receive a fair reward for their own State's mineral wealth? Why shouldn't the Commonwealth be interested in establishing diplomatic ties that are considered the norm in most other countries of the world, diplomatic ties that allowed the State of Queensland to make major sales of wheat and sugar to China? Why shouldn't the Commonwealth want to provide direct financial help to local authorities, which deal with many of the day-to-day, bread-and-butter aspects of community life and political administration?

Of course, when we talk of this help to local government, we are really referring to better transport, better roads, sewerage, drainage and relief of flooding. This is where the Commonwealth wants to assist and is what Premiers such as Mr. Bjelke-Petersen condemn as interference in State rights.

Why shouldn't the Commonwealth assist our hospitals when the added finance will mean better conditions and services in these hospitals? When Commonwealth assistance and co-operation aids the economic, community and industrial life of Queenslanders, it should be encouraged, not cast aside as centralist interference because the Government is of a different political colour to the minority one presided over by Mr. Bjelke-Petersen in Queensland. The only reason for Mr. Bjelke-Petersen's propaganda expressions—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! When the honourable member is referring to the Premier, he must not refer to him by name. He must refer to him as the Honourable the Premier. The honourable member has been here long enough to know that.

Mr. BURNS: The only reason for the Premier's, Mr. Johannes Bjelke-Petersen's, outrage is the fact that the Federal Government in Canberra is now a Labor one. He resents the type of assistance from Canberra today that he would have welcomed if the former Liberal-Country Party Government had shown the interest and initiative to offer it.

Mr. K. J. Hooper interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member for Archerfield that he may not interject from other than his own place in the Chamber.

Mr. BURNS: In other words, the Premier is prepared to place the interests of the Queensland citizen second to his own desire to wage a senseless party-political conflict against the national Government. Our interests, as both Queenslanders and Australians, are best served when our elected representatives at all tiers of government are able to co-operate in sensible administration. Attempts to achieve this type of national co-operation should not be misinterpreted as an invasion of State rights or moves to create centralism at the expense of the States. No-one wants centralist domination with a destruction of Queensland's rights; but, likewise, no-one—with the exception of Mr. Bjelke-Petersen—has ever suggested it.

Let me now turn briefly to the Country Party, a party that its own Federal Leader has said must change or die. The State Country Party secretary has said that the Country Party should sponsor television programmes. He has some excellent material on the Government benches to play with. The Premier being questioned about his oil shares and leases should be titled "I've Got a Secret". A Cabinet-meeting spectacular could run under the title "Dad's Army".

The Gold Coast Country Party pair could be "Batman and Robin" or, as was suggested to me, "Fatman and Dobbin". The Minister for Local Government could star in his own show. Instead of "On the Buses" it could be called "On the Taxis". For the Mines Minister negotiating cheap coal deals with Japanese buyers an apt title would be, "The Price is Right". The saga of the battle for the Liberal leadership would be called "Homicide". Would honourable members need any prompting to choose Government stars for such shows as "Make Room for Grandaddy", "Mission Impossible", "Till Death us do Part", "Dr. Who" and "No. 96".

I could go on and on. Let me tell honourable members of the approved anthem for Queensland after the Country-Liberal Government secedes. Sung by a joint-party Caucus in full jackboot uniform, we will have not "I like Aeroplane Jelly" but "We love Aeroplane Bjelke".

What a session this has been! We have had the Minister for Justice running for leadership, the Treasurer running for retirement, the Premier running for cover and the honourable member for Chatsworth running for Cabinet. About the only thing none of them is doing is running the affairs of the State.

Easily the most amusing contribution to this debate came last Tuesday from the Minister for Justice and not-so-young pretender to the Liberal throne in this State. He did not tell us how under his ministerial guidance we have reached that new judicial pinnacle where women jurors are questioned by police before they sit on trials. He did not tell us how under his able supervision of the Transport Department the State's railways managed to return new record losses

each year. In fact, he did not tell us anything whatever about the Government. He kicked the old red can as his major shot in his campaign for Liberal leadership. Everyone knows that he can scarcely wait for Sir Gordon Chalk to retire so that he can make his own leadership bid in the Liberal Party. He is the arch-conspirator in this Parliament—the arch-intriguer. All his colleagues know about him. It is common talk among Pressmen. He is intent on easing Sir Gordon—and not too gently, if necessary—into retirement. I feel sorry for Sir Gordon. He has so many holes in his back from the Minister for Justice that sometimes he must feel like a second-hand dart board. The Minister for Justice has become known in the lobbies as “Knoxie the Knife”. That is how he is now referred to by those who really know him. I say no more other than to warn Sir Gordon to keep one eye over his shoulder. If the Premier doesn’t get him, “the Knife” will.

For 30 years all Liberal-Country Party campaigns have been based on fear. Today the backroom controllers of the Government have dreamed up centralism as a new scare word, but they are on shaky ground. Whilst opposing national centralism, they practice State centralism. For example, not one Queenslander living north of a line from Bowen to the Northern Territory border is represented in the Country Party-dominated Cabinet. We have a Speaker from North Queensland only because of a rank-and-file parliamentary revolution which overthrew the Premier’s personal, near-city, seaside-resort nominee.

After 16 years of a Country Party-dominated State Government, not one ministerial department has shifted its headquarters from Brisbane’s city lights. When Government members try to talk decentralisation, they speak of mineral development as if they themselves had placed the minerals in country areas. They support and propagate centralist, semi-socialist marketing boards. Their regional-planning organisation will be dominated by the Brisbane-based Co-ordinator-General’s Department. Their inquiry into the status of women will be based in Brisbane. When the Country Party appointed a secretary, it chose a Brisbane-based school-teacher. The Government is now centralising health services and forcing country people to travel to Brisbane for treatment. Forty-five Charters Towers patients, with their forced removal to Brisbane, have just had an example of health centralism.

Let us look at some of the Liberal-Country Party attitudes. The Young Liberals Fifth National Convention supported a proposal to renounce British sovereignty and for Australia to become a republic. That was announced by Greg Vickery, a Queenslander. The Young Liberals National Convention decided to cancel the payment of child

endowment after the fourth child—a blatant attack on the larger families, making it harder for them to live.

In June, 1973, when the State Country Party Lands Minister announced a scheme for cheaper land, the Country Party president said it was against the Country Party’s philosophy to support cheap land schemes.

The Fisher area conference of the Liberal Party sought a ban on statements by Liberal State and Federal M.P.’s. which were not approved by party executives. The Country Party Queensland Central Council said that fluoridation should be mandatory in Queensland. Where is the freedom of choice there? There can be a poll about beer, but not about fluoride.

The Minister for Mines (Mr. Camm) said he supported a 35-hour week. The same Minister welcomed the appointment of a trade delegation to China at the same time as the Premier was attacking any connection with China.

On censorship, the State Liberal Convention voted to remove all censorship on books. It decided that homosexuality laws should be repealed. Yet Government member after Government member jumps up in this Parliament and, in an effort to run away from his party’s views, spouts his own personal opinions.

Mr. Porter: You don’t understand.

Mr. BURNS: Oh, yes we do. Every time the honourable member rises in this Chamber he tries to distort the Labor Party’s policy. Every time he speaks, he picks out some small item of a convention agenda that has been defeated—probably one that has been defeated time and again. He misconstrues it and spews it out in this Parliament, and we have to accept it.

I have just started to go through some Liberal-Country Party agendas, and I have found some remarkable things. In Mentone, Victoria, these people wanted to bring in conscription of 18-year-old girls at a time when the Governor of New South Wales, a V.C. winner, was against conscription. Honourable members opposite supported conscription in those days. They also supported Mr. Billy McMahon as a State-rights Prime Minister who, since the election of the Labor Government, has said there were three things that he supported and that he wished his Liberal Government had done. The first was to increase social services. The second was the Karmel Report. He said it was an excellent report and he wished that his Government had initiated it. Yet honourable members opposite have attacked it daily in this Parliament. Mr. McMahon said he had hopes that the Liberal Party would help local government, but already the Treasurer of this Government has said, “If local government gets any extra money from the Federal Government, we will take it back.” The Treasurer has already had a fight with Mr. McIlwain and Mr. Bishop on the Gold

Coast, who opposed him in his effort to rig the system and stop Federal aid reaching the people concerned.

Honourable members opposite constantly attack Australia's recognition of China, but the chairman of the Sugar Board said that the 50,000-ton sale of sugar to China was a direct result of the establishment of diplomatic relations with that country. We can tell honourable members opposite many things about their own policies. They have so much to hide. Never has any member on the Government side said one word to oppose the 29 per cent increase in doctors' fees. They support it, but they do nothing about the wages of the staff doctors in hospitals, who are working for \$4,000 and \$5,000 a year less than their confreres in the other States receive. There has not been one word of opposition to that type of control from Government members.

I know Liberal members of this Parliament who, in drawing a comparison between doctor's fees and the charges of television repair men, have talked about doctors' patients as though they were television sets. But let me make the point that we never see 36 television sets sitting in a waiting-room waiting to be fixed. As well, anyone who does not want his television set fixed does not have to take it to the repair man; but anyone in ill-health needs the doctor's support. By their silence honourable members opposite have endorsed and supported the money-grabbing attitude of doctors, 30 of whom in Queensland have said, "We will not service pensioner patients." Honourable members opposite have accepted the situation where, if someone goes to a doctor to have a boil lanced, he pays \$4.50 to visit him and another \$4 or \$5 to have the boil lanced. They have accepted double charges. They have run away from these issues. They have never had the guts to face up to them.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (12.43 p.m.): One would like to be able to comment usefully on the speech of the honourable member for Lytton, but all he does, of course, is deliver a gattling-gun tirade of abuse. He seems quite determined to reduce this House to the level of the steps of the Brisbane Trades Hall and I would say that he has demonstrated, by his vitriolic and personal abuse of the Premier, that he has no argument at all to justify a case. In fact, it is quite obvious that the Premier's leadership has deeply hurt him and his Federal colleagues. The honourable gentleman, having emptied his tin of garbage, now leaves the Chamber. I think it is the oldest and dirtiest trick in the political book to use character assassination instead of argument.

Mr. Wright: What did you use when talking about the unions?

Mr. PORTER: The honourable gentleman refers to what I said about the unions. I repeat the invitation I gave to him: get my speech, go through it piece by piece and tell me where I am wrong. I extend him that open invitation.

What we had from the honourable member for Lytton was not debate; it was garbage—and it was dirty, smelly garbage. It is a great trick to pick from newspapers a few quotations written by favoured Left-wing journalists of the Labor Party. He mentioned something "The Australian" said about the Premier, but he very carefully avoided saying what the same favoured newspaper had to say in its editorial about his own Prime Minister after his appearance on television with Mr. Frost. If the honourable member is to be the A.L.P. State future leader, as is touted, then all I can say is "Hallelujah!" As far as we are concerned, the sooner the better because he will be a pushover.

In the first speech I made in this House in 1966 I pointed to the parlous state of the federal system. I said then that it was dying because the central Government had too much power; we had a High Court that was predisposed to interpret constitutional matters in its favour; and we had State Governments of all political colours that had long been prepared to let the Federal Government have the unpopular role of tax collector. The events of recent years have changed the minds of many people on this. I am not excusing the faults of omission and commission of the past, but when Mr. Gorton became Prime Minister there was a cause for sudden and violent re-thinking on the situation, and all of us have become aware that in this much more than mere academic argument is involved.

It is not simply a question of who controls what or what are the merits of conflicting ambitions of different political groups. The Australian people have been made to realise, especially by recent events since 2 December, that deep, far-reaching considerations are involved. This is not just a struggle for personal power or a question of preserving the role of State politicians like ourselves. Rather it is a question of democracy or autocracy, freedom or regimentation, authoritarianism or diversity in thought and action.

It was interesting to hear the honourable member for Lytton plead that all men should be the same and not different. I say, "Thank God for the differences in people!" I will do all that I can to maintain those differences.

The problem we face is that of believing either that all progress can come only from the elite, all-powerful few at the top, as in Russia and other places, or that there are extraordinary possibilities in very ordinary people. I hold the latter conviction very deeply. I believe that the best ideas can come only from the men at the bottom and filter through to the few at the top.

They certainly cannot come from the top and be handed down as edicts and decrees to be obeyed, "or else...!"

Many of us who at first believed that the socialist shackles could not and would not be fastened on us in Australia are now beginning to recognise with horror and dismay that they can be. I feel that I have been through all this previously, because what was done in Mr. Chifley's bank nationalisation plans in 1949 to frighten the people out of their wits is being done again in Mr. Whitlam's quite crass attempts to swoop Australia into a centralist society as well as to move us away from our traditional friends and allies and, instead, to orbit with Communist and coloured countries.

The time for fond delusion has gone. It is essential that all of us realise that Labor is socialist and is determined to make Australia a fully regimented society. There are no half measures about it; Labor will go the whole hog. Its ideas of a republic, a viceroy and the elimination of the States will sweep the basic freedoms that are presently guaranteed by the Constitution into the gutters of history.

That is what the States' actions on appeals to the Privy Council are designed to prevent. They were not based on an academic argument to retain archaic vestiges of colonialism. Their move was a necessary one to block the unprincipled back-door attempt to sweep aside the Constitution, obliterate the States' reserve powers and provide for the introduction of monolithic and bureaucratic control, without one word of reference to the Australian people.

It is not very long ago that the A.L.P. was quite coy about admitting that it was socialist. Previously when I claimed that it was, members of the Opposition used to become quite indignant and say, "We are not socialists. We believe in social welfare." But pretty terms like "democratic socialism" and "social welfare" are not used today. The socialist tiger is now out of its cage, licking its chops with hunger and impatience and preparing to pounce and kill.

Mr. Armstrong: It's sharpening its teeth, too.

Mr. PORTER: And what teeth they are! Even the most obsequious camp-followers, who are so anxious to see only the best in anything Labor does, can no longer doubt what it intends. With control in Canberra, it means to socialise us totally. But who could ever have been in doubt about this? After all, what is a Labor parliamentarian's pledge, or his contract, as it were, with the party machine, in return for which he is given parliamentary endorsement? What is this pledge that he must obey utterly on pain of political execution? It is—

"I pledge myself actively to support and advocate at all times my party's objective—the socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange."

Let us not be in any doubt as to what this means.

I have already quoted Mr. Whitlam. I shall read now a comment that was attributed to him in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of 26 July 1972—

"It would be intolerable if a Labor Government were to use the alibi of the Constitution to excuse its failure to achieve its socialist objective, and doubly intolerable because it is just not true that this need be so."

Unlike the honourable member for Lytton, I quote my sources and give them word for word. In giving a Fabian lecture on 25 July 1972, Mr. Whitlam also said—

"The major act of nationalisation in the traditional sense that will be undertaken by a Labor Government in its first term will be through the establishment of a single health fund administered by a Health Insurance Commission."

That demonstrates the cynical sham of A.L.P. policies. Nationalised medicine has nothing to do with professed humanitarian aims. In Mr. Whitlam's own words, it is no more than a major gambit in the socialist power play.

Dr. Jim Cairns, in the "Australian Left Review" of May 1971 said—

"I regard the A.L.P. as a vehicle for socialist change in Australia."

Again, in the Left-wing magazine "Dissent", in the same year, he said—

"We of Labor are situated in the political spectrum next to the Communists, and they will stand for many things for which we also stand. We cannot therefore oppose these things."

Surely no-one can suggest there is anything ambiguous in that. They are plain, simple words and I suggest that they mean simply and plainly what they say. They are very like the words of Mr. Grassby, who wrote in the November-December 1970 issue of the "Fabian Newsletter"—

"The Labor Party has drawn on the experience of the U.S.S.R. and other countries to prepare a programme of Socialist agriculture for this nation."

I emphasise that it is based on the experience in Russia, with its forced collectives, bloody liquidation of millions of peasants and its sorry record of agricultural botching, bungling and failure. I could give many other quotations, but that is not necessary because surely no-one can doubt that we must see in every action of the Federal Government its purpose in implementing the socialist master plan. I recall that the recent tariff cuts were presented as a major contribution towards controlling inflation which, of course, they will not do. But we see the real purpose when they are set against the blunt

words expressed by Dr. Cairns in an article he wrote last year entitled, "Towards a New Australia", in which he said—

"Tariff policy for the A.L.P., like every other matter, must be related to the basic aims of the party, and these are Socialist aims."

Does anyone doubt what is planned for us? I ask honourable members to remember that these are not my words. They are statements on record—and I have given the sources—by the new Federal Labor Government's most powerful men.

We now have the overwhelming evidence presented in the Federal Budget delivered on Tuesday night, which is centralist and accepts inflation as a way of life. If we accept that inflation running at about 10 to 14 per cent per annum is feasible, heaven alone knows what it will be by this time next year. I suggest it will be somewhere around 18 to 20 per cent. If we do not know, I should say that the Whitlam covey of academic "think tanks" does not know either. I say that it is the cruellest form of economic double-cross anybody could put over, particularly on the lower, middle and fixed-income groups to use deliberately induced inflation as a method of increasing the tax yield, because it hits the working man and the retired person. And they have no come-back.

The Budget, for proper interpretation and for our State interpretation, must be seen in the context of the Coombs Report which, of course, was a blueprint for hard-line, dogmatic, doctrinaire socialism. The Budget was plainly phase I of centralism in an inflationary setting. In the coming weeks and months it will rapidly induce dismay, despair, misery and panic. That provides the setting for phase II, that is, socialism, with, literally, quite ruthless Canberra control over every phase of Australian monetary and economic policy. Those are the very things that are being said right at this moment.

All this apparatus is headed by men of the type I have cited by quoting their statements. At the top of them is a man who must be one of the most extraordinary persons ever to appear on the Australian political scene. I said in the debate on matters of public interest, just prior to the recess, that the Prime Minister demonstrated by his actions at home and abroad that he was a vain, arrogant and reckless man.

I think those qualities reached a peak of almost pathological intensity in his appearance on television last Saturday night with David Frost. Here was a Prime Minister prepared to insult our allies, destroy reputations, execute public servants and denigrate both colleagues and opponents, all in the vein of a kind of absurd nigger-minstrel show in which Mr. Whitlam played an amateur Mr. Bones to David Frost's professionally ruthless Mr. Interlocutor. The Prime Minister demonstrated once again his

strange compulsion to play to any audience, mainly with a kind of spiteful sarcasm that seems to be his concept of wit.

I, for one, do not believe that that television show did any good at all for Mr. Whitlam, but most certainly it was a body blow to the prestige of the Prime Ministerial office and the whole concept of parliamentary responsibility that he is supposed to uphold. It is no wonder that one of the major newspapers in Britain, in an editorial article on this remarkable show, finished up by asking—"Is Mr. Whitlam intellectually worth 1 lb. of candy floss?"

We should never forget what this socialism that is being fashioned for us really is. It is not the new Utopia where the essential dignity of man is enhanced because he is freed from sordid material motives. This is the glossy picture we are given, but it is not what any country ever gets. Socialism is not new or progressive; it is old and primitive. The progenitors of socialism never had any doubts on what it was all about. Saint-Simon, one of the earliest writers, said—

"Those who disobey the planning boards will be treated like cattle."

Werner Sombart, the German socialist, said—

"State unity is one in which the individual has no rights, only duties."

The German Plenge said—

"Organisation is the essence of society. The individual must submit to society."

There is not much room for doubt or question because the same principle applies to modern society. The Soviet leader Trotsky said—

"The old principle that who does not work shall not eat has been replaced by a new one—who does not obey shall not eat."

We should never forget Lenin's explanation, "Through Socialism to Communism." Socialism and Communism are indeed inseparable bedfellows. It is no wonder the late Archbishop Sir James Duhig said in Childers on 12 September 1948—

"Socialism and Communism are the two arch-enemies of peace and prosperity, with Socialism the more plausible and subtle foe."

I wonder whom Labor men of good will would deny today—Archbishop Duhig, that good and sensible man who bluntly denounced socialism and Communism as twin evils; or Mr. Whitlam, Dr. Cairns and others who say that their socialism operates in the same political spectrum as that of the Communists. Or will they do nothing, as is surely the case here, and forswear their deep convictions in the hope that this will give them a temporary extension of political security in their own party? This, I am afraid, is what is happening.

It is timely to make the point that the Australian people have never indicated that they want any part of socialism or Communism. There has been much talk about Labor's mandate, as though the poll win last year authorised the Federal Government to go ahead with centralist and socialist plans. But what was the mandate? Apart from the fact that the Federal Government won only the outer suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, in fact the so-called mandate was for anything but socialism.

The only time Labor has ever won votes is when it has put its socialist plan under wraps and pretended it is respectable and normal. This is exactly what happened last year. I suggest it is much more probable that we were voted out than that Labor was voted in. I challenge any Labor spokesman—and we are close to the luncheon recess, so there is time to think about it—to produce one instance of an election, by-election, referendum or responsible public opinion poll which showed that Australians want socialism. Not one can be found, although I can find a wealth of instances to demonstrate the reverse. Among them are the Victorian State elections, the Balcatta by-election in Western Australia and recent Gallup polls. And that is especially so when the Australian figures are related to the break-up for the individual States. It is interesting that, in the Gallup poll, the A.L.P. reached a peak of 53 per cent in April and has now fallen 6 per cent to 47 per cent.

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

Mr. PORTER: Whereas Gallup poll figures month by month in recent times have shown that Labor, from its peak of 53 per cent favouritism in April, has now dropped 6 per cent to 47 per cent, we, on the other hand, from a low point of 38 per cent in March have increased to 44 per cent. We have therefore gained 6 per cent.

Mr. B. Wood: You were down on the last one.

Mr. PORTER: It is interesting for people on the Labor side to remember that at the 2 December poll Labor received 50 per cent support, and my side of politics received 41 per cent, leaving a gap of 9 per cent. The last Gallup poll taken a week ago showed Labor as attracting 47 per cent support, whilst we attracted 44 per cent. The 9 per cent gain has now been reduced to 3 per cent. Anybody who knows how the Labor votes are enclosed in specialised areas will realise that there is precious little electoral comfort for the Labor Party in those Gallup poll figures.

On the point of centralism, an article by Don Aitkin in the "National Times" on 25 June last dealt with a poll of 2,000 people taken by Macquarie University. It showed that only 20 per cent of people wanted to see more powers given to the Federal Government. Six per cent were doubtful, and a huge 74 per cent were quite

definite that Canberra should not be given any more powers. Queensland, by the way, showed 79 per cent in favour of retaining State powers.

A similar story is told in any survey that one may like to take. The latest one was published in "The Sydney Morning Herald" of 30 July last, only a couple of weeks ago. Again, 2,000 were interviewed, and, on the attitude of people to Communism or any other planned form of society, 11 per cent were uncertain, 4 per cent approved, and a massive 84 per cent were against it. All the surveys, all the elections, and all the by-elections over the years have told the same story. They reject the Labor claim that their victory at the polls last year was a mandate to socialise and centralise. There is not one tittle of evidence to support that claim. On the contrary, every piece of evidence that anybody can produce will show with overwhelming force that the Australian people do not want to touch socialism with a 40-ft. pole.

Of course, what Labor cannot achieve by persuasion it will certainly try to achieve by downright fraud. One such fraud is to suggest that Australia was in such a mess after 23 years of Liberal-Country Government that Labor had no choice but to introduce radical new policies, and that these necessitated the plethora of boards, bureaucrats, commissions and so on. Of course, that is preposterous nonsense. Lord Dewar said that there are three kinds of lies—lies, damned lies, and statistics. But Labor knows that it cannot manipulate statistics so as to make black white. In this area it never attempts to rely on statistics; it only makes allegations.

Mr. B. Wood: They give the people a chance to have their say.

Mr. PORTER: The honourable member says that they give the people a chance to have their say. I think they will get that opportunity soon, and we will all be delighted—particularly on this side of the House.

A Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics publication, a copy of which was sent to every member of the House, shows the situation in Australia for the decade 1960-61 to 1970-71. I do not think anybody will suggest that this booklet was "cooked" to help the Liberal and Country Parties. The facts contained in the document reveal that every indicator of growth and prosperity shows that tremendous progress has been achieved. Population in this decade has increased by 20.6 per cent. Gross National Product has increased by 125 per cent. Personal incomes have advanced by 120.7 per cent. Mining production is up by 162.2 per cent, and factory production by 82.1 per cent. New life insurance policies, which are always a good indicator of the state of the economy, increased by 324 per cent.

To demonstrate that the progress was in real terms, let us settle once and for all the old standby of the Labor Party that under Liberal-Country Party Governments prices are always galloping ahead of incomes. I ask the House to take good notice of the figures that I am about to quote. In that period of 10 years, the Consumer Price Index, on a base of 100 per cent, advanced 24.6 per cent. But the wage rate index increased by 62.2 per cent. In simple terms, wages in the decade under review rose $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as much as prices, which means that the real purchasing power of money was that much better at the end of the decade than at its beginning. These facts cannot be denied. Whatever may have been deficiencies of our Government at the Federal level—and there were deficiencies—they were not a failure to maintain amazing growth alongside unparalleled stability. We had a record of growth, full employment and minimal inflation not bettered by any other industrial nation in the world.

It is amazing to me that the Leader of the Opposition should suggest, as he did in his speech in this debate, that Queensland did not participate in this achievement. He was prepared to denigrate his own State in order to do a lickspittle job for his new Canberra bosses. He was prepared to assist to crush Queensland under the Communist jackboot. He has shown support, as other honourable members opposite do now, for the three-pronged attack that the Federal Labor Party is making to reduce by economic means the essential areas of State control which constitutionally are barred to it.

This attack is through the newfangled resources diplomacy, new proposals for use of the Australian Industries Development Commission, and the proposal to allow the Commonwealth Grants Commission to deal direct with local authorities. These three methods of attack directly threaten us. Resources diplomacy is a dagger held right at the throat of Queensland and Western Australia. Let there be no doubt about that. If honourable members read the second report of the Australian Industries Development Commission—that is, if they have the wit and ability to even find it, let alone read it—they will see that it makes quite plain that over 21 per cent of projected commitments will be in this State.

But what are the facts about the Queensland economy? Are we impoverished, ailing, and falling behind the Australian average, as the Leader of the Opposition suggests? On the contrary. Last year, for the first time in this nation's history, Queensland alone of all the States ran counter to the economic and employment downturn. This is a fact of quite recent record, and all the significant indicators—employment, incomes, and productivity—clearly demonstrate our strength.

In the last two years the Australian figure for the growth of household incomes was 12.1 per cent, but Queensland's growth was

16.1 per cent. The growth in the Australian work-force in two years was 2.1 per cent, but the Queensland advance was 4.4 per cent—more than twice as much. And honourable members would do very well to remember that everything that is making for this strong State situation in Queensland was Queensland-inspired, Queensland-encouraged, Queensland-generated. No single part of it was generated from central government sources.

I wish to make these points and read them into the record in the hope that others will draw from these facts that the continuing fight for the preservation of the federal system and State sovereignty and individual liberty is inextricably intertwined. No-one can see any of the three reduced or lost without the others being equally injured.

But I do not wish to dwell solely on flushing out of the coverts the enemy we have to defeat. Certainly we must all know it for the dreadful menace it is; but it is not enough for people on our side of politics to wait in the wings and let Labor so anger, dismay and terrify people that they will panic and put us back in Canberra. This surely will happen, but we have to do better than that. I think that victory on these terms, at least for me, is not good enough.

I wish to say certain things to my own party, because I believe it is equally essential that these be placed on record. I remind the House that I was part of the Liberal Party's origins and that I played a major role in both the preparatory work and the actual campaign in 1949, when we in Queensland provided 15 of 18 Federal seats, which was more than half the majority of the Menzies' Government. So what I say is not theory or nostalgia or just idealism. These are hard, practical political facts that have been tested in the crucibles of more than 30 years of political planning and campaigning.

Of course, I speak mainly to my own party, whose endorsement I carry; but what I say is applicable also to my coalition colleagues, because we all travel basically on the same road for the same destination, and it is my belief that before long we will be one single party travelling that road.

I always say that it has been my experience that our support varies according to the enthusiasm or the apathy with which we both approach our political philosophy and, more importantly, practise what we preach. It is only in this context that the differences between Liberalism and Laborism are made apparent and significant. Unless we do it, this leads to a blurring of our ideological image, and then there is a fall in our electoral support. I do not think anybody will doubt that today's political situation is a matter of urgent crisis. I think there is a desperate need for people on my side of politics to restate, lucidly and briefly, fundamental Liberal propositions so that not only we of

the party but all those people who support us outside it can clearly identify the broad philosophic highways along which we go.

I believe that the basic Liberal propositions can be best conveyed in three simple stages: by indicating a central core or heart of Liberal faith, then the basic broad principles that flow naturally from this central tenet, and then the specifics of particular action emerging from each of the basic broad principles. To me, the heart of Liberal faith must always be undeviating emphasis on the individual person, and acceptance that the prime role of government is to induce those conditions wherein ordinary people can largely work out their own destinies.

The fundamental contention that government exists to serve the people and that the people do not exist to serve Governments is the great ideological gulf between us and members of the Opposition. If we accept this, then I think clear principles emerge from the fundamental faith. It has to include beliefs in under-government rather than over-government. Here again there is an enormous difference between us. It has to include a belief in the dispersal of power, both Government and private, rather than its transfer to a centre. It has to believe in self-help and personal responsibility rather than any monolithic welfare system. It must recognise that individual needs today involve goals other than material productivity.

It must mean, too, a devising of external programmes for a free Australia that adhere to traditional ties but also facilitate our growing role in a changing Pacific world. Certainly one of the principles must envisage government as much more sensitive to the needs of the people than to party machines or ambitious groups within party machines. So there is the central tenet of political faith and the six broad principles that flow from it which, in my view, we on this side of the political spectrum abrogate only at our electoral peril.

I now come to some specifics which might flow out of each broad principle and be expressed as matters of platform and policy. If we are to have under-government rather than over-government, we should have programmes which transfer from the Public Service and Government-agency areas those tasks (works, roads and much ancillary work performed in departments) that can be handled on a competitive-tender basis by the private sector. If we mean to really disperse power, this must entail return to the States of an agreed portion of income tax under a single collecting authority. It means upgrading local government; it means real anti-trust and anti-monopoly programmes designed, together with tax incentives, to make a free-enterprise system truly competitive and truly enterprising.

In self-help terms, we have to prune undue welfare and personally intrusive programmes, and then substantially reduce

taxation—get government out of people's private affairs—so that people can then see their own spending power coming back as paternalism recedes. If we accept the principle that we must aim for other than material productivity, then we must concentrate on quality-of-life issues, such as urban living, and environmental and ecological balance.

Certainly, to keep Australia free in today's world we must have agreements, pacts and alliances with our proper friends and allies. These must be balanced by trade and tariff patterns, and certainly it must all be backed by an armed force adequate to our changing situation. An armed force is not just a contemptuous token, but one that can sustain a free and vigorous Australia within the political and geographic realities of the Pacific area.

Finally on this point, I contend that we must accept that most Australians today tend to distrust the major political parties. They certainly distrust machine politics, and my party must become much more sensitive to what people want, not to what its hierarchy wants. It must provide consistent interaction between the organisation and parliamentarians, and, simultaneously, between the Federal and State components. Whilst the party can expect the fullest loyalty to basic tenets and principles, I see great merit in nonconformity on matters of detail. We on this side of the House are the trustees of our party in Parliament; we can exercise individual judgment inside the basic principles. This is quite opposed to the A.L.P. concept of the parliamentarian as a delegate who has no free will at all in the Parliament but must do exactly as his caucus and executive determine for him.

So, for me, a return to the former Liberal greatness is not possible without the adoption in some form of the patterns I propose—the recognition of a heart of Liberal faith, the acceptance of the great basic principles embodied in it, and then, springing from the basic principles, the specific policies and programmes that are relevant to modern times. Every time we on this side deny our faith and adopt some aspect of Labor programmes because we feel they have temporary voting appeal, we grievously wound ourselves. If we keep on doing it, we will die from self-inflicted wounds.

My own view, as I have often expressed it, is that this is the reason we lost the election last year. Over a period of time we were doing so many things that were partly Labor policy that people began to find it difficult to distinguish significantly between us and the then Opposition. The ANOP poll on 1 August last year, to which I have referred, showed that 37 per cent of the people were unable to distinguish any significant area of policy difference between Labor and Liberal. When both parties approached last year's election offering competing packages of Government-provided

goodies, I believe that discerning voters recognised this retreat from Liberal principle and voted accordingly. Shakespeare's "To thine own self be true" was never more applicable than it is to us today. We are now plagued by a flock of very ugly chickens that have come home to roost as a result of expediency and competing personal ambitions luring us, over recent years, from our proper path. It is fatal for us ever to fall for trying to beat Labor at its own game.

Labor's socialist aims are now quite nakedly apparent. Nobody attempts to disguise them or present them as other than what they are. Those aims are to make us, both as persons and as institutions, dependent, weak and gutless. Their aims are to foster the habit of leaning on the Government, expecting it to solve all our problems, save us from all our stupidities and iron out all life's bumps into marshmallow-like nothingness.

This is not our way. We believe in people and in their residual strength. We have a reverence for the essential dignity of the individual person. Ours is the doctrine of self-help and personal responsibility, not flabby dependence; of free decision and choice, not subservience to some bureaucratic plan. We believe in the diffusion of power, not in its concentration. If these doctrines are not in tune with the times, then it would be far better for us to remain in Opposition federally until people again recognise things for what they are and always must be, rather than betray our principles for the hope of gaining brief political power.

But our doctrines are not out of tune with the times. The fundamental articles of Liberal faith are as valid today—perhaps more so in these crucial days—as ever they were. The concept that Government exists to serve people, not people to serve Government, will never be outmoded while men are free and Christian. Ours is a doctrine for today and tomorrow. It is an essential respect for people and this is an acceptance, in the space age, that there is a need for growing internationalism here. We on this side envisage a generous, outward-looking Australianism, not the narrow, jingoistic, old-fashioned little Australianism that Labor is trying so hard to foster at present as part of its justification for an attempted socialist take-over. If we on our side of politics are true to what we profess, we must win. Truth will prevail. What we stand for is part of the very essence of man. It cannot ever be long subdued, diverted or denied.

Mr. LEESE (Pine Rivers) (2.35 p.m.): Having heard that previous speaker, I am more than ever convinced that Government members have not yet awakened from their horrible dream that there is a Federal Labor Government in Canberra. They simply cannot realise that Labor is in office for two reasons: first, its sound policies and, second,

the shocking mismanagement of the previous Government. It is in office because the people of Australia realise that the Labor Party is the only political party that can bring equality to Australia. Previously, Australia did not enjoy even the slightest semblance of equality.

The honourable member for Toowong spoke about looking inwards towards Australia and not outwards to the international scene.

Mr. Porter: I quoted some facts, too.

Mr. LEESE: The honourable member said that the Liberal Party is looking to further horizons on the international scene.

Over the past nine months, Gough Whitlam and his Government have done more to put Australia on the map than the previous Federal Liberal-Country Party Government did in its 23 years of office. However, I shall not waste any more time on the honourable member for Toowong.

I feel that I could not participate in this debate without making a brief reference to what can only be termed as the Government's and the Premier's neurotic attitude towards the Federal Labor Government. Over the past nine months the Premier, suffering from schizophrenia, has conducted a personal vendetta against the Federal Government. He seems to have forgotten his State responsibilities while carrying out his falsely conceived campaign of hate against the Canberra Government. The Country-Liberal Party coalition in Queensland has tried to lay down a smokescreen of innuendoes and untruths to hide its broken promises and years of shocking mismanagement.

As an illustration, the history of electrification of railway systems is well known; yet a stranger to Queensland could well be excused for believing that it is a new concept and that Queensland's shockingly poor public transport system is the fault of the present Federal Government. The Premier and his Government have insulted the intelligence of the people of Queensland. Believing in the safety of their gerrymander, they have become drunk with power and are treating Queenslanders with contempt.

Although the Premier is very vocal on State rights, he does not seem to have any inclination to exercise his rights in trying to combat rising prices. The national Government has asked the various States to use their powers to assist in containing rising prices, but no assistance has been forthcoming from the Queensland Premier. So much for his pious claims that the interests of the people of Queensland come first!

The previous Liberal-Country Party Federal Government cared little about lifting the standard of living of Queenslanders. For the first time in 20-odd years, Australia has a national Government that is willing to do something to raise the standard of living; so let the Premier put aside his personal

vendetta and, in the interests of Queensland, act like a statesman and co-operate with the Federal Government.

The announcement by the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs that legislation will be introduced to strengthen the fire-safety role of fire brigades is long overdue. Nevertheless, such legislation will be welcomed, provided it is far reaching. The paramount role of any fire brigade is fire prevention. Yet under the present legislation both fire brigades and their boards are left toothless on safety issues. At the present time they can only recommend that certain precautions be taken, and there is no provision that requires the Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops, the Licensing Commission or local authorities to submit to fire brigade boards for approval any plans and specifications for the construction of, or alterations to, factories and shops, theatres, places of entertainment and amusement, or premises that are licensed under the Liquor Act.

Fire brigades must be given the power of enforcement in safety matters. To bring this about, there should be a uniform, mandatory code of fire-safety standards throughout Queensland, instead of the multiplicity of Acts that we have at the moment, with their quite often inadequate fire-precaution regulations. It is usually only at the time of a disaster that, on hindsight, it is realised that the safety precautions were possibly inadequate.

I sincerely hope that, before bringing the proposed legislation before Parliament, the Minister's advisers will be seeking submissions from all sources concerned to ensure that we have a set of regulations which, if properly enforced, will give maximum safety to the public of Queensland. It remains to be seen just how wide a net will be cast to glean information for the proposed amendments. However, I am not too hopeful, and I understand that the Queensland Country Fire Officers' Association is very disturbed that no approach has been made to it for opinions or recommendations on regulations that it feels should be included in the Act.

I intend to spend some time dealing with the hazards of polyurethane foam, that is, cellular plastic. Recently I asked the Minister for Development what explicit precautions were laid down for the storage of cellular plastics, whether the precautions were mandatory and how often premises where cellular plastics are stored were inspected by fire-prevention officers. The Minister's reply was that no explicit precautions are laid down, and that the Chief Inspector of Fire Services considered that there was no apparent need for legislation on this matter. It would be an understatement to claim that the answer left much to be desired. It seems that the Minister's advisers have failed to inform him of research to date, which has shown that

there is a need to lay down stringent fire-precaution regulations covering the manufacture, storage and use of polyurethane foams.

With that in mind, I intend to have recorded in "Hansard", for the benefit of the Minister, some of the findings from the investigations that have been carried out to date. Tests conducted at the instigation of the Department of Employment in the United Kingdom have shown that the rate of the spread of flame across a surface of flexible foam polyurethane is quite rapid. The time for total combustion is considerably shorter than that for an equivalent weight of wood sticks. In these tests, burning of polyurethane foam in bulk was found to develop rapidly large quantities of thick smoke at least twice as dense as that from a wood fire. Smoke greatly restricts visibility in rooms and corridors, thus making escape difficult, and its choking effect on breathing helps to engender panic.

Not only was there a particularly large volume of smoke in these tests, but its temperature was also unusually high. Indeed, flames were even observed in the smoke some 12 metres or so from the burning polyurethane. This indicated that if a person had to escape along a corridor under a layer of smoke near the ceiling level, the downward radiation of heat would be sufficient to set his hair alight, and probably his clothing as well.

It is well known that most fires produce carbon monoxide, which is poisonous and may give no warning of its presence. The foam-polyurethane fires were found to produce much larger quantities of carbon monoxide than did burning wood. The feature that particularly distinguished foam polyurethane from other combustibles was, however, the production of hydrogen cyanide and isocyanates. These were evolved in amounts fully comparable in toxicity to the carbon monoxide. They represent an important additional hazard which may not have previously been properly recognised. This no doubt explains the fact that in some factory fires employees and firemen appear to have suffered long-term effects from inhaling fumes which do not seem to be characteristic of exposure to carbon monoxide.

The temperature of smoke and fumes from the burning polyurethane was found to be very high—in excess of 1,000° centigrade. It appears that it would be very difficult to set cellular plastic foam alight from a spark or smouldering cigarette. Nevertheless untreated foam can readily be set alight with a flame similar to a lighted match, whereas foam treated with a flame retardant can easily be set alight with a sheet of burning newspaper. Once alight, some flame-retardant foams burn more rapidly than untreated types. Moreover, in every case the combustion of the treated foam produced

much denser smoke and at least as much carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide than the common, untreated variety.

Many factories contain newspaper, cardboard and packing materials which can be easily ignited and, if ignited, may give off sufficient heat to set alight flame-retardant polyurethane. Under these circumstances, and as the tests I have mentioned revealed that such material, when burning, gives off more toxic fumes than the untreated polyurethane, it would appear that flame-retardant polyurethane does not offer any substantial safeguard in the event of an industrial fire.

Over all, the results of the tests indicated that although foam polyurethane burns quickly, its principal danger probably lies in the rapid production of unusually large amounts of hot, dense smoke and poisonous gases. Moreover, these high levels are attained very quickly—usually within one or two minutes of the fire reaching a size at which an alarm would be raised by an alert observer. In most tests, within one minute of the earliest time of alarm the smoke density and the plume 12 metres from the fire were such that visibility was reduced to two metres or less. So it can be seen that there are severe fire-evacuation problems. I suggest that the Minister take note of this, because he has obviously not been advised of it or else we would have seen something from him in the Press already.

Mr. Campbell: Don't be so insulting.

Mr. LEESE: I do not consider I am being insulting in saying that. However, I will not engage in any banter with the Minister.

Cellular plastics play an important part in industry today. In fact, it is fair to say that they have revolutionised certain industries. I am not suggesting that it should be otherwise. In fact, they have been a boon to many industries. Most of our furniture is padded with one of the cellular plastic foams, and possibly the mattress upon which we sleep is made of cellular plastic. This being the case, it is all the more important that we should be aware of the hazards that these plastics engender.

A few years ago little was known of the dangers and hazards of cellular plastics when submitted to fire, but that is not the case today. Sufficient is known for the Minister to lay down strong legislation to protect firemen, as well as employees in the industry. From research to date, certain technical procedures have been laid down that should minimise the risk of death or injury should a fire occur in premises at which cellular plastic is manufactured or used.

It is my understanding that the Pine Rivers Fire Brigade has circularised employers in the area it covers, advising them of the recommended procedures to be adopted in industry in order that protection can be given from the most serious and lethal discharge of toxic fumes and intense heat

given off when cellular plastics are involved in a fire. I commend the board on taking that action.

The board, of course, can only recommend. The Government can do much more than that. It can gather material from all the research that has been carried out with cellular plastics, and it can prescribe standards that will be mandatory and enforceable throughout the State. If the Government is sincere in its approach to safety in industry, let it show its sincerity by bringing down the necessary legislation.

No factory that manufactures or uses cellular plastics should be allowed to operate unless it holds a certificate of safety issued by the local fire brigade. In fact, no factory at all should be allowed to operate without such a certificate. I was pleased to notice in the Press recently that the appropriate Minister is considering making all manufacturing premises obtain safety certificates from the local fire brigade before being allowed to operate.

The fire brigade should be allowed to get on with the job for which it is trained. At the moment, many factories are old buildings that are potential death traps. It is no use saying that tragedies could not happen in them. Must we have another "Whisky Au-Go-Go" incident to prove that these things can happen? In how many factories are fire-evacuation drills carried out? For that matter, how many schools have fire-evacuation drills? It is not sufficient to have one fire-evacuation drill carried out in a school each year, in Fire Prevention Week. It should be mandatory for fire-evacuation drill to be carried out at least at the beginning of each term. Again, how many schools have even an internal fire-warning system? Very few.

I cannot stress too strongly the need for strong legislation to keep to the very minimum the fire hazards involved in the manufacture of cellular plastics. To labour the point, I propose to quote from a paper prepared by Mr. D. R. Richards, B.Sc., A.M.I.Fire E. This is what he said—

"The relation of the hazards with which the Fire Service are faced in dealing with incidents involving polyurethane foam must lead to a rethinking of the fire-fighting techniques now employed. To ensure the safety of fire-fighters, they must be aware of the problems likely to be encountered and be adequately protected against them.

"Only a minimum number of personnel should be used inside a building and they must be relieved at frequent intervals. Breathing apparatus and protective clothing should be worn on all but the very minor incidents. It must be realised that the toxic gases can be absorbed through the skin and that the T.L.Vs. of the gases evolved are lower than the facemask leakage of the average breathing apparatus set. Wherever possible, therefore, fire

fighting should be undertaken from open air and in any cases of doubt buildings must be immediately evacuated.

"The Factory Inspectorate now regard polyurethane foams as highly flammable material."

The factory inspectorate referred to is the one in the United Kingdom, not, I am sorry to say, in Queensland.

Mr. Richards continued—

"Where stocks of foam are kept, a high density sprinkler installation and strict stock control should figure strongly in the fire prevention officers' recommendations. It is advisable that all stocks are kept in enclosures separated from the rest of the factory area.

"The high rate of flames spread and smoke production must be considered when formulating requirements for means of escape. The rapid rate of smoke production may cause smokeloggling of a building in one or two minutes. Smoke and volatile gases may travel faster than people using an escape route.

"Effective steps must be taken now to minimise the risk to life and to bring pressure to bear to have far stricter control over the manufacture and storage of polyurethane foams and the use of isocyanates."

I should like also to quote from the following article that appeared in the "Daily Mirror" in the United Kingdom on Wednesday, 1 December 1971, headed "Doomwatch' Mystery of 33 Firemen Who Fell Ill". It said—

"Home Office experts have started an investigation into a mystery 'doomwatch' sickness which has hit 33 firemen, it was revealed last night.

"Four of the men have been pensioned off. Several more are still under medical care—years after the fires which apparently caused their illness.

"Last night a trade union official said that all 33 men had become ill after fighting fires in which they were exposed to the fumes of a cyanide compound called isocyanate.

"The official, Mr. Dick Foggie, a national officer of the Fire Brigades Union, said: 'What is being uncovered is very serious. At the moment medical experts seem baffled.

"We know that some of the men have suffered heart attacks, serious chest trouble, dizziness, numbness in limbs, loss of memory and nervous disorders.'"

The possible hazards of cellular plastics are clear, and I hope that the Minister will take the necessary steps to ensure that maximum precautions are carried out.

I shall now refer briefly to another matter that should be given serious attention by the Government—the transportation of hazardous substances. For many years fire-brigade

officers have been trying to explain to members of various bodies the hazards encountered in the transportation of various combustibles, alkaloids, and toxic, explosive and corrosive substances, and the problems associated with these hazardous substances whilst in transit. Many loads being transported by road and rail are potential bombs. I do not think there is sufficient awareness of this fact.

Identification is a major problem, because very few loads, cartons, packs or other containers give any real identification of the chemical substances they contain. Trade names of substances give little indication of their properties, and should any of these chemicals be involved in an accident whilst in transit, this leaves the fire officer at the scene with the risk of applying wrong methods of fire-fighting, which could have repercussions and possibly even fatal effects.

There is a real need, therefore, to devise a method of easy identification of various substances that will indicate to the emergency services the nature of the substance involved. This will enable the correct method of dealing with the situation to be undertaken and risk eliminated. At the moment there is not any coherent or legally binding code of signals applying to the transportation of these substances. The Australian Transport Advisory Council has issued a model code covering them, but it is purely advisory and has no legislative effect.

In the United Kingdom, a number of interested bodies, including the Institute of Fire Engineers, are endeavouring to set up a computerised data bank for hazardous loads with a view to providing precise information about the properties of the hazardous substances, together with advice as to the practical methods to be adopted in dealing with them. In the United States of America, there is a system known as Chemical Transportation Emergency Centre, which provides a 24-hour-a-day information service financed by the Manufacturing Chemists' Association.

No doubt there is need for a similar system in Queensland, because these same substances are being transported on our railways and roads, often through densely populated areas, and no such information is at present available to our emergency services. In fact, only very rarely are fire brigades advised when hazardous loads are passing through their own fire districts. It could even be said in many instances the drivers of the vehicles are not aware of the hazards which could prevail if they become involved in a collision or any other emergency.

Mr. Davis: You are quite correct.

Mr. LEESE: I know I am correct, but I am taking time to expound this for the benefit of Government members.

It must also be appreciated that, while chemists may be aware of the reaction of different substances under laboratory conditions, for various reasons those conditions seldom prevail during a fire. First, there is the heat produced by the fire and the reaction between water and various chemicals. I will give a simple example of that. I understand that carbide pellets are used extensively on the land. No doubt some Country Party members would know more about that than I do. Carbide pellets can be purchased at most farm suppliers, so it can be assumed that they would be transported with other commodities on private trucks.

Such a vehicle could be involved in an accident and as a result catch fire. When the fire engine arrived on the scene the brigade officers would not know that there were carbide pellets in the load. What would happen if they played water onto the load? For the benefit of those honourable members who do not know, I point out that acetylene gas is produced when carbide comes in contact with water, and everyone knows what happens when acetylene gas comes in contact with a naked flame.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. LEESE: At this point of time the Government is considering another change in the regulations, but it has not consulted the various fire brigade unions.

I was referring to the heat produced by the fire and the reaction between water and various chemicals. The fire officer is confronted with all these conditions. He has to ascertain the contents of the cargo and anticipate the reaction. He has to decide whether the contents are toxic, corrosive, explosive, etc.; he has to determine the appropriate extinguishing medium, if extinguishment is safe; he has to decide whether breathing apparatus is safe; he has to arrange for the rescue of any trapped persons; he has to arrange evacuation procedures if there is danger of an explosion; he has to take all precautions to avoid an explosion; and he has to arrange for further assistance and send messages to his control.

He has to make all these decisions immediately on arrival, and when under stress, knowing that a wrong decision could involve considerable damage, injury to personnel or even loss of life. We all know that if a wrong decision was made and there was loss of life, by the time the matter got to the Coroner's Court it would be common knowledge what medium should have been applied, and it would be said that every fireman should have known that.

If the fire brigade personnel and other emergency services are willing to expose themselves to these hazards in the course of their duty, surely every possible assistance should be available to alleviate the situation as much as possible.

Although I realise that this is a problem being faced throughout the world and that possibly there is no easy solution to it, nevertheless I am of the opinion that in the interest of public safety the Government should instigate the setting-up of an expert committee to research the full ramifications of the transportation of hazardous goods.

I should now like to bring to the attention of the House the excellent work being carried out by the Social Projects Committee of Parents without Partners. That committee was set up some 12 months ago within the Parents without Partners organisation in Queensland, and is concerned with making a contribution towards the solution of the social problems of the day. A major problem having ramifications throughout society is that of children being left unattended after school hours while they are awaiting their parents' return from work. The parents are either single parents or married parents who both go to work. It is felt that this may be one of the many causes of juvenile delinquency which result in handicapped lives and a loss to the community.

The committee is looking into the possibility of occupying these children during these crucial hours with supervised homework, sport, cultural activities, and so on. The committee has made contact with every State Minister whose department could be remotely concerned with the welfare of children. In the main, to date it has received a sympathetic hearing, but over all the attitude, to say the least, has been negative. This committee is genuinely concerned as to what could happen to the children who are returning home to an empty house. When I last raised this question in this Chamber, the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services answered me by saying, "You cannot force children to attend after-school care centres." This is the usual type of negative approach we have come to expect from this Government.

There is nothing new in the concept of after-school care. The Department of Community Welfare in South Australia has established two after-school activity centres in the Adelaide area. Group workers from the department are in charge and are assisted by other paid staff. Volunteer aids assist with instruction in crafts and sports activities. The centres are open after school and on Saturday mornings. The costs are met by the Department of Community Welfare and there is no charge for children who attend. Both of these centres are located in areas where there is a concentration of low-income earners and large families. Similar groups are encouraged to establish similar centres. They can apply to the Child Welfare Grants Advisory Committee for financial assistance to establish a centre.

The position in New South Wales is that in an increasing number of schools after-school recreation programmes have been

encouraged. These programmes are instigated by the Director of Sport and Recreation Services in co-operation with the school principal and parents and citizens' association. The centres are self-supporting. Parents make a small daily contribution, which meets the cost of employing the supervisor, and the finances of the project are managed by a sub-committee of the parents' association. Recreation activities include art classes, drama groups, crafts, chess, outdoor games, recorders and so on. Initially, over-all an intensive supervision is given by one of the recreation officers stationed at one of the area offices of the department. Each project is gradually handed over to local control so that eventually a recreation officer tends to have from six to 10 centres under his general care.

The New South Wales Education Department encourages the use of school facilities by community groups, which are able to organise appropriate supervision through the Youth Advisory Council. It also makes subsidies available to a number of groups.

South Australia and New South Wales have accepted and recognised the need for after-school care centres. Surely, then, this need exists in Queensland, and I contend that it is the Government's responsibility to meet the financing of such centres.

Parents Without Partners, in its representations, has shown clearly the plight of the father left with a family, and of the deserted wife and the widow. Of course, the case is the same for intact families where both partners are at work. A survey conducted at the West End Primary School on behalf of Parents Without Partners by a university social work researcher indicated that 12 per cent of the children are from one-parent families with the father missing and 4 per cent from one-parent families with the mother missing. The figures also reveal that each morning 14.5 per cent of the children are latchkey children and each afternoon the figure rises to 21 per cent. The figures indicate quite clearly that the area is ideally suited to the provision of an after-school care centre.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. LEESE: I realise that I am referring to the honourable member's electorate. He is well known for the service and attention that he gives to the schools and people in his area.

I recognise the excellent job that is being done by the Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Queensland in conducting its playgrounds at Paddington, Spring Hill, Inala and Stafford. I understand it is the association's intention to provide new playgrounds at Arana Hills, Carina and Townsville. Such a playground will be more than welcome in Arana Hills, which, I am proud to say, is in my electorate.

How far will the Government take its so-called doctrine of self-help? The Government stands condemned by the fact that it leaves so much to private organisations.

Mr. Burns: It is not interested.

Mr. LEESE: Time and time again it has shown that it is not interested. Speaker after speaker on the Government side claims that he cares for the people of Queensland.

Mr. Burns: They are interested only in making a profit and getting a "quid".

Mr. LEESE: Quite so.

Is it right that Parents without Partners should be required to conduct its own surveys to show a need and then, having shown such a need, set about endeavouring to organise the framework and operation of an after-school care centre? There is no Government organisation that provides help in this direction. Both Government advice and supervision are needed to get the project off the ground.

I am not suggesting that after-school care centres are the be-all and end-all; I know that many problems will have to be overcome. For example, a school may not be the best place at which to conduct such a centre. It may well be that a school does not provide the best environment in which a child can relax after attending to his school studies. But this can be ascertained with Government assistance, and such assistance is needed now. The problem is with us today, and it is the Government's responsibility to provide assistance.

Mr. Burns: Do you think it should make provision for them in the forthcoming Budget?

Mr. LEESE: In view of my comments today, possibly provision will be made.

I now wish to refer to a matter that is causing grave concern in the Pine Rivers electorate, namely, certain aspects of the Kedron Brook Flood Mitigation Study that is being carried out by Munro, Johnson and Associates.

In June of this year the Pine Rivers Shire Council was advised by the Co-ordinator-General's Department that a study commissioned by the State Government would be made to determine what flood mitigation measures could be taken in the Kedron Brook area. It was also advised that one of the proposals being examined was the use of the Keperra Golf Club as a retention basin. The department's letter sought the council's co-operation in advising people who lived in the defined area of the proposal. The letter went on to say that, until such time as the area required for the basin was accurately determined, failure to control activity within the area may well lead to unnecessary resumptions. In due course the council quite correctly advised all homeowners and landholders within the defined area of the department's plan.

(Time expired.)

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (3.15 p.m.): Today I am in a most unusual position in speaking in the Address-in-Reply debate because it is unnecessary for me as the member for Mackay to pledge the loyalty of my people to His Excellency the Governor. Only some 10 days before Sir Colin Hannah opened this session of Parliament he paid his first official visit to Mackay and district. On that occasion the people and the children of the whole of the district had an opportunity personally to pledge their support to him and the form of government that we have in Queensland.

The Governor's tour was highly successful, and I should like to place on record my sincere thanks to Alderman Abbott and members of the Mackay City Council, Councillor Young and members of the Pioneer Shire Council, Councillor Newbery and members of the Sarina Shire Council, and Councillor O'Neill and members of the Mirani Shire Council for their wonderful co-operation in planning and staging the visit. I also place on record the appreciation of the people of Mackay and district to Mr. Brock, the Manager of Hay Point Services, for his help, assistance and support, and Captain Tom McLean, of Brampton Island, and Roysten Cruises for the co-operation they afforded on the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor. I pay a special compliment to Mr. Lawrie Payne, the Town Clerk of the Mackay City Council, who acted as secretary of the small committee we formed to co-ordinate activities during His Excellency's visit.

As you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, the Governor's Opening Speech to Parliament sets out the tasks facing this Parliament and the Government of the State of Queensland. The Government presents its programme to us each year, and as the Opposition we have an obligation to fulfil the role of watchdogs in this Parliament of the people's interests in the work carried out by the Government in the State. I am deeply disturbed that, since the Governor's Opening Speech to this Parliament, we have heard very little in debates in this House about anything other than the Federal Government. It is about time somebody spoke to honourable members on both sides of the House and told them to get down to the business of running the State of Queensland.

Surely the Federal Parliament is the forum for discussing Federal matters. Surely the two Houses of the Federal Parliament are quite capable of discussing and dissertating on the problems or otherwise that the Federal Government may or may not have, or the problems that the Federal Opposition may or may not have. I do not believe that the time of this House should be taken up completely by federal political arguments. We have plenty of matters affecting this State with which to concern ourselves and worry about. Both Government and Opposition members have been to blame to date for what has happened so far during this session of Parliament.

An outstanding feature of administration in Australia today is not so much the weakness of Governments, but the weakness of Oppositions, and I believe that is reflected more so in the leadership. That was evident in this House this morning when the Leader of the Opposition used tactics entirely different from those which should have been adopted and, of course, was left completely floundering.

When I hear what is taking place in the federal sphere, I believe that Mr. Snedden and the honourable member for Bulimba must have gone to the same school for Leaders of the Opposition because they display about the same amount of talent as Leaders of the Opposition. In this Parliament we are not here to criticise for the sake of criticising, nor praise merely because of political ties in another Parliament or another system. We are here as representatives of the State of Queensland. We are all Queenslanders representing Queensland electorates. In this Parliament our concern for affairs in Queensland must come first.

I believe the Address-in-Reply debate should be approached on this particular note. Normally, an Opposition should be on the offensive on problems that the Government is not looking into, but so far the Opposition in this Parliament has been on the defensive in support of its federal colleagues. In the light of what has happened, I believe someone should engage in constructive criticism about the problems confronting the Queensland State Government.

Instead of merely criticising the Federal Government, the State Government should apply pressure to the Federal Government and seek its support for more schemes in Queensland. If properly documented schemes put before the Federal Government are rejected, the Premier, Ministers and Government members in this State have every right to criticise the Federal Government. But it is no good being critical of that Government just for the sake of criticising.

Last week in this House I asked the Minister for Mines and Main Roads a question on the National Gas Pipeline Authority. It must be of concern to that Minister that the Federal Government has set up this authority. This was the first State in Australia to develop its natural-gas deposits—and I give the Government the credit to which it is due—so surely the setting up of this authority must be the concern of the Minister for Mines. Surely it is up to the Minister to put forward some proposals on the way in which the Government would like to see Queensland included in the plans of the authority, irrespective of who forms it or its format.

It is no good simply sitting back and saying, "It is there. We know it is there. We have read about it in the newspaper, but we are not concerned about it because

nobody has said anything to us about it." Somebody has to make the forward move. Throughout history, the most successful Governments have been those prepared to take a step forward, not those that stand and wait for things to come to them. I believe that we in Queensland should be looking at these matters. The day will come when, in regard to natural gas, we will be left behind the other States because the pipeline authority, as it is envisaged, is fully supporting South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales and is working for the benefit and gain of the people in those States. We could criticise such an authority if we had put up a scheme to obtain the help, support and assistance of that authority and been rejected by the Federal Government. This has not happened. No such scheme has been put forward. Surely this is the task of the Queensland Government.

The development of roads in Queensland is one of our major problems. The beef roads scheme is fast reaching completion. The latest five-year period is almost completed. The latest allocation has almost run out. Initially, this scheme was put to Queensland by the Federal Government and we have seen its benefits. You would have seen, Mr. Speaker, in your own area in North Queensland, the tremendous benefit that Queensland has reaped from this scheme. But as you and other northern members would appreciate, many access or feeder roads to the beef roads are needed and could be constructed. I think it is up to the State of Queensland, having seen the success of the scheme, to put forward a proposal to the Commonwealth Government in this regard. If that Government decides not to support a further beef roads scheme in Queensland, we can be critical of it for having neglected the interests of Queensland people.

The existing brigalow development scheme is almost complete. Area III, which is west of Mackay, is the last area to be developed under the initial scheme. Several years ago, a survey was conducted by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries in conjunction with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in the Suttor River area, which is the next major undeveloped area to the north in Queensland. It contains some very rich river country, a considerable amount of brigalow land and a large area that needs to be further developed. It could be developed in the same way as Areas I, II and III of the brigalow development scheme.

The same remarks apply to land further north in the Gulf, and even Cape York itself. Surely it is incumbent on the Government to put forward proposals for further development in the Suttor River area and other similar areas that are suitable for development of the type carried out under the brigalow land development scheme. I make my suggestions constructively, as I believe that this is what should be done. The Government should be putting these matters

before the Federal Government in an endeavour to obtain the means for further development.

Recently a question was asked in the House concerning the sugar industry. It is vital that a new international sugar agreement be successfully negotiated. Next month a delegation led by the Federal Minister for Northern Development (Dr. Patterson) will leave Australia to attend the International Sugar Conference. Included in the delegation will be the Queensland Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries. After looking at the relevant figures, I believe that Queensland should have put a proposal to the Federal Government prior to the departure of the delegation. A case should have been prepared for further expansion in Queensland, with an increase in sugar-cane assignments. The history of the sugar industry since World War II shows that virtually every 10 years it has undergone successful expansion. On the last occasion there were severe problems, caused mainly by low sugar prices on world markets. The current world price of sugar has never been higher. Figures produced by the Australian Sugar Producers' Association show that world consumption of sugar has increased by more than 50 per cent in the 12 years since the last industry expansion in 1960-61.

Surely everything should be done to see that Queensland retains its position as one of the major exporters of sugar in the world. For a number of years Queensland was in second place as a world exporter of sugar, but it is now in danger of being displaced in second position by Brazil, where expansion in the sugar industry is at present being backed and supported by the Government. The sugar industry expansion there has been such that Brazil is likely to displace Queensland as the second largest exporter of sugar. Unless the industry goes forward in Queensland, it will go backwards.

I feel that plans for the next expansion of the sugar industry in this State should have been submitted to the Commonwealth Government prior to the departure of the delegation to attend the International Sugar Conference. There are a number of areas in Queensland that carry over-assigned crops and support the remainder of the industry, and they should be given some basis of support for the future. A case on this basis would have provided the Commonwealth with strong points to argue on Queensland's behalf at the conference.

It is extremely fortunate that the leader of the delegation is highly skilled in the sugar industry. I refer, of course, to the Federal Minister for Northern Development. I have said before, and I say it again now, that I think it is wrong that the Premier and the Minister for Primary Industries should be going overseas to the sugar conference when the Minister most skilled and knowledgeable in sugar matters is the Minister for Mines and Main Roads. He knows the practical

aspects of the sugar industry in the growing, milling and marketing fields, and I believe that he should have been a member of the delegation.

There has been talk of the way in which the Federal Budget affects tourism. To my knowledge, no proposal has been put by the State Government to the Commonwealth to obtain support for the tourist industry, particularly in remote areas. I think this is an excellent example of what can be done. If it is not backed by the Federal Government, again we, as Queenslanders, have a basis and grounds for attacking that Government.

As I said earlier, I do not criticise merely for the sake of criticising, and I believe in giving praise where it is due. We have already seen several water conservation schemes successfully submitted to the Federal Government through the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission. Since the advent of the new Federal Government, work has actively been undertaken to reappraise the Eton irrigation scheme and the Urannah scheme, which is an extension of the Burdekin scheme. These are two examples of how the State can put proposals to the Commonwealth and receive its support and assistance for the benefit of the State.

To my mind there was a far more urgent need to undertake rail standardisation in Australia than to convert to a metric system. Surely rail standardisation would be of far greater assistance to the flow of our own goods internally than would conversion to the metric system be to our overseas trade. We do not send anything overseas in milligrams or grams. Most commodities are sent overseas in very large quantities. In fact, in my own area, sugar goes overseas in 15,000 to 20,000-ton lots and coal in anything from 60,000 to 120,000-ton lots.

In recent years we have seen in Queensland the complete reconstruction of the Mt. Isa-Townsville-Collinsville railway line. We have seen also the construction of new lines from Gladstone to Moura, Hay Point to Goonyella, and Peak Downs (it is now being extended to Saraji), and to the Greenvale Mine. All of these have been constructed on the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. In addition, in this period almost the whole of the North Coast line has been rebuilt and reconstructed. If some type of scheme had been undertaken by the State Government in co-operation with the Federal Government, or if the State Government had put plans and proposals for rail standardisation to the Federal Government and received support, almost half the railway line in Queensland could now have been converted to standard gauge.

In the Mackay area, and in North Queensland generally, northern development is still very much a talking point. Several years ago one heard a great deal of talk about this subject. What is the view of the present

State Government? I shall say a little more about that as I continue, because its attitude is not much better than that of the Federal Government.

I have noted here points made in May 1967 by a very highly esteemed gentleman in Federal politics who stated that what was urgently needed in North Queensland was action to devise an over-all scheme of northern development, a plan for Federal contribution towards water conservation in the North, support and assistance for the future of the Snowy Mountains Authority so that it could be brought to the North to assist and support us there, support for transportation in the North to overcome the over-all problems of moving freight, equitable arrangements for financing important projects such as the ones I have mentioned—railways, roads, brigalow lands—and, in addition, a special monetary grant to Queensland on a systematic, long-term, planned basis. Those were the words of Mr. Gough Whitlam when he was Leader of the Opposition, so I contend that, on that basis, he and his Government should now be prepared to implement these proposals. They should be prepared to follow them through.

Has the Queensland Government put forward proposals for Mr. Whitlam's support now that he is the Prime Minister and not just Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Parliament? If it has not done that, it should get on with it straight away. It is no use sitting back and criticising the Federal Government merely for the sake of criticising. Possibly because pressure has not come from this State Government the contrary to what we require is included in the Federal Budget.

In actual fact, financial support has been taken from country areas in order to boost the cities, which is the direct opposite of a decentralisation programme. That is the direct opposite of what was being advocated six or seven years ago by present members of the Federal Government. They should be reminded of that in a proper way. No doubt they will say, "Schemes have been advanced by the New South Wales Government for the development of the western suburbs of Sydney, and other schemes have been put forward for the development of the western suburbs of Melbourne. That is why they have been included in the Budget." This was announced the other day, with the support of the other States.

From Queensland we should really be putting pressure on the Federal Government by submitting properly documented schemes. After all, Melbourne and Sydney are completely non-productive from the point of view of the nation's export economy. In actual fact they are sucking Australia's lifeblood into the south-east corner of the nation.

In this regard Queensland is no better, and I propose to quote from the Government's own publication, "Developmental Expenditure in Queensland." Incidentally, I commend the Government for putting out such an excellent publication. It gives everybody an idea of what is occurring and what is going to occur in the various areas of the State. From the summary we learn that for private projects North Queensland has received 38 per cent of the development expenditure. In other words, the private sector of the economy has recognised the need for and the value of spending money in that part of the State. I stress the word "value" because we all know that the private sector invests capital only where it knows that it can get a return.

The private sector has invested its capital in the northern areas of the State. In the Brisbane area it has invested only 15 per cent of the over-all total spending and projected spending. When we look at the public expenditure, we find that although the figures are almost identical the position is completely reversed. Public spending in the Brisbane area represents 37 per cent of what is projected for the whole of the State, whereas the public spending in North Queensland is only 18 per cent of the total.

It is all very well for the State Government to be critical of the Federal Government just for the sake of being critical, but when we get down to an analysis it is no better than the Federal Government because its own public developmental expenditure is being incurred to a greater extent in the south-east corner of the State than in other areas.

The State's own investment authority, the State Government Insurance Office, would be the most centralised authority in the State. Almost everything it is prepared to build is being built in Brisbane. I know that it has built a small office block in Mackay and another one in Cairns, and that another is projected for Bundaberg, but that expenditure does not compare in any way with the \$48,000,000 being spent for reconstruction over Central Railway Station and Brunswick Street Railway Station.

The State Government Insurance Office was also prepared to put a lot of money into the Crest Hotel for a southern development organisation. It spent a great deal of money in a new building for Mount Isa Mines Ltd., the State's richest mining company. It is developing its own large office complex at the corner of George and Ann Street which will be available for rental. It has spent a mint of money developing the Brisbane Cricket Ground so that the Brisbane Cricket Association can pseudo act as the Queensland Cricket Association and lose a few more Sheffield Shield competitions.

I believe things have even reached the stage where the S.G.I.O. is building bachelor flats in Astor Terrace. Of course, the other insurance companies are not much better. As

I said before, there is very little private spending in the city area; most of that expenditure is going to the North. Most of the money that is being spent in Brisbane belongs to the insurance companies. All they are helping to do is create all-profit, non-sweat industries in Brisbane—industries that are sucking Queensland's economic lifeblood into the south-east corner of the State in the same way as others are sucking Australia's lifeblood into the south-east corner of the Commonwealth.

This State Government should look in the mirror, where it will see that it is currently also moving into policies which reflect some of the Federal policies that have already been implemented and that look like continuing if we do not do something about it. The State Government Insurance Office is Queensland's developmental authority. It should be used to help develop the State's main tourist areas. In fact, there is talk of overseas capital coming in to develop Cape York cattle properties. In other parts of Australia—the Esperance Bay area in Western Australia is a typical example—other insurance companies have moved in with developmental expenditure and, by adding trace elements to the soil, have developed farms in an area where previously there was nothing. Surely the State Government Insurance Office could do this in the case of these Cape York cattle properties rather than have them come under foreign ownership. It would certainly get a good return, with cattle prices at their present level.

It is rather strange that most finance houses in this State will not allocate developmental capital away from the south-east corner of Queensland. One can cover the whole field seeking developmental capital for something in North Queensland or Central Queensland but they all say, "We don't finance anything of a developmental nature except in the south-east corner of the State—Brisbane or the Gold Coast."

In the northern areas of this great State, the heaviest burden on the people and the worst factor in increasing living cost is the cost of transportation. In 1965 the Federal Government produced the Loder Report, about which we hear so much. I have a copy of it here. It is the report of a committee of investigation into transport costs in northern Australia, and it sets out quite clearly where the problems lie in relation to transport costs and the action that Governments could take to overcome them.

The present Federal Government, when in Opposition, committed itself during the Dawson by-election in 1966, and also on every occasion that there has been an election in North Queensland since then, to move towards implementing the recommendations of the Loder Report. This is the type of thing I am getting at. The Queensland Government now has the opportunity to put pressure on the Federal Government for the implementation of these recommendations.

Within the previous statement I mentioned as coming from the Prime Minister when he was Leader of the Opposition, he also mentioned that the Commonwealth paid less to Queensland per mile of classified highway than to any other State. I repeat that the Queensland Government now has the opportunity to put a proposal to Mr. Whitlam for more assistance for road construction and maintenance in the northern parts of this State as set out in one of the recommendations in the Loder Report.

Because of the necessity to travel from one area to another, perhaps for health reasons, or for business or other purposes, or to obtain essential parts and supplies in certain remote areas, air transport in North Queensland is not a luxury but an essential part of transport within the area. Again the Loder Report sets out quite clearly ways and means by which Governments, both Federal and State, should move to support air transport in this area. The Queensland Government now has an opportunity to put forward some of these proposals to the Federal Government.

Another old and continuing problem in all country areas in this State is sales tax. People in such areas buy a commodity and, by the time they receive it, they might have to pay air freight and other charges on it. I cited in this Chamber previously the case of the person who had to obtain a special washer for some hydraulic apparatus in order to keep his men operating on particular work. The washer cost 30c in Brisbane. He had to make a telephone call through the company concerned to obtain the part. The cost of that call was put on his docket. The washer was air freighted up and the cost of air freight was also added. The phone call cost \$2.10 and the air freight \$1.30, or something like that. All those extra charges were added to the cost of the part, and he was forced to pay sales tax on the total amount. Anomalies such as that should be raised with the Federal Government.

It is all very well for politicians to talk about improving public transport systems in the major cities. In the provincial cities of Queensland very poor public transport services are available. In fact, in a number of the provincial cities local residents who do not own a car or cannot ride a bicycle are forced to walk.

Suggestions have been made that an additional Minister will be appointed to the Queensland Cabinet with the portfolio of the Environment and Urban Affairs. I suggest that Queensland should follow the lead set by the Commonwealth and establish a Ministry of Northern Development. On previous occasions I have put forward such a proposal to various groups, but it was stymied. At this stage I do not propose to mention any names.

To follow my line of argument on the problems that confront the people of the North, I shall again refer to the huge

investments by insurance companies in the south-eastern corner of the State. These companies are investing very little in the provincial cities, particularly those in the North. They are probably the worst offenders in increasing costs in North Queensland. Recently they imposed iniquitous increases of up to 300 per cent on storm and tempest premiums. Such a huge increase imposes tremendous hardship and burdens upon the pensioner as well as the family man.

Many people have found that insurance premiums on homes that have withstood as many as 30 or 40 cyclones have been increased by as much as 300 per cent. Pensioners have come to me and said, "I simply can't pay my premium. It has been increased from \$35 to \$105." The increased premium represents a payment of \$2 a week. Pensioners simply cannot afford to pay that amount, yet neither can they afford to be without insurance cover. If during a cyclone a neighbour's house is blown down and a pensioner's home is damaged by flying debris he finds that he has to pay heavy repair bills, which, of course, he cannot afford. Increased insurance premiums have caused tremendous hardship not only for pensioners and families but also for farmers, businessmen and, in fact, the whole community.

I think all honourable members are aware of the three insurance zones that have been created in this State. The first zone extends along a 200-mile-wide belt running north from the 22nd parallel, which is just south of Mackay, to Cape York. The second zone is, likewise, a 200-mile-wide strip, extending south from the 22nd parallel to the Queensland-New South Wales border. The third zone embraces the remainder of the State.

I do not deny that North Queensland is swept by frequent cyclones. With this knowledge, the majority of North Queenslanders, where possible, build their homes, farm sheds and commercial buildings of cyclone-proof materials. They expend additional sums of money in making their structures cyclone proof. Surely this practice benefits the insurance companies, so I believe that people who construct their buildings with cyclone-proof materials should be entitled to a lower rate of premium than that paid by those who do not go to the additional expense involved.

In recent years, many spec builders have erected homes not in accordance with cyclone-proof specifications. After each of the two most recent cyclones that caused tremendous damage in the North, namely, Cyclones "Ada" and "Althea", I visited the Proserpine-Shute Harbour and Townsville areas respectively. I can assure the House that the homes that were damaged were not the old solid ones that were constructed in accordance with cyclone-proof specifications but the newer type of home built from modern materials. Many of these structures had not been properly cyclone proofed.

Every report clearly shows that this is so, but the people with cyclone-proof homes are still being "slugged" with loaded insurance premiums.

I remind honourable members of the storm at Killarney, the one at Gympie a few years ago, and the recent floods in the Mary River and Burnett River areas. I have seen major hailstorms in the south-eastern suburbs of Brisbane cause more damage, perhaps, than that caused by any cyclone I have seen. We in North Queensland do not experience hailstorms.

Brisbane is just as vulnerable as any other place, and the Government knows this to be so. To prove my point, I refer to the \$10,000,000 plan to minimise flooding in this city. In fact, the first and only flood mitigation scheme the Government looks like implementing is to be carried out in Brisbane. It should be remembered that most of the other flood mitigation plans instigated in Queensland have been implemented by river authorities or river trusts and are paid for mainly by the ratepayers in the area concerned.

The Government recognises that there is just as much danger from storm and tempest in Brisbane as there is in any other part of the State. If that is so, why should the people of North Queensland be "slugged"? The principle of insurance is that the risk is spread over a number of people instead of resting on one individual. What is happening is but another example of insurance companies pleasing themselves about what they do. An open inquiry should be held into the operations of insurance companies in Queensland, their methods, and the way they are fleecing people in various areas without proper justification.

Another point that substantiates my argument concerns motor vehicle insurance. Who has not experienced delay in assessment and settlement after a motor vehicle accident? Insurance companies have no concern at all for the owners of vehicles or the inconvenience caused to them. A motor vehicle owner might wait six months for his vehicle to be repaired if his insurance company can find some way of delaying a decision on whether it should or should not be repaired. The worst companies are those that are tied to or are subsidiaries of finance companies. They know full well that they have the insured person by the throat. If he does not do what they want him to do, or accept the terms laid down by the companies, they can get at him through the finance company. Surely that is a further ground for an inquiry.

As a properly trained and qualified valuer in this State, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will appreciate my next point. One of the worst rackets worked in Queensland today is engaged in by insurance assessors. They are costing insurance companies, unnecessarily,

many hundreds of thousands of dollars—if not millions of dollars—in motor vehicle repair costs. These costs are passed on by way of increased premiums to those who effect insurance. Some of the rackets worked by insurance assessors are worse than those engaged in by tow-truck operators. Assessors, ostensibly, are completely tied to insurance companies, but they are getting kickbacks from panel beaters, motor firms and other organisations throughout the State.

Anyone in Queensland whose motor vehicle is damaged, and who wants to get a proper assessment, should approach a properly certified or registered valuer and get him to carry out an assessment, even if it costs a few dollars. I say that because none of the assessors are registered. Indeed, some time before Christmas I asked the Premier a question about insurance loss assessors in Queensland. No legislation ensures that they are licensed or registered, and there is no organisation other than an insurance company to which any person in Queensland can complain about insurance assessors and the problems they create. Assessors are engaged by insurance companies and are supposedly protecting the interests of those companies. There is no-one to protect the owner. In fact, the owner has very few rights if his motor vehicle is damaged and he is in the hands of an assessor.

How are assessors qualified? I have seen advertisements in the newspapers and all that is necessary to become an insurance assessor is to be a qualified tradesman with clerical experience.

(Time expired.)

Mr. ROW (Hinchinbrook) (3.55 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate, I first want to join with my constituents in congratulating His Excellency the Governor on his address on the occasion of the opening of this Second Session of the Fortieth Parliament of Queensland. I also join in the affirmations and expressions of loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen, a gesture which is somewhat tentatively proffered by members of the Opposition. It surprises me that they still do it, but of course we all know the hypocrisy that is not uncommon in their ranks. Their rather rude performance at the opening ceremony of this Parliament bears testimony to my remarks.

As this is the beginning of my second session as a member of the Legislative Assembly, I take the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to my colleagues in Government, the Clerk and staff of Parliament House and the officers of all Government departments for their fellowship, co-operation and assistance during my first year as a member. The role of the Public Service is a very important one. I believe that co-operation between this service and the Government depends a great deal upon good will between the parties concerned.

Demonstrations by the Federal Government in such matters as the A.S.I.O. affair are a clear demonstration not of democratic co-operation but of political anarchy and a purging of a sector of the Civil Service of this country, which was established in the first instance to protect the civil rights of the people. Everyone knows that Senator Murphy was fearful of the skeletons in the cupboard, which could have been attributable to his own party's activities, and he could not get them out quickly enough. Of course, the only method he knew was the underworld method of the midnight door-knock. The sequel to that episode was the attempt to make it out as a heresy hunt for so-called extreme Right-wing terrorists, who were nothing more than political refugees from the same sort of political anarchy that the Labor Government will soon impose upon the people of Australia.

Mr. Frawley: He removed the files about his Communist mates.

Mr. ROW: That is right.

It is these anti-socialist migrants who are the target of Labor's poisoned arrows. Before long, it will be every Australian citizen who dares to speak out against socialism. I suggest Mr. Peter Barbour is a very early victim.

We have also had clear evidence that Labor intends to introduce an electoral system designed to destroy the present democratic method of preferential voting and replace it with a method that will enable a candidate to be elected by a comparatively small percentage of electors. This will depend upon the number of candidates. For example, one of four candidates could be elected by little more than a quarter of the votes, and no-one can convince me that the "first past the post" method of election is democratic.

Mr. Burns: Wait and see.

Mr. ROW: We will wait and see. The honourable member does not want to give the people even a decent franchise. This is what honourable members opposite call democracy, and they are very vociferous when touched on this particularly soft spot. Coupled with this travesty of justice, they wish to gerrymander distribution by altering the electoral system to strengthen their own position.

Mr. Burns: You did it.

Mr. ROW: Not the way you would have liked us to do it.

Mr. Burns: You have been doing it for years. But for that, you wouldn't have got in.

Mr. ROW: What are the margins?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROW: You know what you would like them to be.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROW: By comparison with the Liberal and Country Parties, the Labor Party has an enormous reservoir of votes that are virtually wasted in the large electorates in the big cities of this country. If the Labor Party could transfer some of those votes to more marginal electorates, they would consolidate their position by a means that is in reality nothing but a political gerrymander.

The Labor Government in Canberra wants a complete redistribution that will work in its interests. In order to ensure that such a redistribution falls its way, the Labor Party intends to transgress the democratic rule by which boundaries of electorates are fixed, and to change the present principle of allowable margins between electorates to consolidate its gerrymander. The accepted margin of more or less one-fifth in electorate quotas is the mathematical average for each State. Previously, Governments of all political colours have accepted this margin without query. The exception is the Government with the red political colour that presently predominates in Canberra and flourishes under the chairmanship of "Chairman Gough".

When the joint committee of constitutional review considered the matter of the electoral law in 1959, it asked the Commonwealth Electoral Officer and the Surveyor-General for their opinions on the margin of allowance. The preponderance of opinion was in favour of preserving the then-existing one-fifth margin. Those professional and independent authorities fully realised that the smaller the margin became, the more difficult would be the task of producing sensible and democratic boundaries. If the Labor Party does what it plans to do, a redistribution will be required before every election. That is a ludicrous situation when one considers all the other important factors that should be considered before declaring an electorate, such as community of interest, disabilities arising from remoteness or distance, density or sparsity of population, area, physical features and existing boundaries. By using these criteria wisely, electoral commissioners in the past have been able to reduce the disability experienced by country members in providing their constituents with services comparable with those that members representing the much smaller and more compact city electorates can give.

Of course, we have all experienced this week the bringing down of a socially-biased Federal Budget. I think I can dismiss this by saying that it is designed to intimidate those people who are not traditional Labor supporters.

Unfortunately, many politically uncommitted citizens of this country are swept up in the avalanche of socialism that the Federal Government presumes to touch off. We can only take heart from the certain fact that more people will now find themselves swimming against this stream of

political anarchy. It is very important to remember that many worthy and peace-loving people are forced to suffer these pressures in what is supposed to be a democratic country.

Mr. Houston: We saw democracy in operation this morning.

Mr. ROW: That was democracy.

Coming, as I do, from a rural electorate, Mr. Speaker, I am very conscious of the plight of Australia's diminishing rural population. This is a segment of Australian society which, despite inflation, lack of numbers, remoteness, and the constant demand for increased production and economy of scale, has met the challenge of its obligations to this country in no uncertain manner. Australia is still basically a primary-producing country, yet socialist Labor policies ignore the facts of life to the extent of hitting these people hardest.

The Labor Government attempts to appease them with glib statements about tariff cuts to lower the price of imported equipment, while in the same breath it takes away the investment concessions allowed by former Liberal-Country Party Governments. My impression of the lifting of import restrictions is that we will soon be substituting for our own primary production cheap imports from places such as Red China, and probably they will be available through Myer Stores. I suppose it is only a coincidence that the name Myer has been mentioned publicly in relation to a certain prominent public office in this country. The forecast is, of course, a ludicrous example of Labor's infidelity when one considers its avowed policy to banish the vice-regal system from this country.

Increases in telephone charges, broadcast licensing fees and petrol prices and the general promotion of inflation by an inflationary Budget can only squeeze harder the people who have contributed most to this country, the people who are still willing to live outside the golden circle of Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne.

Mr. Davis: And Brisbane.

Mr. ROW: Fortunately, thanks to the present State Government, Brisbane is still not quite as subject to these pressures as are the places I have mentioned.

Of course, one cannot overlook the unanimous benevolence of the Federal Government in increasing the payout for social services and allocations of tied grants to the States—tied to further the centralist policies of socialism, without any thought to serving community of interest or geographical regional considerations. The concept of growth-centre development based on new high-density, city-type complexes without due consideration for the infra-structure development will not

serve this country beyond the point of establishing new cells of population imbalance.

What this country needs is the creation of fresh interest in its undeveloped resources. This can be achieved only by encouraging the flow of developmental capital from within and without this country. I can cite the example of a very beneficial development from the flow of foreign capital into my area in North Queensland. In the Greenvale nickel-mining complex at present being built this State is receiving a wonderful asset in fixed capital establishments such as railway lines and processing plants, the employment of a large work-force and the settlement of population in the environs of one of our large provincial cities. Yet Labor threatens to stifle that type of development by private enterprise by discouraging overseas investment. Where would the great industrial complex of Mount Isa Mines Ltd. be today but for the foreign capital invested in its developmental stages?

There is a great and vigorous upsurge in interest and endeavour by the people in the more remote areas of the State to promote new industries and to attract people to settle and develop stable, healthy and happy communities. They are encouraging decentralisation, thus giving men the opportunity to become responsible citizens involved in the management of their own affairs, with the opportunity to retain some of the human dignity that comes from independence rather than accept a life of regimentation under centralist mass administration where men are no more than pawns in the political machine.

Already there is clear evidence that the Federal Labor Government intends to cut down the funds it will make available to the States for rural research. This may leave the Queensland Government with no option but to reduce the allocations to rural research institutions and programmes. In view of the importance of this type of research to the predominantly rural State of Queensland, this is a matter of great concern in all rural areas in Queensland.

I now wish to refer to a matter of particular importance to my own electorate of Hinchinbrook. North Queensland in general faces a timber shortage as development of the industry progresses. In the past the stands of rain forest in Far North Queensland have been the basis of a strong timber industry, which is currently meeting up to 60 per cent of the sawn-timber needs of the area from Townsville north. That represents about 75 per cent of the industry's production, the remaining 25 per cent being absorbed in overseas exports of high-quality cabinet timbers and veneers. The industry faces a future grave shortage of log supplies.

Recently, the Federal Minister for Northern Development, the honourable Dr. Rex Patterson, visited my electorate. I was very pleased to welcome him because he is one

Queenslander in the Federal Government who, I believe, is prepared to stand up and fight for Queensland. Dr. Patterson was made aware during his visit of the need for developmental funds from the Federal Government for our future programmes. I was a bit taken aback at one of his comments. He said that the State would have to take the initiative by applying for the necessary funds for further development, particularly reforestation. After further questioning, I learned that what he really meant was that the State would have to ask the Federal Government to go outside the previous State-Federal forestry agreement; that it would have to ask for special developmental funds to initiate any programme of reforestation or developmental work of that nature. I think this is another typical indication of electoral promises that are being circumvented by the Federal Government.

Dr. Patterson's sincerity in this respect is certainly evident, but restrictions are placed upon him by the centralist Government he represents. I am afraid it will put Queensland back into the position where this kind of development will depend, to a large extent, on some kind of charity, which I do not think we can expect from the Federal Government.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Who is going to fill the void?

Mr. ROW: What void?

A Government Member: A Liberal-Country Party Federal Government.

Mr. ROW: Yes. North Queensland cannot afford to be forced into a position where the importation of such a basic material as timber becomes a necessity. Due to distances and freight costs and the general geographic impediment, it is most unreasonable to even countenance the thought that a partly undeveloped area such as North Queensland should become an importer of raw materials. The thought is absolutely ridiculous. We have more raw materials in North Queensland than could be taken out in the next 100 years, and all we want is the finance for its development. Yet we are told to go cap in hand and seek funds under some dubious arrangement outside existing agreements and promises.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Are you in favour of a new State being established in North Queensland?

Mr. ROW: I would be in favour of a new State in North Queensland if the development of North Queensland was brought to the stage it should have reached long ago through direction of appropriate funds, proper concentration of industry and decentralisation of the area. A new State in North Queensland could be self-supporting only if it had sufficient population, and we

will never get the population under a socialist administration which forces people to drift to the city in order to get jobs and there become mere pawns in a political machine. They should be developing their land, but for this they would need money and assistance from the Federal Government, which they are certainly not going to receive.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The Australian Government has only been in office nine months, while the Liberal-Country Party was in office for 23 years.

Mr. ROW: And what has it done? It has disheartened people so much that they are turning away from developmental projects. Overseas investors are losing interest in this country. They are saying now, "Australia is in the Communist bloc; that is the end of that."

There is also the possibility of a chipboard industry, as a supplement to the existing timber industry in North Queensland. Although this matter has been canvassed and looked at, because of its impracticability at this stage it has been put on the shelf. With monetary assistance from the Federal Government, the establishment of a chipboard industry in North Queensland is feasible. Tremendous possibilities exist for the use in the manufacture of chipboard of fibre that is presently discarded by sugar mills.

Owing to its high rainfall figures, North Queensland is ideally suited to the establishment of industries that require large quantities of water. A typical example of this is the Yabulu nickel processing plant near Townsville. It is only in areas that either enjoy a high rainfall or contain large aquifers that such industries can be established. I hope that the Federal Government will recognise this fact and will do all within its power to establish industries in the underdeveloped parts of North Queensland.

To revert to reforestation, I point out that in my electorate a very satisfactory reforestation scheme could be implemented at a cost of \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000. But surely that is a small cost for the establishment of a national developmental project. However, Dr. Patterson has said that the Federal Government will not allocate funds to the State for such a purpose, except by special arrangement. Queensland is not receiving a fair deal from the Commonwealth.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: What happened in the previous 23 years when Liberal-Country Party Governments were in power?

Mr. ROW: Previous reforestation schemes envisaged plantings at the rate of approximately 2,000 acres of pine forest each year. However, as the result of pressure exerted by interests in the more thickly populated areas of southern Queensland, that rate was not maintained. The previous State-Commonwealth forestry agreement was adhered to,

but I contend that it was implemented unfairly relative to my electorate. I believe that any member of Parliament should speak up for his electorate, so I have no hesitation in agreeing to some extent with members of the Opposition that, in the past, North Queensland should have been given a better deal. As a North Queensland representative, I see no excuse for the Government's failure to recognise the needs of that part of the State.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: At least you are very fair.

Mr. ROW: Thank you. In opening this Parliament, His Excellency referred to a comprehensive submission to be made to the Commonwealth for financial assistance to effect substantial improvements in the field of urban public transport. I hope that this policy is not confined to the capital city of the State. The numerous provincial cities in Queensland are growing at such a rate that they also have trouble with their public transport facilities. When the public transport scheme promised by the Federal Government is implemented in Queensland, I sincerely hope it will be on a State-wide basis.

We have a vast system of beef roads and arterial roads that have been provided by the State Government, but to supplement their value, these roads must be linked through the development of the lesser inter-connecting roads. I hope that the Ministers of the Crown charged with the responsibility of formulating the Budget will give every consideration to the need to develop the infra-structural roads and other public conveniences.

The provision and reticulation of electricity in Queensland poses a major problem. I am only too well aware of the problems besetting settlers and others who are developing land in new areas without electricity supply. I trust that the Minister for Local Government and Electricity will give due consideration to the augmentation of reticulation systems in the rural areas of the State. Heavy demands are made on electricity supplies by the larger industrial complexes that are developing in Queensland, and a great deal of money and effort will be channelled into the generation of power, but I suggest that, if electricity is not reticulated in the developing areas, where it will be greatly appreciated, there is little chance of proper decentralisation being achieved.

To foster expansion of our export trade, particularly in the northern part of the State, we must undertake development of harbour facilities and deepening of berths at existing ports to accommodate larger ships. This will facilitate a better economy of scale through a quicker turn-round of shipping carrying Queensland's exports. The deepening of berths at some of our northern sugar ports would enable the shipment to overseas customers of larger tonnages of this very

much sought after commodity. When the Budget is being framed I trust that due consideration will be given to this matter.

The construction of small boat harbours is essential. We hear a great deal about the need to sponsor tourism in the State and, indeed, North Queensland is wide open for the expansion of this valuable industry. Even though the Federal Government has dealt a crippling blow to tourism for the time being, in the imposition of higher fuel charges and so on, the tourist industry will eventually become a very lucrative industry in Queensland if facilities are available. There is nothing wrong with the area, the climate or the willingness of the people to participate in this industry. Rural landholders are only too willing to provide caravan parks on their properties and to give leases to oil companies to establish roadside service stations for the convenience of the travelling public. There is a vast awareness among some of our earlier indigenous industries to this new era of mobility in which people want to travel. They will be welcome, and they will go to these areas, provided the facilities they need are available. I urge the Government to do all in its power to develop such facilities.

I was greatly impressed with the standard of road signs now appearing along some of our new highways in South Queensland. Recently I attended a meeting of representatives of some North Queensland areas whose aim is to promote the development of tourism. One of the subjects raised in the discussions was the very poor standard of signs and definitive devices provided for the public so that they could find their way easily to areas of interest. I urge that due consideration be given to a design for road signs throughout Queensland. They should not be confined to the highways and multi-lane expressways in the southern populous region. If it is good enough to have this for the South, it is good enough for the North.

I support the comments of the honourable member for Mackay on the disadvantages suffered by people who build homes in the tropical, cyclonic region of Queensland and have to pay excess loadings on insurance premiums. This is a very unfair imposition. I appreciate the honourable member's elucidation of this subject. I trust that this matter also will receive due consideration. Whilst insurance companies in general perform a valuable service to the community, they are inclined to be rather mercenary in their outlook. If they are to provide a service of any value, they should be prepared to take the risk that they appear to offer to take. I am not convinced that they do in fact take that risk. In many instances, the insurance institutions are better covered than the people whom they are supposed to cover. I say this without reservation. I hope that this matter will receive attention.

Mr. HARVEY (Stafford) (4.35 p.m.): In rising to speak in this debate, I assure the House of my true allegiance to constituted

authority and the laws of the land in which I reside. I also declare my allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen, her heirs and successors, and her representatives. I also assure the House of my true allegiance to my oath of office. I will at all times use my little influence, and exercise my right, to justify the mandate given to me to be here.

I have now been in the House for a little over 12 months, and I have had the opportunity of observing the functioning of Parliament. Holding the reins of office in this State is a coalition Government that is unable to justify its legislative policies and that lacks the administrative ability to justify its actions. It acts in a manner calculated to distract attention from its deficiencies by resorting to unjustified personal attacks, purely as a smoke-screen, on other Governments at the municipal and Federal levels. I consider that this Government lacks the leadership, knowledge, creativity, experience, and, above all, the interest and enthusiasm to achieve benefits quickly and efficiently, and to meet the challenge of the responsibilities of the office that it has accepted.

Decision-makers must assess the various facts, and the views of all. They must attach values to the facts, and make a choice between alternative courses of action. If no alternative course of action exists, no decision is necessary. Policy decisions are those in which the valuing of the elements is relatively more important, and the conflict of views is far greater. The broad policies of political parties are to a large extent established and involved. In administrative decisions, the factual elements of the issues involved are most important.

We are elected to represent the people of this State in its Parliament. No-one in this House was elected to govern the people; rather were we elected to govern on behalf of the people. We are the people's representatives in this Parliament, not parliamentary representatives above the people. We are here to justify the people's wishes and demands, and to endeavour to meet their requests. We must govern in a humane manner, and not as a machine. Our decisions must not only be legally right but morally right as well, and they must not only be right but must also appear to be right. Above all, it must be remembered that our decisions affect the lives of the people around us—the human beings of our State. They must therefore be based on a humane understanding of the responsibility that they carry.

I consider that the brains of this Parliament are not being used to the best advantage. Suffice it to say that the knowledge and ability of members of Parliament on both sides of the House are not being used in the best possible manner. One finds that

in this State we have government by Executive Council, government by a few, government behind closed doors, government by secrecy. Therefore, in the actual functioning of this Parliament, the views of constituents and the attitudes that members bring into this House are not being fully utilised. I say that very confidently, for I well remember the structure of the various standing committees of the Brisbane City Council.

During the period that I was chairman of one of the council committees—I should say it would have applied also to other committees—the aldermen, irrespective of the side to which they belonged, contributed worth-while submissions and their views and submissions were taken into account. Neither their contribution to the debate in committee nor the manner in which they voted in committee was used against them in the full meeting of the council. As a result, I believe that many of the men who served with me on that committee—Lex Ord, Harold Crawford and others—probably contributed as much to the ultimate decision as I did.

In this Chamber, I should say that the knowledge and experience available on both sides could be better utilised in the government of the State. Instead of Parliament being a sham in our democratic structure, I believe that many honourable members could contribute much if only their views were taken into account in arriving at decisions, whether legislative or administrative.

Mr. Hughes: You will agree, then, that all-party committees could do a very good job?

Mr. HARVEY: I believe that all-party committees could indeed do a very good job. From my personal experience as a member of the Brisbane City Council, I believe that one would get sincerity in such committees and cross-sections of opinion from those in all sectors of the community. This Parliament and the Government of the State would function better, more efficiently and in a more democratic manner if there were all-party committees making recommendations, and I am quite sure that the Ministers charged with the respective portfolios would then be able to make far more constructive decisions. Members of this Assembly represent people in all sectors of the community, all walks of life and all parts of the State. There is no better way of having the opinions of those people taken into account than by ensuring that their representatives are able to express them fully.

In November last year the honourable member for Chatsworth mentioned the need to make a critical examination of our parliamentary function, and I concur with what he said.

Mr. Burns: He did not stand by that when the Bill relating to appeals to the Privy Council was before the House.

Mr. HARVEY: That is correct. I am concerned also about recent references in this Parliament to the standing and reputation of some honourable members. Here I draw attention to the fact that the Parliament of Queensland has considered it necessary to include in the City of Brisbane Act a provision relating to the "disability of aldermen for voting on account of interest in contracts, etc.", with which they, their relatives or their spouse may be connected. I refer to section 25A of the City of Brisbane Acts, 1924 to 1960, which provides—

"(2) For the purposes of this section, a person shall (subject as hereafter in this subsection provided) be treated as having indirectly a pecuniary interest in a contract or proposed contract or other matter if—

- (a) He or any nominee of his is a member of a company or other body with which the contract is made or is proposed to be made, or which has a direct pecuniary interest in the other matter under consideration; or
- (b) He is a partner or is in the employment of a person with whom the contract is made or is proposed to be made, or who has a direct pecuniary interest in the other matter under consideration:

"(3) In the case of married persons living together, the interest of one spouse shall if known to the other be deemed for the purposes of this section to be also an interest of that other spouse.

"(5) The Town Clerk shall record in a book to be kept for the purpose particulars of any disclosure made under subsection one of this section and of any notice given under subsection four thereof, and the book shall be open at all reasonable hours to the inspection of any alderman."

I suggest that every member of this Parliament should record his various interests with the Clerk of the Parliament, who should keep a record that would be open at all times to any honourable member. In that way we would know whether an honourable member was voting on a matter that was directly to his own personal or monetary gain or from which he could in any way directly benefit. In that way no honourable member would be able to use his office for his own personal gain.

From time to time I have read many Press articles regarding outsiders' observations of the functioning of this Parliament and in my view there is need for a review of the manner in which we function as a Parliament.

Recently we have had a problem with regard to the siting of the proposed new power station. This is a matter that is of particular concern to this Parliament at the present time. It is difficult to get excited about a powerhouse—a great building that chews up coal and excretes smoke. Last year the chairman of the Detroit Edison Electric Company in the United States of America was in Brisbane. He pointed out the co-relation of living standards and the per capita use of energy. He mentioned that it was our responsibility to plan wisely for the inevitable increase in electrical energy requirements and also for the thoughtful utilisation of this valuable energy resource.

Mr. Ed. Vinnard, chairman of the Edison Electrical Institute of New York, which is an adviser to the American Government, said in Melbourne three years ago—

"Today we do 98 per cent of our work by machinery and 2 per cent by muscle power."

In Australia, some 95 per cent of our work is being performed by machinery. When one relates energy to machine power, each working man has working for him at the machine the equivalent of 400 helpers. Therefore he can produce 400 times more than he can without electrical energy.

Here I refer to the need for a uniform bulk-supply rate for electrical energy throughout the State, and ultimately a uniform consumer-supply rate throughout the State. A uniform consumer-supply rate applies in Victoria. Like Great Britain, New South Wales has a uniform bulk-supply rate. I believe that if we are to achieve our ultimate objective of assisting in the decentralisation of this State, if we are to do something to ensure that the people in the Outback are afforded the same opportunities as those in this part of the State, then we must ultimately have a uniform electricity charge throughout Queensland. At the present time marked discrepancies exist, a few of which I will quote.

The Brisbane City Council and consumers in the Brisbane area pay approximately 1.87c a unit; in the Wide Bay area the charge is 3.49c a unit; in the Barcoo area it is 16.71c a unit; and, in the Diamantina area, 25.43c a unit. Yet this Government can offer electrical energy to Comalco at .358c a unit. Imagine that! One firm—Comalco—gets its energy for .358c a unit, while the pioneers in our country areas are required to pay up to 25.43c a unit. These are matters that really concern us.

The S.E.A. franchise will expire in 1975, and we must do something about our generating authority. We must have a State-wide generating authority under the control of the State—not semi-governmental or private-enterprise control, but direct State Government control. I believe this can be achieved

in two steps to reach the ultimate of a bulk-unit rate throughout the State and progressing towards a uniform consumer-tariff rate.

In 1971 the previous State Electricity Commissioner, Mr. Neil Smith, predicted a 150 per cent increase in growth over the period 1971 to 1981. In the past it has been generally accepted that the generation and distribution system had to be doubled over a period of 10 years, or 10 per cent growth per annum. Mr. Smith estimated that meeting that 150 per cent growth would involve this State in a capital expenditure, in money values at that time, of \$850,000,000. In 1972 he pointed out that the Government would have to do something about the erection of the power station at Gladstone, generating 1,100 megawatts, of which 600 megawatts had to be reserved for the export industry potential in order to qualify it for the \$80,000,000 Commonwealth assistance. Failure to do that would deprive the State of that money.

It is interesting to note that up to the present time we have not received one cent of that money from the Commonwealth Government. One well remembers the issue between the then Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton, and the Postmaster-General, Sir Alan Hulme, as well as the subsequent visit of officers from the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Authority who came here to examine the situation and questioned the price at which we were going to supply this electrical energy.

I also draw attention to the fact that the then State Electricity Commissioner pointed out the difference in cost between a 30-megawatt unit and a 500-megawatt unit. I particularly draw attention to this because it is not the honourable member for Stafford, or Roy Harvey, or Joe Blow off the street, who is making these utterances; it is the then State Electricity Commissioner. He pointed out that the estimated capital cost per kilowatt installed in a 30-megawatt unit would be \$205; in a 60-megawatt unit it would be reduced to \$181; in a 275-megawatt unit it would be further reduced to \$137; and, in a 500-megawatt unit, even further to \$123.

Mr. Smith showed quite clearly that the bigger the generating unit, the more efficient its operation would be and therefore the cheaper the power would be. He also showed that the cost factor of coal production had no bearing on the matter. Support for his contentions can be found in comments made in June 1973 by the chairman of the British Central Electricity Generating Board. He referred to the advantages that his board had derived from the conversion of units from 60-megawatt capacity to 660-megawatt capacity. He said—

“These themes include the high cost and prototype nature of small size units such as 120MW and 200MW if they were

built today to modern technological standards; also the technical attractiveness of projected 600MW units compared with the 500MW units designed a few years ago.”

The foregoing comments underline my assertion that the measures that Queensland is taking in power generation will not assure the most economic operation of its power stations or the most economic supply of power.

When Mr. Neil Smith was State Electricity Commissioner he pointed out that the average cost of coal for the generation of electricity in the eastern States had decreased over the previous five years by from 10 to 20 per cent a ton. Whether coal is extracted by either open-cut or underground mining, modern techniques have had the effect of reducing the cost of coal at the pithead. The savings that have been effected have been passed on to the consumer in all spheres.

A programme of replacement of power stations is to be embarked upon. Bulimba “A” Power Station at New Farm closed on 15 February 1969, and it is to be transferred back to the Brisbane City Council during the current financial year at a cost of \$140,000. Bulimba “A” Power Station consisted of small units.

Bulimba “B” Power Station, which is to be phased out of operation from 1975, contains six 30-megawatt units. Ultimately, the Tennyson Power Station, which contains four 30-megawatt and two 60-megawatt units, or a total of 240-megawatts, is to be closed down when it is considered obsolete.

When this Government commenced to play politics with electricity power stations, tariffs and concessions it got itself into a mess. In an effort to extricate itself it attempted to bribe, if I might use the term, industry to this State. Instead of admitting that it had blundered, it succeeded only in becoming more deeply involved. If a person makes a mistake and then is honest enough to admit it, even his opponent will commend and respect him for having admitted it. In the past I have made mistakes but I have admitted them, and quite candidly, I felt very happy about admitting them.

The Government's blunder in getting itself in deeper and deeper started initially when it offered Comalco electrical energy at .358c a unit, the cost of converting coal to heat energy. The Snowy Mountains Authority officers sent here by the Prime Minister of the day determined that .358c was the cost of converting coal to heat energy, disregarding the capital cost of the power station, transmission costs, and so on. It is well understandable why the then Prime Minister, John Gorton, and Sir Alan Hulme questioned the figure.

Under the Gladstone Power Station Agreement Act of 1970, the Commonwealth agreed to provide a loan of \$80,000,000 towards meeting the cost of constructing this 1,100-megawatt station on the condition that 600-megawatts would be reserved for industries producing for the export market. Unfortunately, however, sound and factual decisions have been thrown out in favour of political indecision and for obviously questionable reasons that are completely out of place in wise government.

I believe that the State Treasurer is concerned about the proposal for the new powerhouse, and rightly so. I commend him for asking for more details than have been made public relative to this operation. These details must be taken into consideration, and I am sure he will be asking questions about where and how he can raise \$80,000,000 for the Gladstone Power Station if the conditions of the Commonwealth Agreement Act of 1970 are not fulfilled, as appears probable at the present time.

The Premier has been reported as saying that the decision in respect of the next major power station must be made on over-all economic grounds. I concur. It is correct that the decision should be based on economic grounds, taking into account all factors, such as subsidiary industries, supporting requirements, and the investment already made in the respective localities. It is obvious, however, that the bad economics applied to the financing of the Gladstone Power Station, as well as to the unit sale price, got the Government into the initial political bog that it still finds itself in.

The Southern Electric Authority, which has the task of building the Gladstone Power Station, is reported to have told the Treasurer that it would be impossible to get the cost down to the unit tariff rate negotiated with Comalco. Long before I became a member of Parliament I pointed out in the Press to the Minister for Mines and Main Roads that the power station's ability to provide power at this cost was questionable. I assure honourable members that at that time my doubt was based on very sound grounds.

Unfortunately, power stations are now being dragged into political manoeuvring. This has never been so previously. It is regrettable from the point of view of the power-supply industry in Queensland, and the dedicated men within the industry, that this should happen.

I ask: Will Comalco want 600 megawatts from the Gladstone Power Station? If so, will Brisbane consumers, both domestic and industrial, who are paying four times more than it is proposed to charge Comalco, be further taxed to meet the difference between the .358c and the true unit cost? Somebody has to meet this discrepancy. In

November of either 1968 or 1969, Parliament passed a Bill to permit an increase in bulk-supply and consumer-supply tariffs to allow a greater allocation of revenue funds to be used in capital expenditure in the electricity supply industry of this State. I believe that, deep down, the Government has this thought in mind at present.

If Comalco, which has not committed itself beyond conducting a feasibility study, does not proceed with the Gladstone project, what is to become of Swanbank Power Station? The initial idea was for 600 megawatts from Gladstone to meet our permanent load and for Swanbank to meet the peak-load demand. If no-one takes the surplus from Gladstone, Ipswich has a great deal to be worried about.

Mr. R. E. Moore: You can never have enough electricity. There is always growth and a need for more electricity.

Mr. HARVEY: I can assure the honourable member for Windsor that the electricity programme has been planned to keep pace with the 150 per cent growth over a period of 10 years, taking into account the 600 megawatts required for Comalco. Power from a power station is not like the energy stored in a battery that can be put away today and used tomorrow. It is created on demand and as required, other than by water storage, which is considered to be not an economic proposition at this stage although in other parts of the world it can and, of necessity, must be done. We are not in the same position as New South Wales and Victoria which have the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme.

What effect will this proposal have on Ipswich and its supporting industries? If Swanbank is to be made unfunctional, even during peak-load periods, the 1,100 employees in Ipswich, with a pay-roll of some \$6,000,000, and the whole town must be adversely affected.

What further financial redress will we be committed to in any behind-the-door dealings that may have been entered into with C.R.A.? What action will be taken to ensure continuity of employment opportunities for the workers of Ipswich because of the Government's bungling in the Gladstone Power Station project?

Mr. R. E. Moore: This is all hypothetical.

Mr. HARVEY: It may appear hypothetical to those who lack the ability to assess.

Will the Government be big enough to admit that it has fouled up the whole issue and, before it gets more deeply involved, do something to correct the calamity? Will we learn from this calamity that there are two levels of Government responsibility, namely, policy-and-decision making and implementation, being soundly advised by

the people it employs, and by those it has employed because of their knowledge and ability in the relevant subjects. So much for the power-supply industry of this State and the need for a reassessment of the situation and a determination of where we are going. I wholeheartedly agree with the Treasurer that the economics of the project must receive the closest consideration.

In the few minutes of my speech that remain, I wish to refer to transport. I consider that Brisbane, as a city, has everything going for it. It has the North Coast and South Coast beaches handy to it, and, as a place in which to live, it is ideal. However, one regrettable feature of Brisbane is its build-up of traffic, particularly in the inner-city area, during peak hours. I therefore believe that there must be a more vigorous approach to the untangling of traffic snarls. Traffic delays mean considerable costs in man-hours and material.

I well remember a report compiled in 1947 in which it was asked, "What is the use of reducing working hours if the extra leisure time is taken up in travelling to and from work?" Today many people waste two hours a day in travelling to and from their places of employment to do eight hours work. Reserved-track rapid transit is the answer, and this is a system that Brisbane must have. As it is, traffic on the road is strangling itself.

I believe that the most important step is for the Government to take over the transport system of the Brisbane City Council. The council has 573 buses on peak demand, and of the buses now being used 150 are over 15 years old.

Another point that I should like to bring out is the cost to the council as a result of the increase in tax of 5c a gallon on diesel fuel. This will mean an additional tax of \$90,000 per annum that will have to be met by the Transport Department. The buses use 1,800,000 gallons of fuel per annum, and a tax of 22.5c on each gallon amounts to \$405,000 per annum. It may be asked why the Brisbane City Council pays this tax when it is not paid by similar authorities in New South Wales and Victoria. Whilst Brisbane City Council buses operate over roads built and maintained by the Brisbane City Council, roadways are Crown land dedicated to the council. Because this is Crown land, the council has to pay diesel fuel tax, whilst the railways are not required to pay it.

Australian motorists use over 6,500,000 gallons of petrol a day, and at the previous level of fuel tax they paid \$1,000,000 in tax each day. Anyone who cares to investigate what fuel tax means to Brisbane motorists will find that more than 277,000 motor

vehicles are registered in the Brisbane area. If each of these vehicles uses only eight gallons a week, the additional tax of 5c a gallon amounts to \$110,968 in addition to the \$17,600,000 per annum already being paid in petrol tax.

I believe that there is a chance for public transport to show its worth at this stage. On the south side of the Brisbane River, approximately 4,000 people arrive by rail at the South Brisbane station each day. On the north side, because the services feed into the heart of the city 40,000 people reach the city by rail. I extracted those figures from a report prepared by the Bureau of Transport Economics. It is therefore necessary to make use of freeways on the south side to run express services to the city.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BRUCE SMALL (Surfers Paradise) (5.15 p.m.): I am privileged to join the chorus of acclamation and commendation of His Excellency the Governor on his Opening Speech, which depicts a programme of prosperity and progress for the future of this great State of Queensland. I am also very happy to add my name and the names of the constituents whom I have the honour to represent in that paradise on earth, the electorate of Surfers Paradise, to the pledge of loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and to extend good wishes for her continued prosperous reign. I commend the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply for their worthy contributions to this debate.

I take this opportunity of saying something of the admiration I have for our leader and the wonderful task he has performed in the face of a tirade of personal abuse and slander, and for the support he has had from Cabinet.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber, and I do not intend to tolerate it. If I suspend someone, honourable members might realise that I mean what I say.

Mr. BRUCE SMALL: I reiterate how much I admire the Premier for the steadfast and courageous way in which he has stood firm in the face of a tirade of abuse and personal attack. I reflect on the wonderful stand he took during the visit to Queensland by the Springboks and the battle of law and order that ensued. We will not forget in a hurry the Premier's stand on the question of appeals to the Privy Council and his flight to London, where he was followed by the Premiers of the other five Australian States, to make

representations in order that Queensland and the other States might preserve their identity.

Mr. Newton: Is Gough giving you a pension because you are over 75?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Belmont.

Mr. BRUCE SMALL: With the advent of a socialist Government in Canberra, we have seen the Prime Minister make a trip round the world insulting and offending every traditional friend of the Commonwealth of Australia—Singapore, London, New York and Washington have all been in it—and engaging in a continued campaign of offence designed to lower the standards and traditions of Australia amongst friends who have stood by us so loyally in the past. We have seen also interference with the currency and our currency sent awry.

Finally, the Federal Budget makes a most savage and most direct attack on the man on the land, the man who for decades—in fact, centuries—has been the backbone of the country. He has been attacked with taxes and withdrawal of subsidies in a manner that is designed to enable the Government to take from him and implement its crazy socialist policies.

Prices continue to soar and inflation goes from bad to worse, but there are no signs of anything that will bring about an abatement of it. I believe that all thinking people can now be said to be in a state of terror at the ultimate outcome of the present inflationary spiral and all its implications.

Mr. Newton interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Belmont has already had one warning. This is the last.

Mr. BRUCE SMALL: This is the product in a short nine months of socialism in this country. If inflation continues—and there is no sign that it will not—it means that we are facing a reign of terror, a reign of danger and a reign of catastrophe unless something is done to curb it.

The price of land has risen, along with the price of every other product. The land developer is being abused and reviled as the cause of it. It might be fitting that we take a look at the real cause and to find to what extent the demand for more and more services has introduced a factor into the cost of land, and to what extent the inefficiencies of local authorities who are slow to grant approvals for subdivision have been instrumental in increasing land prices. I speak with some knowledge of this subject, because in the

City of Gold Coast at this moment no fewer than 45 subdivisions are awaiting approval. In every case the time allowed for appeal has expired. In some instances approvals have been awaited for as long as 12 or 18 months. That sort of thing creates a shortage of land, and it stands to reason that the market reflects that shortage in higher prices because there are many anxious buyers waiting to get on with the job of building homes.

The suggestion that the solution to this problem is in the hands of Governments is quite ridiculous. It is one of the fundamentals of private enterprise that can best be handled by private enterprise. It calls for skill; it calls for the entrepreneur with years of experience; it calls for the investment of huge sums of risk capital; it calls for energy and enterprise, which cannot be found in the Government institution. I say again that the matter is one that can be corrected only by the law of supply and demand. If the efficiency of local authorities could be stepped up so that subdivisions could get under way, that would be the solution to the problem.

I cite the example of one subdivision on the Gold Coast. Two months ago 179 blocks of land were released. Within 36 hours every one of them was sold. In every instance there was a clause in the contract that unless the building of a house was commenced within four months of receipt of title, the contract would be revoked and the land would be put on the market again. Professional builders were limited to a maximum of three blocks on the same terms.

Mr. D'Arcy interjected.

Mr. BRUCE SMALL: Surely that is evidence of a shortage of land! I do not know what the solution is if it is not the release of more land. Progress and development on the Gold Coast is such that thousands of people would build homes and live there tomorrow if it were possible for them to do so. I repeat that 179 blocks were released and within 36 hours they were all sold. The release had not been advertised.

Mr. Jensen: Are you trying to emulate Mr. Whitlam?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member for Bundaberg wishes to interject, I ask him to move to his usual seat.

Mr. BRUCE SMALL: I am not emulating Mr. Whitlam—"Gough" forbid! But I do say that God helps those who help themselves—and I did not say "Gough".

If honourable members want evidence of what I am saying, they should visit the Gold Coast. It is an area that is growing at a rate unequalled in the history of Australia, and certainly in the history of Queensland. It is expanding and developing soundly on

lines which constitute a model in town planning and city development. Evidence of this growth is seen in a sales figure to 30 June of real estate worth \$218,000,000, involving 10,659 individual sales. In the previous year, an all-time record to that stage was established with a total figure of \$97,000,000 and 5,500 sales. That is just one small example, but in every respect the city is providing similar evidence of extraordinary growth and expansion.

I could tell honourable members of a redevelopment in the heart of Surfers Paradise on a block of 4.7 acres that sold for \$4,700,000. It is now in the process of being planned for redevelopment by the Hanover complex, which plans to spend \$32,000,000 on the project. It calls for provision for that monster of traffic, the motor-car, with parking space for no fewer than 2,000 vehicles.

I forecast that, in the very near future, honourable members will hear something about the most modern method of transport for inner cities ever seen anywhere in the world. It is proposed for Surfers Paradise, which constitutes the heart of the Gold Coast. I am talking about an electrical transport system which, for the want of a better name, I call the "Smallmobile". It will be on a concrete track elevated 12 feet above the kerb. It will be completely automatic and will operate a transport service over a circle of the heart of the city, embracing a group of some four high-rise car parks so that the heart of the city can be kept relatively free of this monster of traffic. Yet the people will be given facilities to come into the heart of the city and be taken back to their vehicles. In the process, they will be taken along that glorious Esplanade, which Surfers Paradise boasts is superior to anything similar in the world.

The system I am referring to was introduced by L.T.V., the manufacturers of Corsair fighter bombers. They are one of the oldest aeroplane manufacturers in the world, and they have just installed at Dallas and Houston airports one of the most modern transport systems to be seen anywhere in the world. I promise that the electorate of Surfers Paradise will show Australia the way to do this. It offers something that Australia badly needs, and is an example that we can well follow.

But that is not the only way in which the people of the Gold Coast have learned to counter the trials and tribulations associated with such extraordinary growth. In 1967 they suffered a cyclone that almost destroyed them, and they face a bill of almost \$13,000,000 for reparation work. When Mr. Whitlam visited the Gold Coast on his election campaign last year, he said, "I do not think this should be paid for by the people of this city. The Federal Government should pay half and the State Government should pay the other half." When he

became Prime Minister and took charge of the exchequer, we put to him: "What about this ideal of yours, with which we thoroughly concur, whereby the Federal Government pays half and the State Government pays the other half?" But he said, "I am very sorry; we have no cash to spare." However, the people are not taking it lying down. They are proceeding with the job, and at this moment tenders are being considered that will cover \$3,000,000 worth of the programme. This is to be borne by the people themselves, with a subsidy from the State Government, which is very acceptable and greatly appreciated.

Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 17, the debate was adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

MUTUAL HOME LOANS FUND OF AUSTRALIA (QLD.) LTD. AND MUTUAL HOME LOANS MANAGEMENT CO. (QLD.) LTD.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (5.30 p.m.): My attention has been drawn to a circular dated 31 July 1973 and distributed to members of four Home Loans Funds by Mr. D. A. Reynolds. I understand that all honourable members have received copies of the circular.

In view of the many statements made by Mr. D. A. Reynolds in such circular, I feel it is incumbent upon me to point out the following facts.

The petitions for the winding up of the six Mutual Home Loans Funds companies were presented to the Supreme Court following on the detailed investigation by Mr. P. D. Connolly of Queen's Counsel into the affairs of these companies.

In relation to the Mutual Home Loans group, Mr. Connolly summarised his conclusions as follows:—

"(a) The Fund Company is within the definition of 'Building Society' in the Building Societies Act 1886-1972 and was illegally formed contrary to Section 41 of that Act.

"(b) The operations of the Fund Company are not subject to the restraints imposed by Parliament on building societies because the relevant provisions are directed to 'registered building societies'.

"(c) I am of the opinion that it is in the interests of the public and of the shareholders that both companies should be wound up.

"(d) I am of the opinion that the directors have acted in the affairs of the Fund Company in their own interests rather than in the interests of the members as a whole.

“(e) I am of the opinion that it is just and equitable that both companies should be wound up.”

Mr. Connolly's report was tabled in this House on 3 April 1973, and the petitions for the winding up of the various companies were filed in the Supreme Court and served on the respective companies on that date. The appointed day for the hearing of the petitions was 30 April 1973. However, by reason of an application by Mutual Home Loans Management Co. (Qld.) Ltd. and its associated Fund Company to have certain questions of law determined by the Full Court, the hearing of these petitions was adjourned to 29 June 1973.

After certain preliminary submissions before His Honour Mr. Justice Matthews, a special case was filed for determination by the Full Court and this was heard on 17 May 1973. The Full Court delivered its judgment in this matter yesterday. The Full Court determined that, at the time of incorporation of the companies, the companies were not building societies, and directed that the petitions be referred back to the judge, who will hear such petitions. In his reasons for judgment Mr. Justice Douglas stated that he came to his conclusion with great regret.

The hearing in respect of other grounds alleged in the petitions for the winding up of the companies stands adjourned to 17 September 1973.

I understand Mr. Reynolds was afforded every opportunity to make submissions to Mr. Connolly during the course of his investigations, and I understand that he took advantage of these opportunities.

Mr. Connolly is presently investigating the affairs of the Queensland Home Loans Fund Limited and its management company. I understand that directors and officers of these companies were requested to furnish information to Mr. Connolly in relation to the affairs of these companies, and evidence has now been taken from those officers.

Whilst I have been invited by Mr. Reynolds to attend the meeting of members of the fund to be held on Monday, 27 August, I consider that it would not be proper for me as the petitioner in the proceedings presently before the Supreme Court to attend and participate in such a meeting.

I have the reasons for judgment from yesterday's Full Court decision, and these are available for perusal by any interested member. I strongly advise persons attending the meeting called by Mr. Reynolds for 27 August 1973 to first obtain advice from their own legal advisers and to carefully read the report by Mr. Connolly, of which each member of this House has a copy.

The House adjourned at 5.35 p.m.