

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 1973**

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

**PAPERS**

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

Report of the Queensland Radium Institute for the year 1972-73.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Report of the Dumaesq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission for the year 1972-73.

Orders in Council under the Forestry Act 1959-1973.

Analysis of Voting at 1973 Local Government Elections. (Answer to question asked by the honourable member for Redlands on 5 April, 1973).

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (11.4 a.m.): Yesterday, the Federal Attorney-General introduced two measures, a Human Rights Bill and a Racial Discrimination Bill, into the Senate. It is to be regretted that the hasty manner in which these important and far-reaching measures have been introduced has prevented State Governments from adequately considering the Bills, with particular regard to their effect on State laws.

Senator Murphy sent me draft copies of the Racial Discrimination Bill some weeks ago, but in an accompanying letter he emphasised that the Bill was only in draft form and that it did not necessarily represent his settled view. In fact, he even listed one example where he was not satisfied with the proposed law. In view of his own qualifications about the Bill, I find it incredible that the measure should be introduced into the Senate without the States being consulted, or being given a copy of the final draft. Whilst it is incredible, it also happens to be typical of the attitude of the present Federal Government towards the States. I have protested by telegram to Senator Murphy, both about the haste with which these Bills are being introduced and the absence of proper consultation with the States. In fact, a meeting that was to be held with him tomorrow was cancelled at his request.

The Queensland Government supports the principles of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. Indeed, this Government

has taken action to repeal discriminatory legislation still in the Queensland statutes. The Aborigines Act and the Torres Strait Islanders Act of this Parliament were originally introduced by Labor Governments. It has been the Country-Liberal Government which has amended the Acts to remove many of the discriminatory sections originally introduced when the A.L.P. was in office.

In view of Senator Murphy's apparent distress about these two measures, the fact that they were originally introduced by the A.L.P. cannot go unnoticed. The journals of this Parliament will show that every piece of discriminatory legislation was introduced by the A.L.P., and that the only Government that has repealed such discrimination has been the present coalition.

Honourable members should also be aware that the proposed Federal laws, whilst containing worthy phrases and expressions about human rights and liberty, also seek to define those rights in many key areas. It has been world-wide experience that, when this is done, then rights and freedoms are actually limited, and even destroyed. The powers that the laws grant to Australian Industrial Courts are enormous. The right to quash decisions of State courts and tribunals, and to nullify the wishes of democratically elected State Parliaments, represents a serious infringement both on State rights and on personal liberties.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION**

**Mr. HINZE** (South Coast) (11.7 a.m.), by leave: During a division in the Chamber yesterday I passed a remark to the honourable member for Port Curtis (Mr. Hanson). The remark, which was intended to be jocular, was, "Are you full again, Marty—full as a boot?" I am aware that such a remark would not appear in "Hansard" as it was said during a division. However, it certainly does not look very good when printed in the Press. I therefore wish to apologise to the honourable member, whom I regard as a personal friend. I have never on any occasion seen him in this Chamber, or in the precincts of the House, under the influence of liquor.

**VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL**

**INITIATION**

**Hon. R. E. CAMM** (Whitsunday—Minister for Mines and Main Roads): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Veterinary Surgeons Acts 1936 to 1964 in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

## COURT FUNDS BILL

## INITIATION

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the law relating to the custody and investment of money paid into the Supreme Court, to provide for the custody and investment of money paid into a District Court, to provide for the security and management of money and effects of suitors in those courts and for related purposes.”

Motion agreed to.

## QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FOR EDWARD RIVER  
AND LOCKHART RIVER ABORIGINAL  
COMMUNITIES

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

When will electricity be available for Edward River and Lockhart River?

*Answer:—*

“At this stage of development, it is not possible to accurately forecast just when electric power will be available at Edward and Lockhart River Communities. Electrical installation work for the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs is being undertaken by the Cairns Regional Electricity Board and that Board is making every effort to complete installations, but as the Honourable Member will appreciate, the number of difficulties concerning each installation, primarily associated with geographical situations and the seasonal weather conditions, mitigate against accurate forecasting. Efforts are being directed to provide power towards the end of 1974, but this could well be later if adverse conditions are encountered.”

S.G.I.O. FINANCING OF PARKING STATION,  
TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to a letter in *The Townsville Daily Bulletin* of November 6 over the signature of Alderman Charles Arnold of the Townsville City Council in regard to the financing of the proposed parking station in Townsville by the S.G.I.O.?

(2) Does a clause in the proposed contract with the S.G.I.O. provide that the building will be revalued at a minimum of five-year intervals and that the revalued figure will be the basis for setting the repayments at approximately seven per cent. interest rate?

(3) If so, as it has been reliably demonstrated that the cost of a standard home in Townsville has risen by some 120 per cent. in the last ten years and keeping in mind the present inflation rate, could the effective interest rate on the original amount expended rise during the 50-year leasing arrangement to a crippling and completely unacceptable figure, which will be an intolerable burden on future councils and ratepayers?

(4) If the answer to (3) is in the negative, will he provide a detailed and logical explanation as to where Alderman Arnold's submission is astray and, if the answer is “yes” or “maybe,” is it right and equitable to allow a council to enter into such a one-sided financial contract, even though new parking arrangements are urgently necessary?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) “The arrangements for the financing of the proposed parking station in Townsville are being negotiated by the Townsville City Council, a body elected by the citizens of Townsville who will benefit from the facility and who will be responsible for its eventual financing. The details of the arrangements insofar as S.G.I.O. may be concerned would be confidential as between S.G.I.O. and client and it is not policy to disclose these confidences. I would however point out to the Honourable Member that if these arrangements do call for a quinquennial review as he suggests the new base could only relate to the then current value of the facility and its worth to the community.”

REORGANISATION OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY  
ADMINISTRATION, MARYBOROUGH

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

With reference to recent Press statements that the six regional electricity boards in Queensland are to be amalgamated and reorganised into four regional electricity boards, will he give an assurance that Maryborough will retain the administrative headquarters of the regional electricity board in which it will be situated upon the proposed reorganisation of electricity board boundaries coming into effect and that there will be no transfer of staff from Maryborough?

*Answer:—*

“No decision has been made on the location of headquarters for the four electricity distribution Boards provided for in the reorganisation of the electricity supply industry approved by Cabinet. That decision and the question of location of individual employees are properly matters for consideration by those Boards themselves. I repeat what I have told other Honourable Members and that is that there

will be no retrenchments because of the reorganisation and that no present employee will be disadvantaged thereby."

**POLICE STRENGTH, ROCKHAMPTON DISTRICT; BREAKING AND ENTERING OFFENCES**

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

(1) What is the present strength of the Police Force in the Rockhampton District and what are the specific particulars pertaining to all ranks and sections?

(2) How many officers and vehicles are available for patrol during (a) week-nights and (b) week-ends?

(3) How many breaking and entering offences were reported in Rockhampton during the last twelve months and during 1972-73?

(4) How many of the incidents reported were solved?

(5) What was the total value of goods stolen or property damaged in these offences?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The present total strength of the 26 police stations in the Rockhampton Police District is 199 as follows:—

	Uniform	C.I. Branch
Inspectors ..	3	—
Senior sergeants ..	7	1
Sergeants 1/C ..	14	1
Sergeants 2/C ..	24	2
Constables ..	114	16
	<hr/> 162	<hr/> 20

Civilian staff—17

Details of strengths of sections, other than C.I. Branch are not readily available and it is not considered that compilation and supply of them is warranted."

(2) "The established strength of Rockhampton Station is:—Police, 91; Civilian staff, 13. There are 14 motor vehicles and 3 motor cycles allocated to that station. It would be contrary to the public interest to make available particulars of the dispersal of police resources. Allocation of these resources is a matter for determination by the Inspector in charge having regard to requirements but adequate patrols are maintained as required."

(3) "1-11-72 to 31-10-73, 254; 1-7-72 to 30-6-73, 282."

(4) "1-11-72 to 31-10-73, 33; 1-7-72 to 30-6-73, 47."

(5) "This information is not readily available. To supply it would require an examination of each crime report which it is not proposed to undertake."

**ALLEGED PAYMENT BY MARRICKVILLE MARGARINE CO. OF EXPENSES OF STATE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, CHINA DELEGATION**

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

Has he been informed that the Marrickville Margarine Company paid the expenses and generous allowances of non-Federal Members of Parliament who recently visited Japan and China with the Prime Minister and, if so, who are the members concerned and for what reason was the company so generously disposed towards the A.L.P.?

*Answer:—*

"I am not aware that Marrickville Holdings Ltd. paid the expenses and generous allowances to which the Honourable Member refers. However, I quote from a periodical printed and published by Australian Press Services, Canberra: 'the Federal Labor Government is under a considerable obligation to Marrickville Holdings Ltd., which has been given a monopoly for the manufacture of margarine in the A.C.T. The Labor Party is indebted to Marrickville Holdings, both as a result of electoral support and other expressions of goodwill to prominent party members.' To my knowledge this statement has not been repudiated by the Labor Party. I might add that white coats similar to that worn in Peking by the Member for Lytton would be issued and worn by employees of Marrickville Holdings."

**DOUBLE-DECK CATTLE-LOADING RAMPS, WESTERN RAIL CENTRES**

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

Because double-deck loading of cattle on transports is now a well established practice and most western cattle properties have erected special ramps, will he consider installing similar ramps at major rail centres such as Charleville, Cunnamulla, Mitchell, Blackall, Barcardine, Quilpie and Longreach, etc., to facilitate loading and unloading and prevent injury to and bruising of cattle?

*Answer:—*

"A ramp suitable for handling double decker road transports is in use at Quilpie where it was installed in August, 1972. Consideration would be given to any further applications for a similar ramp. As a result of the representations of the Honourable Member for Gregory this facility was made available at Quilpie."

PHOSPHATE AND SHALE-OIL DEPOSITS,  
NORTH-WEST QUEENSLAND

**Mr. Marginson for Mr. Aiken**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines,—

(1) Has a decision been reached on the development of the phosphate and shale-oil deposits in North-west Queensland and when is production likely to commence?

(2) What are the known quantities of deposits and could production be sufficiently economical to sell on world markets and compete with imports?

*Answers:—*

(1) "These are two separate projects and one decision cannot cover both. I can assure the Honourable Member when firm decisions have been made these will be announced publicly."

(2) "The companies involved in these projects are still carrying out feasibility studies and are no doubt striving to attain these goals."

PRODUCTION AND IMPORTS, BUTTER  
AND CHEESE

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

(1) Is Queensland considered a shortage State in butter and cheese production and what is the consumption of these products compared with production?

(2) Has Queensland butter a quality of sufficient acceptance to the average consumer or is there a preference for butter imported from other States?

(3) Which State is supplying the bulk of Queensland's need for extra butter?

*Answers:—*

(1) "During 1972-73, Queensland produced 624,340 boxes of butter, the lowest on record, and this was supplemented by imports of 169,489 boxes from Victoria and New South Wales. Queensland used 343,877 boxes for table use and 67,138 boxes for manufacturing purposes. Some of the imported butter and all poorer quality local production was exported as butter and butter products. Seventy-five per cent. of cheese produced in Queensland is sold on the local market, the balance being exported. Some exotic type cheeses are imported."

(2) "Yes, Queensland butter is entirely acceptable to the average consumer."

(3) "New South Wales."

CEMENT SUPPLIES

**Mr. Ahern for Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Development,—

(1) How short, in real terms, is the cement supply in Queensland?

(2) What are the sources of supply of cement for the building industry in Brisbane and can his Department determine the exact amount supplied to builders in Brisbane annually?

(3) Is it a fact that cement leaves Brisbane and is resold to Queensland from the south with a surcharge?

(4) If this practice occurs, even in a small way, what means are necessary to stop such activity?

(5) Could such a large firm as Queensland Cement and Lime Co. be assisted by the State Government to actively expand production and, if so, by how much?

*Answers:—*

(1) "It would not be practicable to attempt to precisely define the present demand for cement in Queensland. By way of illustration of the situation I would refer the Honourable Member to a statement by the major Queensland manufacturer which appeared in *The Courier-Mail* of November 9. This indicates that the average annual growth of sales for a number of years past was of the order of 6 per cent. However sales of cement to traditional markets supplied by the company for the 12 months to July 31, 1973, were 761,250 tons which was 23 per cent. above sales for the previous year. For the three months ended October 31 last, sales amounted to 222,295 tonnes or an increase of 12.7 per cent. compared with the same three months of 1972."

(2) "The Brisbane market is supplied principally by cement manufactured by Queensland Cement and Lime Company Ltd., Darra. Under present circumstances the company's production is being supplemented by supplies from Townsville, Rockhampton and, when available, from other States. Cement is utilised for a wide diversity of purposes and distribution is handled through a large number of outlets. Consequently, without a great deal of detailed research it would not be possible to determine the exact amount of cement supplied to Brisbane builders."

(3 and 4) "I have no knowledge of any such practice."

(5) "The Honourable Member will be aware that the company presently has an application before the Brisbane City Council for the establishment of a clinker grinding plant. Upon approval of its application by the Council it can be anticipated that the company will proceed with implementation of the project without delay. Commissioning of the proposed plant will result in a significant increase in the availability of cement supplies."

ASSISTANCE UNDER RURAL  
RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME

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

How many people received financial assistance under the Rural Reconstruction Scheme for 1972-73 and (a) who were they and (b) what was the amount in each case?

*Answer:—*

"Three hundred and sixty-five farmers were approved assistance under the Rural Reconstruction Scheme in 1972-73. As to the balance of the information sought I inform the Honourable Member that in common with all lending institutions, the Rural Reconstruction Board conducts its relationships with its clients on a strictly confidential basis. I do not propose to breach that confidentiality by requesting the Board to supply names of persons assisted or the individual amounts involved."

RAILWAY APPEAL BOARD HEARINGS,  
SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION

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

(1) What was the number of Railway Appeal Board hearings in the South-Western Division for 1972-73 and of these how many were (a) upheld and (b) dismissed?

(2) Is the cost of holding appeals recorded and, if so, what was the total cost?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "Twenty-two appeals were held, of which three were upheld. Of the twenty-two appeals, nine were lodged by three men who sought modification of the punishment only. Of these nine, five were successful in having the punishment modified. The cost of appeals is not recorded."

DRINK-DRIVING CONVICTIONS

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

(1) During the twelve months ended September 30, how many motor vehicle operators were convicted of driving under the influence of liquor or drugs?

(2) How many of these were first offenders, and of such first offenders how many were sentenced to prison?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "The Honourable Member should direct this Question to another Minister."

EMPLOYMENT OF RETRENCHED  
PERSONNEL, DEFENCE FORCES

**Mr. Row**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

In view of the drastic curtailment of defence force expenditure announced by the Commonwealth Government and especially the reduction in air crews at Amberley and the Tropical Trials Unit at Innisfail, what prospects for re-employment exist for those persons, many of whom are family bread-winners, who will face redundancy as a result of this action?

*Answer:—*

"The latest announcement by the Minister for Defence of more cuts in defence spending means that Australia's preparedness to meet an international emergency will be reduced even further. I am not aware that the cuts will result in the retrenchment of servicemen because of redundancy. However, it is patently clear that it will be the moral responsibility of the Commonwealth Government to find acceptable employment for any member of the Armed Services who, through no fault of his own, is discharged before the period for which he has enlisted has run its course."

STATE SOFTWOOD FORESTS AND  
HARDWOOD PLANTINGS

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

(1) Will he indicate the number and locations of State forests in which the propagation of softwoods is the predominant function?

(2) Is the Forestry Department carrying out any plantings of indigenous hardwoods and, if so, what are the locations, acreages and species?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Propagation of softwoods is the predominant current function on a total number of fifty-five State Forests, the locations of which I list by Forestry Districts:—Brisbane, 9; Gympie, 8; Maryborough, 5; Yarraman, 13; Murgon, 8; Monto, 2; Warwick, 3; Mackay, 3; Atherton 4. Total, 55."

(2) "Enrichment plantings of Blackbutt species have been carried out on one State Forest in the Brisbane Forestry District and on two State Forests in the Gympie Forestry District, acreages of eighty and fifty-one being involved respectively. It must be realized however that indigenous hardwoods are regenerated by a system of natural regeneration and in this regard silvicultural treatment has been afforded over the years to about half a million acres of hardwood forest."

LIGHTING, GABBA GREYHOUND  
RACING TRACK

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

(1) Was the lighting of the track at the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club meeting on November 15 greatly reduced and was it below the amount of lighting provided at all previous meetings?

(2) Was this decision taken by the Lord Mayor, who also holds the positions of Chairman of the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust, President of the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club and chief groundsman?

(3) Were either the Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust, the Greyhound Control Board or the Committee of the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club consulted before this decision was made and, if so, when?

(4) In view of complaints about the poor lighting, what action will be taken to ensure that the position is improved before the greyhound meeting scheduled for the night of November 22?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) "The Brisbane Cricket Ground Trust and the Gabba Greyhound Race Club are conducting a series of experiments to improve the track lighting. A number of complaints had been made by patrons regarding the number of poles on the cricket oval and annoyance caused to the public by direct lighting from these poles. It is therefore proposed as a first stage to install a new system of strip lighting on the inside running rail. The inside lighting on the track was reduced to some extent last Thursday but a number of additional lights were placed on certain buildings to make the lighting more even on the track itself. The Club had discussed the proposed lighting arrangements with the Greyhound Board and held the Board's written approval. The Board's stewards, as the persons responsible for the conduct of the meeting, were satisfied and passed the track as fit for racing. Similar lighting was used for the public trials held on Monday, November 12. As some of the new system of strip lighting will be in operation for tonight's meeting, it is anticipated there will be an appreciable improvement in lighting."

DIELDRIN AS SUBSTITUTE FOR  
BHC GAMMEXANE

**Mr. F. P. Moore**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Is he aware of the claimed shortage of BHC gammexane, which is used for the control of the cane grub?

(2) Why is there a shortage and what can be done to overcome it?

(3) Do the chemical companies have an over-supply of dieldrin and are they selling this to farmers as an alternative, which is not as effective and is more dangerous?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes, I am aware that there is at present a shortage of BHC Gammexane used in the control of the cane grub."

(2) "The shortage was caused by the failure of traditional overseas manufacturers to supply orders for the raw material used in the formulation of the insecticide. This was coupled with an unexpected high demand for BHC insecticides in Queensland. I have been informed that a formulator in Queensland has arranged for supplies from other overseas sources and that there will soon be sufficient to meet the demand."

(3) "I am informed that there is no over-supply of dieldrin in Queensland. Dieldrin is just as effective as BHC Gammexane for the control of greyback cane grub, the main cane grub problem in north Queensland. On the other hand, BHC is also effective against other species of cane grubs. Users need to exercise more care when using dieldrin than when using BHC Gammexane."

PLANS FOR RENOVATION OF OUTPATIENT  
DEPARTMENT, ROYAL BRISBANE  
HOSPITAL

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

Will he table a copy of the plans for the outpatient department at the Royal Brisbane Hospital?

*Answer:—*

"The plans referred to are the property of the North Brisbane Hospitals Board and I suggest to the Honourable Member that if he desires to view such plans he should contact the Chairman of that Board."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

NEW CEMENT WORKS, BRISBANE

**Mr. LANE:** I ask the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs: Will he give me a public assurance, as he did privately when I inquired recently, that the State Government, through his department, has no involvement either in supplying finance or making land available to Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd. for building a clinker-grinding works at the mouth of the Brisbane River?

**Mr. CAMPBELL:** Speaking on behalf of my own department, I can reassure the honourable member that Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd. has neither made an

application to the department for financial assistance in connection with this project nor approached it for land on which to site the project.

POLLUTION FROM NEW CEMENT WORKS,  
BRISBANE

**Mr. LANE:** I ask the Minister for Health: Has he seen a report in this morning's "Courier-Mail" indicating the deep concern of people in the Ascot-Hamilton area over the possibility of their homes being affected by air pollution from the clinker-grinding works which Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd. proposes to build near the mouth of the Brisbane River at Meeandah, and for which it is currently seeking the approval of the Brisbane City Council? Has he noted, too, the comments by various people associated with the Australian Labor Party who attempt to suggest that the elected aldermen and the Lord Mayor of the Brisbane City Council have no say in approving or disapproving the building of this plant? If so, will he clarify the matter and set the public record straight?

**Mr. TOOTH:** First of all, I thank the honourable member for his prior notice of intention to ask this question. I have seen the report and the various comments contained therein. I feel that an unfortunate attempt to play party politics in this serious matter is being made by prominent members of the A.L.P., led by the honourable member for Lytton. This is regrettable because we on this side, too, are concerned—and deeply concerned—that every safeguard should be taken when establishing industries to ensure that they cause no discomfort or nuisance to persons living in residential areas. I have frequently discussed the problem of industrial pollution with the honourable member for Merthyr, and I appreciate his great concern about this matter.

As to the approval required by Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd. to build a clinker-grinding plant at Meeandah, I point out that any building approvals necessary under the City of Brisbane Act have nothing to do with the State Government. That is obvious. Building approvals throughout the State are given or refused by the local authorities concerned.

To comment on the article in this morning's "Courier-Mail", let me say that the A.L.P. machine cannot have it both ways. When it has absolute power, as it has in the Brisbane City Council with a majority of 20 to 1, it cannot shirk its responsibility when an issue of potential embarrassment comes under its direct authority.

As to the Clean Air Act, which comes under my administration, the application for approval pursuant to section 27(2) to carry out any work, to construct any building, or to erect or alter the height of any chimney, requires that written evidence be attached

to it when submitted to prove that all necessary approvals required under the City of Brisbane Act have been first obtained.

To establish the order in which things are to be dealt with, I point out that local authority approvals come first, and approvals under the Clean Air Act are then applied for. These are either given or refused in accordance with the circumstances of the case.

MOTION ON COMMONWEALTH CONTROL OF  
PRICES AND INCOMES; ABSENCE OF OPPOSITION  
MEMBERS DURING DIVISION

**Mr. BIRD:** I ask the Premier: Did he notice that several members of the A.L.P. were absent from the House yesterday during the division on his motion concerning the forthcoming referendums? Would their absence indicate that they are uninterested in the future welfare of the people of this State, or that in fact they were in favour of his motion recommending a "No" vote but were not prepared to cross the floor and be counted?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I would not know the thoughts of honourable members opposite who were absent from the House yesterday.

**Mr. Marginson:** What about your own members? You had more absent than we did.

**Mr. Bromley:** Where was the Minister for Health?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** All I can add is that it was suggested to me yesterday that some Opposition members were at the races. It would be very interesting to know if they absented themselves for that reason at a time when very important issues affecting the well-being and future of this State and its people were being debated. But that is their responsibility, and they have to answer to the people of their electorates and of Queensland for their actions.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Mr. Speaker, I seek your direction as to whether I can at this point make an explanation following an interjection by the honourable member for South Brisbane, who asked where I was yesterday. With your permission, I would like to tell the House where I was.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Go ahead.

**Mr. TOOTH:** My absence from this House yesterday in the early part of the day arose from the fact that I was opening another of the many magnificent additions to our hospital system in Queensland. I arrived here just after the Premier began his speech, and I was present for all divisions subsequent to that point.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Am I allowed to explain where I was?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will please resume his seat.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I rise to a point of order. On behalf of the Opposition, may I claim the same right to allow Opposition members to explain where they were on the occasion in question?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There were members absent from both sides of the House yesterday, so I do not think any capital can be made out of any particular absences. No doubt they were attending to their parliamentary duties, which is their right.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Health has given an explanation of his absence from the House. I was present in the House until about 4.15 p.m., when, following a request to my leader and the party Whip, I was granted leave to attend to obligations in Toowoomba. I was paired with a Government member.

**Mr. Aikens:** I was not absent; I walked out in disgust.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! If there is a continuation of this type of conduct, a number of honourable members will be absent today.

#### CONDUCT OF OPPOSITION MEMBERS IN CHAMBER

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Premier: Has he read in today's "Courier-Mail" that Senator Murphy has introduced into the Federal Parliament an alleged Bill of Human Rights containing a provision relating to the "right of free speech"? If so, will he ascertain if the political party of which Senator Murphy is deputy Federal leader will take any punitive action against A.L.P. members in this Chamber who frequently, and loudly and loudly, deny the right of free speech to opposing members?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can fully appreciate the reason for the honourable member's question. In view of the attitude adopted by Opposition members, you, Mr. Speaker, have a very difficult task to perform. The actions of many members of the Opposition can only be described as disgraceful and despicable.

**Mr. Bromley:** What about your own members? What about yourself?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. Bromley:** Well, what about it?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! Never mind asking me "What about it?"

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I recognise the extreme difficulty of your task, Mr. Speaker, as the person in charge of this Assembly. The attitude adopted by members of the Opposition yesterday was one of total defiance of your authority, and, as such, was disgraceful.

**Mr. Aikens:** I walked out.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The honourable member for Townsville South also recognises this fact, and, as he said, he felt compelled yesterday, in the face of the attitude of Opposition members, to leave the Chamber.

#### BALLOT, NATIONAL ABORIGINAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I ask the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs: Is it a fact that some candidates who were correctly nominated for election to the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee now find that their names do not appear on the ballot paper? If so, will he take steps to have the ballot declared null and void?

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** I am very concerned that the names of two people who applied to be candidates for election to the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee do not appear on the ballot paper. I refer particularly to Harris Gregory of Kowanyama, and Kenny Jimmy. I am not very conversant with the qualities of Kenny Jimmy, but Harris Gregory is a man who has both feet on the ground, and he could do an excellent job. My information is that, although his nomination was lodged properly and his deposit was paid, at this stage his name does not appear on the ballot paper. Yesterday we sent a telegram to the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs requesting an investigation of the matter. If my memory serves me rightly, Kenny Jimmy is presently chairman of the Aboriginal Council at Kowanyama.

I often wonder where we are going when things such as this happen. We should all act as sensible and responsible people. The present Government in Canberra is setting up a National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, but, so far as I can see as one who is genuinely concerned for the real interests of Aboriginal people in Queensland, we are likely to have on that body a number of people who are not dedicated to the Aboriginal cause. Every honourable member in this House who is reasonable will surely realise that we have to get on this committee dedicated people, not those who are just after easy money—it is as simple as that. Various people have received assistance from the Commonwealth Government for canvassing purposes. This will not bring credit to any of us. We should be interested only in the Aboriginal people, but all that the proposal will do will be to divide them and create problems.

I repeat my earlier remark, namely, that the Aboriginal problem in this State will not be solved in my lifetime or that of any other honourable member here. The solution to this problem lies in dedication and interest in the job, and the appointment of people who are dedicated and want to do the job.

I am certainly very concerned that the names of Harris Gregory and Kenny Jimmy do not appear on the ballot paper.

ALLOCATION OF SURPLUS ARMY HELICOPTERS  
FOR CIVILIAN USE

**Mr. CASEY:** I ask the Premier: Has his attention been drawn to the statement in yesterday's Press that the Federal Government has decided not to purchase all 75 Bell light-observation helicopters on order for the Defence Department? As the Commonwealth does not want those helicopters for defence purposes, will he approach the Prime Minister to see if the Commonwealth Government will go ahead with the purchase and make the unwanted helicopters available to the States for search, rescue, emergency and civil-defence work?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can fully appreciate the honourable member's raising this matter. Over the years there has been a request from people in North Queensland that the Army should station helicopters in that part of the State for use in times of drought, cyclone or flood. On the other hand, it seems that the Commonwealth Government's policy is to reduce the number of helicopters on the basis of reducing costs, in line with its policy of not being interested in defence. This is evidenced by the cuts being made in all the armed services. Therefore, I doubt very much whether any good purpose would be served in my asking the Prime Minister to make available, for civilian use, those helicopters that are not required for Army purposes. I am quite sure that I would be given a negative reply.

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES FOR SEWERAGE WORKS

**Mr. BRUCE SMALL:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: In view of an offer from Canberra to the Gold Coast City Council of loan money for sewerage proving quite unacceptable, will he advise the House if his recent visit to Canberra achieved any improvements in the conditions attached to such loans?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Honourable members will recall that the present Commonwealth Government made certain promises to local authorities during the election campaign. One such promise was to provide grants to catch up on the backlog of sewerage, particularly in certain specified cities. The two places specified in Queensland were the Brisbane regional area, which extends a little beyond the bounds of Brisbane itself, and the Gold Coast.

Last Friday the Prime Minister contacted the Premier and asked whether, as there was considerable concern among local authorities that these subsidies were not forthcoming, the appropriate Ministers of the various States would meet in Canberra to discuss the backlog of sewerage work. The proposal that the Commonwealth Government had offered was for \$30,000,000 for certain specified cities throughout the Commonwealth, and of this amount Queensland was to receive \$3,100,000. However, the condition was that

the money would not be made available as grants, as had been promised, but as repayable loans bearing interest at the bond rate of about 8.5 per cent. There would be no subsidy, as is applicable in Queensland.

Consequently, it was pointed out to Mr. Uren that the Commonwealth Government was offering to Queensland and other States money for sewerage at a price that would double the cost to local authorities and, as such, it was generally unacceptable in that form. Local authorities generally are bitterly disappointed to think that, although they were previously promised grants, they have now had repayable loans, bearing heavy interest rates, offered in their stead. This is causing concern to local authorities throughout the State.

Under the Commonwealth scheme, the cost of installing sewerage would be \$117 per tenement. In Queensland, under our terms and without subsidy, it would cost \$97. When the Queensland subsidy is applied, the cost for each tenement would be only \$58. Consequently, the Queensland Government's offer to local authorities means that the cost of installing sewerage for each tenement is about half what it would be under the terms offered by the Commonwealth.

Therefore, as honourable members will appreciate, local authorities are concerned that the Commonwealth Government has broken its promise to make these grants to them. As a matter of fact, the Commonwealth Government has indicated very clearly that its aim is purely to usurp power, that it is not interested in sewerage. Mr. Uren made the clear statement that, as far as the Commonwealth Government is concerned, sewerage is a business proposition; on the other hand, the Queensland Government regards it as a service to the public.

To test Mr. Uren's feelings, I asked him whether he would accept a situation in which more loan money was made available to the States, including Queensland, through the Loan Council, so that the Queensland Government could carry on its scheme under the present very satisfactory conditions. He said he would not make any money available unless it was controlled by the Commonwealth Government itself, which indicated clearly that he would not assist local authorities to halve the price of sewerage installation; that his aim, and the Commonwealth Government's aim, was purely to obtain the power that they so urgently want; and that their interest in local authorities is negligible.

In addition, the Ministers of the various States were asked to go to Canberra and negotiate on the matter. When they arrived, all they were offered was what had already upset the local authorities. Some of the Ministers representing States with Labor Governments rejected the Commonwealth's proposal out of hand. The words of the Tasmanian Minister were, "We want nothing to do with it. It is merely putting a load around our necks."

I am becoming tired—I am sure Ministers from other States are, too—of being called to Canberra, time after time, to negotiate. There is no such word as “negotiate” in the Commonwealth Government’s vocabulary. It lays down what it has already proposed and what local authorities have already said is abhorrent to them. It makes no effort to reach a compromise on which the States would be prepared to negotiate in the interests of local government. As the honourable member for Surfers Paradise has said, local authorities on the Gold Coast, in Brisbane and in the Pine Rivers area need this money to enable them to overtake the backlog of sewerage work; but they are appalled at 8.5 per cent, with no subsidy assistance. The Commonwealth Government frequently asks State Ministers to go to Canberra purely to make them sick of the whole business, so that in the end they will say, “We are sick and tired of sending public servants to Canberra, and also sick and tired of Ministers going there.” The Commonwealth will then accuse the States of refusing to negotiate. The Commonwealth Government will not negotiate now, even when we do go to Canberra.

At 12 noon,

*In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, the House went into Committee of Supply.*

## SUPPLY

### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES— ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH ALLOTTED DAYS

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

#### ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1973–74

#### RAILWAYS

##### GENERAL ESTABLISHMENT

Debate resumed from 20 November (see p. 1813) on Mr. Hooper’s motion—

“That \$35,764,000 be granted for ‘Railways—General Establishment’.”

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (12.1 p.m.): I advise the Committee that I will now reply to the majority of members who spoke on the Estimates on Tuesday night last. However, it is not my intention to reply to today’s speakers until later tonight.

Regarding the honourable member for Cairns, I believe that on Tuesday night I dealt sufficiently with his contribution. It was riddled with petty, unwarranted attacks on the Commissioner for Railways, while the remainder was nothing more than extraneous matter.

The honourable member for Ipswich has expressed his concern with the drink-driving problem. As a medical practitioner, with

wide experience of the results of drink-driving in casualties and close personal association with the many tragedies that affect the lives of all those involved, he will be pleased to see when I bring down a Bill to amend the Traffic Act, of which I have given notice to the House, that positive action is being taken in this area. I am confident that he will make a valuable contribution to the debate in this Chamber on the forthcoming drink-driving Bill.

I would also like to reassure the honourable member that the claims of Ipswich, so far as electrification of rail is concerned, have not been overlooked.

The programme of electrification has been devised so that, following the commissioning of the Ferny Grove-Darra section, subsequent sections can be commissioned at intervals of six months. Because of engineering and other practical considerations, it is not possible to complete all the main parts of the lines at one time. However, the Darra-Ipswich section of the line is planned as stage 3, which means that, if all goes as planned and the Commonwealth makes sufficient moneys available, within 12 months after the Ferny Grove-Darra section is completed, we should be in a position to connect Ipswich to Brisbane. But with our limited State resources, I want to emphasise that we are so very much in the hands of the Commonwealth as to how much we can do and what time it will take.

On the question of the desirable provision of a new station at Ipswich, which was also advocated by the honourable member, I can say that the redevelopment of the Ipswich Railway Station area, including air space above, is at present the subject of investigation by the State Government Insurance Office. Included in the redevelopment proposal is the provision of a new station. Good progress is being made, and it should be possible to make a further announcement on this project in the near future.

As to the suggested use of Wulkuraka as a goods-receiving depot, it is mentioned that land was resumed at Wulkuraka as part of the original electrification plans when it was proposed that the area be utilised for the stabling of electric trains, with the transfer of marshalling-yard activities from Ipswich. Diesel-electric locomotives having been introduced, the transfer of goods-handling facilities to Wulkuraka would not command as high a priority as some other works in the allocation of funds.

I have explained to the honourable member for Ipswich the circumstances which have given rise to the decline in the demands being made upon the services of moulders in the Redbank workshops. The position unfortunately is that there will be a surplus of a further three moulders at the end of this year. The staff concerned will be offered alternative positions, and for a period of two years from the date on which they take up duty in these positions, they will be paid at their present rate of pay.

The honourable member for Stafford has spoken about the planning of purchases of city council buses. All the information that the council supplied was included in the submission to the Commonwealth, but no doubt the honourable member is aware that there is a lead time for the purchase of buses of some 18 months, so the mere fact that there is no provision in the 1973-74 Budget does not mean that a request was not made for finance. But the Commonwealth Government will not give a commitment at this stage for expenditure for 1974-75. If the council, which is of the same political colour as the Commonwealth Government, can get an undertaking that money will definitely be available as requested by the State, then I see no reason why it cannot plan and place orders for the buses that have been included in the information supplied for our submission.

As to his claim that the council is not aware of what the Government is doing concerning urban transport, this is not in accordance with the facts. The general manager of the Transport Department of the Brisbane City Council was specially seconded by the Lord Mayor to participate in the planning of the programme for urban transport for the next five years, and the Lord Mayor himself has a copy of the submission made to the Commonwealth Government. I should like the honourable member to keep to the facts when he makes submissions to this Committee.

Perhaps the honourable member might even inform this Committee whether the council in fact owns the buses which it has—or what has happened to the capital which has been obtained from the sale or will be obtained from the sale of council land, such as Ipswich Road and Milton depots, presently used for transport purposes. I hope it will make this money available for improvements in bus services, as it could well do, they being part of the operations at the present time.

But let me make this clear: there is no intention to take over the Brisbane City Council bus services in the foreseeable future. Our concern is to improve services, and the money we hope to get from the Commonwealth should enable us to do this, but it certainly will not enable us to purchase existing assets, which no doubt the council would wish to dispose of at an exorbitant cost.

The honourable member, in very generalised criticism, attributed to "mismanagement" the 32 strikes which have occurred in the Railway Department since January of this year. He attributed it to the Railway Department. This assertion is of course quite contrary to the true position.

In the limited time at my disposal, I could not trace the history of all of the disputes referred to, but, in reminding the honourable member for Stafford that the responsibility of union leaders in these matters

cannot be overlooked, I relate the circumstances of the most recent dispute involving members of the Australian Railways Union at Bowen.

The point at issue in this dispute was the subject of a determination by the Industrial Commission. The decision of the commission given in August 1973 was not favourable to the union involved, and strike action was initiated on 13 September 1973. The department undertook to review the roster and prior to the further stoppage on 12 November, the men were aware that the services of five men had been obtained to fill vacancies, and that it was planned, when these men had been trained in the base duties, to change the roster to provide one 5-day week and one 6-day week per fortnight.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I rise to a point of order. On the intercession of the Minister on the last occasion I raised this matter in the Committee, we were told that it was sub judice. I would like your ruling, Mr. Lickiss, on why the Minister should now be allowed to put his case when I was not allowed to put mine.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I ask the Minister if he was referring to the matter under—

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** No.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Don't tell deliberate lies.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member for Cairns to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** How can he?

**The CHAIRMAN:** I now warn the honourable member for Mourilyan. When I am on my feet, he will remain silent. If I have occasion to speak to him again, I will take action. The honourable member for Cairns will withdraw the statement.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I do withdraw the statement. I apologise and point out that I was provoked by the Minister shaking his head, and I did call out that he was a deliberate liar. I withdraw that remark on your ruling.

**The CHAIRMAN:** On the occasion when the Minister rose to his feet the other day he informed me that, as an appeal had been lodged by the Railways Commissioner against the decision of Mr. Pont, the matter was sub judice. I now ask him if he is now referring to that matter.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** No.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is that not the fact?

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** No.

**The CHAIRMAN:** In that case, I would like an explanation.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** I am only too happy to give an explanation. The information given to you, Mr. Lickiss, based on legal

advice that we received, referred to a remark by the honourable member for Cairns that the Commissioner for Railways had defied the ruling given by Industrial Commissioner Pont. There is nothing more to it than that. As to the dispute itself, it is over and done with. The only matter in conflict is the appeal lodged as a result of the issue of a direction by Mr. Pont.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Under the circumstances, as I cannot for one moment see that this will in any way hinder the course of justice, I now rule that this matter is not sub judice.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** Thank you, Mr. Lickiss. Before I continue, I should like to point out to you, as well as to the Committee, how grateful I am to you. I can only go on legal advice that I have received, and you, Mr. Lickiss, know this.

**Mr. R. Jones:** You were given wrong advice.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chair can only rule on the advice it is given, and I have now so ruled. I have before me a list of speakers on both sides of the Chamber, so there will be ample opportunity to raise this matter subsequently. I do not want any criticism of the action now taken by the Chair. I believe I have ruled in the interest of the Committee, and I do not want any further comment. If there is any further comment, I will deal with the offender.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** The responsibility is now yours, Mr. Lickiss. As I say, I thank you for your ruling.

As to the speech of the honourable member for Murrumba, firstly, I want to express my thanks to him for his kind remarks about the railway inspection tour that he made with me earlier this year. It is certainly a pleasure to have interested members on such tours.

The honourable member has indicated his opposition to random breath tests, because he claims they are a breach of civil liberties for non-drinkers. He would be interested to learn of the number of bodies who have written to me stressing that the only way to reduce the road toll caused by drink-drivers is to introduce random breath tests.

No doubt the honourable member has seen the remarks of Mr. Justice Meares at the recent Sydney seminar on road safety and the law convened by the Commonwealth Department of Transport. His Honour made it quite clear that, in his opinion, having regard to the rights of other road-users, no breach of civil liberties was involved in this question.

The role of the police is to enforce the law, and while his suggestion that "courtesy" police should be in attendance at hotel car-parks is well intentioned, this would not be practicable when their prime function is

the prevention and detection of crime. However, the suggestion is commendable, and could well do with investigation at all levels.

As to the breathalyser, this matter will be dealt with at a later date when the Traffic Act is amended.

The honourable member will be interested to learn that the question of high-performance vehicles capable of ridiculously fast speeds has been of major concern to all State Transport Ministers and the Commonwealth Minister himself. But this is a question which must be considered on a national basis, because the introduction of any restrictions in Queensland would be impossible without similar regulations in other States. The majority of vehicles are not manufactured in this State, and this is where the problem begins. These vehicles are all right on the speed track, but certainly, as the honourable member says, should not be used on our roads, which were not built for these super cars.

As to the installation of speed governors on cars, this has been considered from time to time, but the consensus of opinion is that it would be unworkable. In the interest of the general safety of all users of the road, it must be pointed out that the need for additional power can arise from any number of reasons during an overtaking operation, so that the loss of power as a result of the governor would be potentially dangerous. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee on Safety in Vehicle Design, which is the special committee of the Australian Transport Advisory Council dealing with the problem of high speed of these vehicles, has this problem under active investigation at the present time. In this, it will include such matters as warning devices and other electronic controls which may achieve the same objective of controlling high speeds.

I have under examination at the present time the "retrofitting" of seat belts to older vehicles, but this is a question of determining safe anchorage points and the type of seat belt that can be fitted. The Traffic Advisory Committee constituted under the Traffic Act is presently looking at this problem, following certain recommendations made by the Australian Transport Advisory Council.

The honourable member for Port Curtis has expressed his concern at the increasing road toll and lack of road safety, as he terms it, and I can understand his interest. I know that he must be an advocate of sensible drinking and he would be shocked to see obviously intoxicated persons trying to get into cars to drive them on our roads. With his support we hope to separate the drunk driver from his car, which becomes a dangerous weapon where alcohol is concerned.

The honourable member levelled criticism at the standard of the griddle-car service on air-conditioned trains, and his several observations will be fully investigated. It is worthy

of comment, however, that conflicting reports have been received by the department on griddle-car services. Complaints from some passengers have been countered by expressions of praise by other passengers travelling on the same train.

The honourable member for Port Curtis criticised the basis on which the schedule of freight rates has been formulated, quoting instances of varying freight rates on different commodities conveyed over the same distance. The rates quoted for distances not exceeding 770 kilometres are—

\$10.90 manure in truckloads.

\$15.05 minerals in truckloads.

\$26.90 B class in tonne lots.

\$60.60 2nd class merchandise in small lots.

Railway by-law rates in Queensland, in common with those on all other Australian railway systems, are largely based on the concept of charging what the traffic will bear. The manure rate covers fertiliser and this traffic is carried at less than cost, but the loss is cross-subsidised by increased production and increased traffic in agricultural produce. The mineral rate is designed to cover basic minerals such as coal, crushed metal, sand, limestone and crude ores, the value of these commodities generally being relatively low. Minerals of greater value or subject to some form of concentration are classified at higher rates based on value.

The "B" class rates cover such commodities as higher-value ores, unprepared steel and dairy produce to ports. The second-class merchandise rates cover luxury or non-essential high-value goods such as tobacco and cigarettes, bottled beer, confectionary, etc., as well as light and bulky high-value goods such as furniture and electrical appliances.

The manure and mineral rates apply to truck-load consignments of low-value commodities where the department is involved only in the line haul of the loaded wagons and is not subject to claims for loss or damage. The "B" class rates apply to one-ton lots of commodities which are relatively easy to handle and not subject to any great incidence of loss or damage. The second-class rates apply on the basis of very low minimum charges for goods of high value and great susceptibility to loss and damage, leading to payment of claims.

Prior to the Government's decision to abolish the schedule 11A scale of rates from 1 July 1972, the second-class rate for 770 km from Brisbane to the North would have been \$66 per tonne instead of \$60.60. The rates quoted are the by-law rates and the department's policy of quoting concessional rates to meet competition is such that the second-class rate of \$60.60 for 770 km would have little application except in the instance of light and bulky traffic such as furniture, etc.

As to the standard of accommodation provided for maintenance employees, particularly these in migratory gangs—a subject to which the honourable member also alluded—it is mentioned that a programme of construction of new camp wagons to accommodate such employees is being progressively implemented, and 90 of these wagons have been constructed since 1970. They are fitted with gas installation to cover lighting, stove, refrigerator, etc.

I thank the honourable member for Windsor for his contribution to the debate, and also for his continued constructive interest in the advancement of the conditions of members of the railway staff. He referred to the entitlement of various categories of railway employees to certain allowances, and I shall have his submissions fully examined. Generally speaking, these allowances have resulted from Industrial Commission decisions or conform with the Public Service practice.

The honourable member made mention of district allowances payable to employees of the Education and Police Departments. On this point, I would mention that, as a result of a relatively recent decision, locality allowances, at the same rate as paid to public servants, are paid to members of the railway staff employed at various centres throughout the State.

The honourable member for Windsor also queried the differentiation between salary and wages employees on the matter of the issue of inter-system rail passes.

All Queensland railway employees, whether classified as "salary" or "wages" employees are granted first-class passes for the period of their leave, for travel in Queensland. However, the regulations governing rail travel over other rail systems in Australia are matters for the collective decision of Railway Commissioners. Requests for the issue of first-class inter-system passes to all railway employees have been considered at conferences of Railway Commissioners on a number of occasions, but a variation of the existing practice has not been adopted.

The honourable member for Ipswich West, in referring to the railway staff position at Ipswich and Redbank, supported local requests that manufacturing work undertaken by private firms be entrusted to railway workshop employees. The Government's aim has been to strike a balance between the retention in employment of its own tradesmen and the involvement of private manufacturers in meeting rolling-stock and other requirements. As a general principle, contracts are let for the purchase of new equipment and the department's work-force is engaged on the maintenance, repair and overhaul of supply equipment.

This policy confers considerable benefit on industry generally in the Ipswich area. Scotts of Ipswich, for instance, are currently engaged on contracts to the value of \$3,700,000 for the manufacture of railway wagons. Other

contracts, aggregating some \$500,000, have been let over the past two years to some 50 other firms in the Ipswich area. I am sure the honourable member for Ipswich West would be aware of the effect on industry of the withdrawal of these orders.

The honourable member also raised the question of the extension of electrification to Ipswich and the provision of a new railway station in that city. I have covered these matters in my reply to the honourable member for Ipswich. In regard to the provision of additional long-distance train accommodation incorporating single cabins, it is pointed out that there are no proposals at present under consideration in this regard. However, the honourable member's submission will certainly be borne in mind.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North questioned the adequacy of the submission made to the Commonwealth Government by the Queensland Government for financial assistance for the development of urban transport. A comprehensive and fully documented case was submitted in this regard, but the Commonwealth Government has approved three projects only as being within its capacity to finance this financial year. The adoption of other proposals put forward by Queensland will be further considered at the appropriate time.

The honourable member had nothing constructive to contribute so far as urban transport is concerned, and apparently has no appreciation of the tremendous cost that will be incurred in implementing the essential improvements, which have to pass Commonwealth scrutiny. We do not believe in building "pies in the sky". On the contrary, we adopt a responsible approach in spending taxpayers' money.

I am surprised at the honourable member's statements, which can only demonstrate his lamentable lack of knowledge of urban transport problems. He would be well aware of the reason liquor is not allowed to be served in griddle cars, other than with meals, as he asked a question, to which I replied on 8 December 1972, in the following terms:—

"The decision that liquor was to be served only with meals was made because of the behaviour of a number of passengers who created a nuisance to other passengers and to railway staff working on the trains. Instructions to this effect were issued in March 1971."

I might mention that, amongst a number of complaints received in this regard, was one to the Commissioner from an organisation catering for the movement of children which took strong exception to the actions of persons who, after spending lengthy periods drinking in the griddle car, molested young girls in sitting cars. Similar incidents are a continual worry to my brother Minister in New South Wales. It is true that anyone causing a disturbance could be taken from the train by the police at the next station, but restraining of the individual concerned

presents a problem in the interim. There is no excuse for beer being served in a luke-warm condition, and, if this is so, action will be taken to have the matter rectified.

Reference was made by the honourable member for Rockhampton North, and also by other honourable members opposite, to the shortage of staff in the Railway Department, and the suggestion would seem to be conveyed that this state of affairs exists only in this department. I can, however, assure honourable members that other Government departments, as well as private industry, are unable to obtain their labour requirements. The fact of the matter is that those persons who are able and willing to work are insufficient in number to meet the demand.

The honourable member spoke in derogatory terms of the operation of the centralised traffic-control system introduced to facilitate the working of traffic in the Central Division. I am advised that approximately two weeks ago heavy damage from lightning occurred in the C.T.C. system between Goonyella and Hay Point as the result of severe storms throughout the area. No undue delays as a result of rain occurred on the system. Recently an intermittent fault occurred on the Moura-Gladstone system over a period of two or three days as the result of an extremely obscure fault in the supervisory system. No undue delays have occurred on this system as a result of rain, but the system is being continually improved to guard against normal wet-weather conditions.

Equipment is at present being assembled for installation at one of the crossing loops on a trial basis, and a new type of track battery is being progressively installed throughout the system. Fault conditions on both of the above systems have been aggravated as the result of the recent six to eight weeks' ban on call-outs by electricians and technicians.

The operation of long-distance road-passenger bus services is still in the formative stage, and the particular claims of Rockhampton for a proper coach terminal must be considered in relation to the viability of those operations. The honourable member must remember, of course, that interstate operators are not subject to the State transport laws, and these operators are increasing in number. Wherever possible and practicable we will insist upon proper terminal facilities, but this does not necessarily mean that we will require the provision of terminal buildings which may not be appropriate to the traffic in a particular area. It is perfectly competent for the local authority or a syndicate of interested parties, including bus companies, to submit proposals for terminal facilities as joint ventures, and these would be made stopping places for intrastate services.

Before dealing with the matters that the honourable member for Roma raised, I take the opportunity to express my appreciation of the successful arrangements he made for my visit to his electorate earlier in the

year. From the visit, members of my party and I were able to get a better appreciation of the problems in the area.

The honourable member referred to the tow-truck regulations and claimed that they are not suitable for some parts of his electorate. But the regulations apply only to tow-trucks which are to be used to tow a damaged motor vehicle from the scene of an accident; the Commissioner for Transport does have the power to exempt certain tow-truck operators from the licensing provisions where he is satisfied such an exemption is justified. So far as the road safety of tow-trucks or towing vehicles is concerned, I would assure the honourable member that there can be no relaxation in this particular area.

The standards laid down must comply with the national safety standards and, in addition, separately from the licensing provision of tow-truck operators, the vehicles must meet the standards of the Chief Inspector of Machinery. No unsafe towing vehicle will be permitted on the road, and this includes the requirements for braking, strength of axles and the safety of lifting equipment, etc. I feel sure the honourable member is not asking that the standards of safety of towing vehicles be watered down.

I will be replying by letter to the honourable member's representations to me in respect of a particular case in his electorate, outlining as fully as possible the requirements of the legislation.

I was not aware the honourable member felt that 100 kilometres per hour is too slow a road speed. When we consider that two vehicles approaching on a collision course at the maximum speed of 100 kilometres per hour could have a collision at 200 kilometres per hour which, as the honourable member knows, is equivalent to 120 miles per hour, then I think the question of road speed is one which he should reconsider.

Again, at a speed of 100 kilometres per hour, as I can say from my position as chairman of the Road Safety Council, it takes a distance of not less than 246 feet for the average driver, allowing for reaction time and with good brakes and good road surfaces, to pull up in the event of some unforeseen circumstance. The margin of safety at 60 miles an hour is not great, and it is considerably worse when speeds in excess of that are travelled.

I would remind the honourable member that road fatalities in the country at the present time far outweigh those in urban areas. In most cases it would seem, from the reports I have seen, that speed has been the killing factor. Very few of our roads are designed for these high speeds and, in fact, it is only in recent years that we have tried, on a national basis, to design motor-cars for speeds of up to 60 miles an hour so far as their equipment, braking capacity and occupant protection is concerned.

I am interested in knowing that the honourable member has advocated a fuel tax in lieu of transport charges, in view of the recent heavy increase in excise duty imposed by the Commonwealth Government which has flowed through to many areas. The question of substitution of a fuel tax in lieu of road charges was raised by the Western Australian Minister some time ago, and I can assure the honourable member that it did not get a favourable reception from the Commonwealth Government. As the honourable member would know, any fuel tax would have to be collected by the Commonwealth, as it has been established by the High Court that States cannot impose a sales tax and that customs and excise duties are the function of the Commonwealth.

**Mr. Tomkins:** What was the feeling of the other Ministers?

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** It was rather a mixed feeling. Some of them took the honourable member's view that it would be a good thing, while others took the view, "We can't really debate it, because the Commonwealth has the power."

This would place the charge outside the control of the States and give the Commonwealth greater powers than it is endeavouring to obtain at the present time. If the honourable member wants to run the risk of having a greater degree of centralisation than we have at present, then this is surely one way to do it.

I admit that on the surface, without study in depth, the imposition of a fuel tax would seem to have some merit, but when we consider the additional impost that will be placed on the private motorist, including the worker who has to use his car to get to his place of employment where public transport is not available, whether he is a country worker or a city worker, then the incidence of the charges would be transferred from the commercial-vehicle operating industry, which can well afford to pay the charges, to the individual motorist. The apparent attraction of a fuel tax, when analysed properly, indicates that more anomalies would be created than could be justified.

Although a heavy vehicle consumes more fuel than a light vehicle, all studies have indicated that fuel consumed per pound decreases as the vehicle increases in size. This is one important reason why heavy-vehicle operators are always pressing for more liberal laws relating to capacity, weight, and length limitations, which would lessen their contribution to the construction and maintenance of roads without necessarily reducing freight charges or real costs to the taxpayer.

In Queensland, the number of commercial goods vehicles represents only a very small percentage of total vehicle numbers, and

they consume a relatively small amount of the total fuel used by all vehicles, including private motor-cars.

Apart from this, any loss to the State's revenue of road permit fees under the State Transport Acts would have to be made up within the State from other sources of taxation, as reliance could not be placed on obtaining an equivalent amount of revenue from Commonwealth sources. There could be a significant reduction in the services provided from the State's revenue because of such loss.

The honourable member for Roma also referred to the proposed in-filling by the Railway Department of a section of the railway bridge over Bungil Creek, at Roma. It is true that this matter, as well as claims that there would be resultant increased flooding of Roma, was raised with me at a deputation introduced by the honourable member and comprising representatives of the Roma Town Council, the Bungil Shire Council and a number of local residents. A conference was subsequently arranged between representatives of these two councils and engineers of the Main Roads Department and the Railway Department.

I might mention that there is a school of thought that the raising in height of the nearby main road could already have contributed to an increase in the incidence of flooding. However, as the position has not been resolved, I presented a submission to Cabinet on Monday, 19 November, when it was decided, because of the number of Government departments and other authorities involved—and these now include the Department of Primary Industries and the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission—that the Co-ordinator-General investigate the claims that elimination of the timber piers by earth filling would cause worse flooding conditions in Roma. That investigation is now proceeding. The findings and recommendations of the Co-ordinator-General will be binding on all parties concerned.

The honourable member also raised the matter of the closure of access across the railway line at the western end of the Yuleba railway station. I arranged through the Commissioner for Railways for the General Manager of the South-western Division, Mr. Mendoza, to discuss this matter with local residents, and they agreed that the provision of a crossing to serve pedestrians only would suffice. This will be arranged. I sincerely hope that the arrangements agreed upon are satisfactory to the honourable member.

Turning now to the speech made by the honourable member for Toowoomba North, the honourable member did not appear to understand either the Treasurer's Budget or the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways, and, in turn, I was not able to understand him.

I have noted the suggestion by the honourable member for Wavell that free public transport should be provided in the city area. I recently had the opportunity of having a look at what is being done in Perth, and I might say that transport there is certainly not free. It is a system that enables people to get to the bus terminals or the railway stations, and the one ticket covers this travel in the city. As to free transport generally, this has been explored and experimented with, and even adopted for short periods of time, in other parts of the world, but has proved a dismal failure. The travelling public are very suspicious of anything that is handed to them free, and the general taxpayer rightly would know that anything that is free has to be paid for by someone.

The honourable member also criticised the "give way to the right" rule. A considerable amount of time and advice and examination by experts on a national level, as well as in each of the States, and by Minister-members of the Australian Transport Advisory Council, has shown that up to the present there is no satisfactory alternative to the present "give way to the right" rule. The "give way" rule is quite clear. I quote regulation 33 of the Traffic Act and regulations, which says—

"Where these regulations require a driver to give way to a vehicle or person, the driver shall, in circumstances where if he proceeded there would be a reasonable possibility of his colliding with that vehicle or person or otherwise creating a dangerous situation, slow down to such an extent, or stop and remain stationary for such time as is necessary to allow that vehicle or person to continue on its or his course without risk of collision or as is necessary to avoid creating a dangerous situation."

I do not think anyone can claim that that regulation is unreasonable, for obviously the objective is to avoid creating a dangerous situation where accidents can occur.

But, above all, section 17 of the Act itself provides—

"Any person who drives a motor vehicle on a road without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons using the road shall be guilty of an offence."

If both these provisions of the law are observed, there should be no real problem. However, recent discussions were instituted between the Minister in charge of police, the Commissioner of Police, a senior police officer from the legal section, the Commissioner for Transport, the secretary of the Transport Department and myself, with the desire of having all police officers interpret the "give way to the right" rule in a reasonable and uniform manner.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** They don't do it.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** We did not have this conference until last week, and we will endeavour to have this done.

As to the co-ordination of traffic-light installations between the Road Safety Council, the Main Roads Department and local authorities, I know that there is co-ordination and co-operation between the Main Roads Department and local authorities; but, in this special and expert area, the question of where traffic lights should be installed is determined by warrants as set out in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Devices.

The honourable member made particular reference to city streets. These are at present undergoing a complete change, involving the recirculation of traffic flow, re-signing and conversion of one-way streets, and many other requirements that are needed when recirculating traffic. When all this work has been completed, I feel sure the honourable member will not have anything to complain about. As a member of the Brisbane Transportation Policy Committee, I am aware of the problems that are being caused by the changes that are necessary, but I am also confident that everything possible is being done to resolve any temporary difficulties.

The honourable member for Redcliffe renewed his strong plea for the provision of a rail service to the Redcliffe Peninsula as part of the proposed Brisbane suburban electrification scheme. The possible construction of such a railway was, as I have previously informed the honourable member, the subject of examination during the course of the South-east Queensland-Brisbane Region Public Transport Study undertaken by Wilbur Smith and Associates. However, construction of such a line was not included in the recommendations made by the consultants. I assure the honourable member that his most recent submissions will be subjected to close examination.

The honourable member also raised the question of the availability of bus connections at the Sandgate railway station for Redcliffe passengers. From Brisbane to Sandgate there are 29 train services on week-days with 28 bus connections, 22 train services on Saturdays with 21 bus connections, and 13 train services on Sundays with 11 bus connections. From Sandgate to Brisbane the train services total 30 on week-days with 20 bus connections, 22 on Saturdays with 18 bus connections, and 13 on Sundays with 9 bus connections. By comparison, the services operated from Brisbane to the Redcliffe Peninsula by the direct private bus service total 25 on week-days, 10 on Saturdays and nine on Sundays, and, from the Redcliffe Peninsula to Brisbane, 23 on week days, 10 on Saturdays and nine on Sundays.

The suburban rail service operates at a loss, and many of the services provided are very poorly patronised. The road-motor portion of the co-ordinated service to the

Redcliffe Peninsula is operated by private enterprise and must be conducted on a profitable basis. It is considered that the service provided is quite adequate.

The honourable member is concerned about the transport problems of the Redcliffe area, which has been included in the urban transit study and the submissions made to the Commonwealth Government from time to time. I can assure him that the special claims of Redcliffe have not been overlooked, and, when the programme we have planned gets under way, the proper co-ordination of buses will be given high priority.

The suggestion that Redcliffe should be considered before other areas of the Brisbane region is understandable, but is completely impractical and contrary to the advice which has been received as to how we can update and improve all our urban services. I will make sure that the honourable member's suggestions are passed on to the planning group that we have established with the Department of Transport, and that they receive proper examination.

**Mr. BURNS (Lytton) (12.45 p.m.):** The road-safety problem is one that demands the immediate attention of this Government. Although it is obviously a serious matter, no-one seems to have even embarked upon a comprehensive analysis of its causes, effects and possible ways of relieving it. The problem, simply stated, is that people using our roads, either as motorists, cyclists or pedestrians, are being killed and injured at an alarming rate. The result of this in terms of human pain and suffering alone is tragic. In terms of waste of human effort and material resources, the result is one that we cannot tolerate, if only because we cannot afford it.

Road accidents have become a tragic major industry. When we combine the manufacture of vehicles, which will later be damaged in road accidents, the subsequent repair of them, the insurance of vehicles, property and people against accidental injury or damage on the road, and the provision of medical and legal services to injured persons, we can see it is a major industry that we cannot afford to maintain. Yet no-one really has the courage to undermine this industry, as we would if we implemented a fully integrated and comprehensive road-safety programme.

If we take those powerful multi-million dollar interests that I have mentioned and add to them the liquor industry and the petrol distributing industry, we realise that genuine road-safety campaigners are confronted with a formidable array of opponents, linked by a common bond of profit.

My appeal today is that the Government will put the welfare of our citizens first, place them before the profit of these industries, act now on the deliberate misuse

of our road system, and also act now to protect our citizens from the growing carnage on the roads.

A road safety Ministry should not mean a few Press hand-outs; it should mean real concern, real action and real planning to stop motoring madness from destroying lives and maiming and injuring millions of good Australians.

**Mr. Porter:** What would you do?

**Mr. BURNS:** In a few moments I will tell the honourable member.

We know that drivers make mistakes. We know that, at some stage during his driving career of 40 or 50 years, a driver is going to have a momentary lapse in concentration, drive too fast, be distracted by someone either in or outside the car, drink too much, or make any one of a thousand mistakes that could lead to an injury or death-producing accident. However, the important point is: should he die for his mistake? I do not think that just because a person makes a mistake he should die for it.

I am confident that a safe car can be built at the same cost as that of a dangerous car. Each requires the same amount of metal and the same manufacturing process. The only difference in the ingredients is the desire of the manufacturer constructing the vehicle. The automobile is produced specifically to the standards that the manufacturer desires to establish. It comes into the market-place unchecked.

When a car becomes involved in an accident, the entire police-investigation and insurance-claims apparatus that makes up the after-accident procedure looks immediately to driver failure as the cause. Incidentally, I agree with the Minister that police should not be used in this way but are for law enforcement, and that a specially trained group of persons should be used for this job. The need to clear the highway rapidly after collision contributes further to hiding the vehicle's role. If vehicle failure is obvious in some accidents, responsibility is attributed to inadequate maintenance by the motorist. Why do we lean over backwards to protect the car manufacturers, who produce our most lethal consumer product?

Car advertising stresses the undesirable aspects of power, aggression and speed. Motor vehicles are not required to adhere to any real federal safety standards, and our existing State requirements are limited and/or grossly deficient. There are no statutory criminal penalties for manufacturing a defective automobile that is dangerous to life. Yet driver behaviour is subject to criminal penalties. Both are causes of accidents and should therefore carry the same kind of penalty.

The motor industry has actively cultivated a customer ignorance about safety by promoting and advertising an automobile that stresses style, ride and performance. The industry has, but will not reveal, data about braking ability, tyre-skid and blow-out resistance, roof collapse strength, door hinge and latch strength, the dash panel's cushioning ability, rearward displacement of the steering wheel and shaft, and so on.

I am told that with the technology available to them, manufacturers are capable of producing cars that are 100 per cent safe at speeds under 50 miles an hour. The plain fact is that it is faster and cheaper to build operationally safe and damage-resistant automobiles that will prevent death and injury than to build a policy around the impossible goal of having drivers behave perfectly at all times under all conditions in the operation of a basically unsafe vehicle, and often under treacherous highway conditions.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** If they can guarantee a vehicle to be safe at under 50 miles an hour, maybe we should think about governing the speed.

**Mr. BURNS:** The Minister has answered suggestions made about governors on cars. I am not a technical man so far as cars are concerned, but we are always trying to overcome the common frailties and weaknesses of human beings, and trying to make them perfect. Why should we not start at the other end, the manufacturing processes, and use our many technological advances to try to build very safe cars? A damage-resistant automobile is the last clear chance to prevent bloodshed. It is the final net that catches all the contributing factors in the collision sequence. In this way casualties would be prevented or minimised. If the rate of increase in road accidents over the next 10 years is the same as it has been over the past 10 years, we will lose more than 50,000 Australians killed, and more than 1,000,000 will be injured.

While great public interest is focused on road deaths, very little attention is paid to the number of permanently and seriously injured traffic victims. At the same time, we should not forget the victims' families. In Queensland, we have little information on the number of invalids and long-term convalescents caused by road accidents. It is obvious, however, that both economic and social costs would be high.

Part of the cost of almost every road accident includes hospital and medical charges, loss of earnings, welfare support and so on. An adequate approach to the road-safety problem depends upon the collation and analysis of all appropriate data. Answers to questions in the last few weeks indicate that the road safety section of the Transport Department is collecting far too little data to enable serious governmental research in many areas. The failure

to have research instituted and answers produced makes me wonder if the Government has the necessary information to act in this matter.

It is obvious that the Minister's road safety title covers very little road-safety planning and, in fact, is nothing but a screen for political grandstanding. Letters and questions from members of Parliament invariably attract answers involving other Government departments, councils, or the Federal Government.

If the Government is concerned about the mayhem on our roads, the Minister should immediately commence a programme of accident research, and from this research produce a positive road-safety programme. I should like an answer to the following:—

- (a) the make of vehicles involved in injury or fatality-producing accidents, which might disclose a common thread;
- (b) the kind and severity of injuries sustained;
- (c) the kinds of structural damage suffered by vehicles; and
- (d) the road and traffic conditions which seem to be responsible for some of the problems that arise.

I have been unable to find any recent, significant research on the costs of road smashes in Australia. The problem of defining these costs is difficult, but major areas that ought to be included are—

- Wage losses and loss of productivity through injury, incapacity and death;
- Medical fees and hospital expenses;
- Insurance administration and claim settlement costs;
- Property damage;
- Money value of time lost by the non-injured who are directly or indirectly involved in accidents, and when they are sick or attending courts; and
- Barristers and solicitors' fees, as well as the fees of others who batten on to such cases to make a dollar out of them.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** How would you assess the cost when an employee who has just completed his university degree is killed?

**Mr. BURNS:** There are ways of assessing all costs, and surely they are known to our experts. I am suggesting that we gather together a set of figures, which I am sure will shock most of the people, especially the Government, into doing something.

If the Government had collected all this material maybe we would not be drifting along with one little session on 4BH and a few Press hand-outs to kiddies about what road safety really means.

It is obvious that hospital fees, insurance premiums, and so on, contain costs to cover the treatment of injury or the repair of damage arising from car smashes. Even our income tax levels are affected by road

smashes, because each year a proportion of revenue is set aside to provide funeral benefits, invalid pensions, unemployment benefits, health expenditure, and so on—all necessitated by motor-vehicle smashes.

Reports have stated that one-quarter to one-third of all hospital beds and associated facilities are required exclusively for people injured by motor vehicles. I do not have the figures available, but we should know how much money is being spent under the health services in this field. If honourable members spent a few hours in any hospital casualty department, they would see personally the physical and financial results of the carnage on our roads.

A factual, research-based assessment of the costs of this motor-vehicle carnage might shatter the apathy and complacency of the Government and many people in the community who, when they read of someone dying on the road, say, "That relates to someone else, not me; it is not a problem for me." It is a problem that affects all of us.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** They adopt the attitude, "It cannot happen to me."

**Mr. BURNS:** That is right.

We must make people realise that, when they read about 500 people being killed on the road, it is not merely another little newspaper story. I do not know that making headlines of it would be the answer. In some way we must bring to the notice of people factual evidence of the financial and physical costs that they are meeting by way of taxes, providing hospital services, and all the other things I have mentioned.

Although there is a fair amount of Government apathy, there is public concern, fear and confusion over the road toll. Our citizens are looking for a lead. Many people are concerned and worried, and if the Government scratches the surface and gets beneath the apathy, it will find there is a grain of fear running right through the community.

I believe the road toll is not a problem beyond our ability to solve. Some techniques and priorities for reducing the accident and injury rate exist and are being implemented elsewhere with some effect. They could be implemented here with considerable effect if we had sufficient response.

Recognising this is the first step in trying to put into effect a driver-based programme to cut the road toll, for it will place emphasis on those areas that man, together with science and technology, can control. This driver programme must go hand in hand with an automobile-based programme. We cannot have one without the other.

Many of the thousands of people who die on the road each year, and many of the hundreds of thousands injured, are lost to the community because of the abuse of

alcohol. With this evidence of alcohol's role in the bloody murder of our citizens, one wonders why the brewery barons succeed in their push for more hotels with bigger adjoining car parks. We then extend the drinking hours to the early hours of the morning when no public transport is available and the only method of transport for the drink-driver is his car.

**An Honourable Member:** Or a cab.

**Mr. BURNS:** I am a regular cab-user, but cabs are not always readily available, and the person who is drunk will not wait.

Has the Road Safety Council been consulted by the breweries or the Licensing Commission on this important question? Do we have a say, from the road-safety angle, in the siting, on an arterial road in a suburban area, of a hotel with a car park capable of holding 1,000 cars? Should we allow a person to drink at isolated hotels till 10 p.m. and then drive home? Surely road-safety planning must be involved in this matter. Surely we should consider how many people will be killed by siting a hotel and its car park in a certain place.

When considering the question of the driver who has consumed alcohol, why should we not follow some of the overseas trends? For example, free breath tests are offered from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m., in the French quarter in New Orleans, with an articulate and professionally-trained policeman in charge. People have been known to queue nightly in an effort to test their awareness of alcoholic content.

Our breweries tie more and more hotels to their particular line of "grog" and as their profits soar yearly, pushed up by a highly skilled advertising campaign, why should they not be required to fund a number of mobile breathalyser units under the control of civilian male and female road-safety officers? They could operate at the larger hotels so that drinkers could test their driving capacity before entering their cars.

What I am suggesting is that a person should be given the opportunity to pass or fail the test before he steps into his car. If he failed the test and left his car in the car park, no action would be taken against him, but if he failed and drove the car, he would be booked and prosecuted, because he would then be a criminal. He would know he was drunk and was deliberately hopping into his car to drive away. Many people drink in hotels on a Friday night and do not know the numbers of beers they would have to consume before reaching .05 or .08.

We would thus be preventing drink-drivers from going onto the road. We would remove the stupid money-raising system of policemen hiding 100 yards down the road from the hotel waiting for the drink-driver. Failing that, hotels should erect signs in bars indicating that a certain quantity of beer drunk in an hour would cause a person to fail a drink-driving test, possibly lose his right to

drive, and be fined a deal of money. Hotels put up signs suggesting that a person take home a flagon of wine, so why can they not erect signs indicating that a person who consumes a certain amount of alcohol within one hour is considered to be drunk and that, if he drives, he is taking his life and other people's lives in his hands?

**Mr. Jensen:** Why can't they drive a motorist home if he is drunk?

**Mr. BURNS:** Yes.

If licences are granted to allow drinking until 3 a.m. or 4 a.m., bus transport should be provided by hotels throughout the area in which the local-option poll was conducted. In applying for late permits, local hotels are really asking that they be allowed to print money.

Existing penalties for infringement of traffic laws should be reviewed. Emphasis should be placed, in the first instance, upon the education of drivers and riders by way of advice rather than apprehension, and by courtesy lectures rather than conviction and penalty.

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

**Mr. BURNS:** I support the view that the points system does not have one scrap of educational content, and that traffic offenders should be sent back to learn the dangers of alcohol and the rules of the road if they offend against those rules.

Commonwealth and State authorities, in consultation with the Commonwealth Statistician, should define basic information required in accident reports. The use of trained personnel in special accident investigation should be encouraged. I would remove the police completely from such investigations.

The Road Safety Council should provide the necessary leadership in the field of driver-training. We should pay urgent attention to expanding driver-training in schools, and inaugurating new programmes both in and out of official school hours. The Minister in charge of road safety should undertake the task of providing a planned syllabus for driver instruction for use at school level and by private instructors. Tight control should be exercised over driving schools by legislation requiring training and special licensing of instructors.

In the light of the motoring murders that are taking place on our roads, would it be too tough to suggest that holders of driving licences should be required to submit to eyesight tests at least every 10 years up to the age of 50, and at least every five years thereafter? Or that an inquiry should be initiated to ascertain whether present standards of pre-licensing testing are adequate, and whether harder tests, or tests of a different nature, such as psychological, physical reaction and others, should be introduced?

The present list of diseases of which applicants for licences must make declarations should be revised in the light of the findings of the World Health Organisation. Medical authorities should establish a set of physical standards for use by medical practitioners in considering whether patients should be advised not to drive a car. I think there is a responsibility on medical practitioners in this matter.

I believe that consideration should be given to a system of provisional, or restricted, licences for graduates of approved school driver-training schemes, where the graduates of such schemes are under the legal driving age. I do not believe in arbitrarily deciding on an age—say, 18 or 21 years—at which people are permitted to obtain a driver's licence. I believe that younger people could well be permitted to drive if they had passed through a course of training approved by the Government or the Minister.

We must move to protect pedestrians who daily dice with death at deathtrap zebra crossings. I do not have much faith in zebra crossings. I feel that too often children put their faith in such crossings, but motorists disregard them and plough through. In many cases, zebra crossings are potential deathtraps for children. A State Government-planned pedestrian programme should be drawn up, defining the rights and responsibilities of pedestrians, and establishing standards of safety measures for them.

Finally, I wish to express my concern, which I think would be shared by most Queenslanders, at the increase in the number of gigantic semi-trailers, cement trucks, and gravel lorries that now terrorise the ordinary man and woman when he or she ventures onto the roads. Vehicles with a width of up to 8 ft. 2 ins. take up three-quarters of the sealed surface on Queensland's narrow country roads. The only limit to the weight and size of these vehicles seems to be the ability of the structure of the road to carry them. Every day we see large trucks heavily overloaded. They can be seen in Shafston Avenue every morning. They are overloaded to such a degree that they are just able to struggle to the top of a slight incline.

These road monsters are growing taller, longer, wider and dirtier in the pollution that they cause. Yet so far as I can ascertain (the Minister may correct me if I am wrong), there is no mechanical check of the roadworthiness of interstate vehicles that cross the border into this State. Weighbridges have inspection pits, but, to my knowledge, interstate vehicles are rarely inspected. When the Government has been asked to inspect all interstate vehicles, it has said that it would cost too much. I do not believe that a policy of "profits before road safety" should be encouraged.

The large number of interstate-registered mechanical monsters on our roads leads me to believe that not all of them are operating

on an interstate basis. Many must be working solely in Queensland without regular mechanical inspections and, of course, paying no registration fees to compensate for the damage done to Queensland roads. One even sees vehicles such as end-loaders and cranes bearing interstate number plates driving along the roads, holding up traffic, creating traffic jams and tension in other drivers, all of which can lead to road accidents.

Many of the roads on which such vehicles travel, especially in Brisbane, are council roads paid for by the ratepayers. For example, in the Lytton electorate, in which there is a tremendous amount of industrial traffic, there is not an inch of Government main road. Traffic to Wynnum and Manly is regularly delayed or forced to detour because gigantic trucks have smashed into the railway bridge at Cannon Hill, blocking Wynnum Road. I remind the Committee that this happened again yesterday morning. This railway bridge is a monument to the lack of interest in road safety and in transport for the ordinary citizen in the community. It is a dangerous deathtrap for pedestrians, mostly school-children, who cross there daily. It is a miracle that no child has been killed there.

I have been told of a regulation or law which states that long and wide loads must be transported between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., and yet we find such loads on the roads day and night. I remind you, Mr. Lickiss, of one that was taken down Queen Street recently during morning peak-hour traffic, after it had flattened light poles and safety signs and destroyed road surfaces. Surely our citizens come first and must be given consideration over these mechanical monsters.

I also remind the Committee that one of the residents of my electorate was smashed up very badly recently when a car rally was being carried out under a permit issued by one of the Government departments.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BIRD (Burdekin)** (2.21 p.m.): I must admit that, for once, I agree with much of what has been said by the honourable member for Lytton, particularly his comments relative to the motor vehicles in which we are forced to drive today. It is high time, as the honourable member said, that much more was done to improve the construction of these vehicles, having in mind the safety of their users.

Let me turn now to the subject of my own speech. I note in the report of the Railway Department for the year ended 30 June 1973 that it has sustained further trading losses. I do not mention that with the intention of criticising the department; in fact, my reason is exactly the opposite.

Honourable members will have noticed that the Federal Government has recently imposed further burdens on country people throughout Australia, and, of course, the country

people of this State have suffered. Its decision to increase taxation on fuel and to remove concessions on telephone charges and several other concessions is placing a greater financial burden on country people. Therefore, the decision of the Government of Queensland not to increase rail-passenger fares and freight charges is, I believe, a genuine attempt by it, and by the Minister and his department, not to further burden the people living in remote areas of the State.

It is my firm belief, of course, that these people need every incentive, especially at present, to remain in country areas, and the Government's action is progressive and is a step in the right direction. The Country-Liberal Government is, and always has been, a believer in decentralisation, and its decision not to increase rail-freight rates and passenger fares will continue to assist decentralisation.

However, my main concern at present is the shortage of goods in Queensland. Many recent reports have mentioned shortages of various commodities in the stores in North Queensland. I believe there are two reasons for this—firstly, the consistent and numerous strikes that occur within the Railway Department; and, secondly, the efficiency of the railway system.

It is very unfortunate, of course, that the Railway Department is continually faced with a strike somewhere in the State—perhaps at Bowen this week, Mackay next week, or Rockhampton the week after; perhaps at the Roma Street goods yards. These strikes cause difficulties in getting commodities to the people of North Queensland, and also to those living in even more remote parts of the State. Honourable members are aware that much of the blame rests with the bottleneck at the Roma Street goods yards, and the difficulties are increased by the industrial trouble that occurs there.

I say this in all sincerity, because I know that the people of Queensland are so concerned that representatives of various chambers of commerce have come to Brisbane to study the problem. People from my own chamber of commerce are constantly expressing their concern. Only this week several business people from my electorate came to Brisbane in an effort to overcome the problem of the shortage of commodities. Many shops in the north are very short of items that the people of North Queensland will require over the Christmas period.

The Railway Department cannot continue to ignore the problems that exist at Roma Street. I know that it cannot overcome the industrial problems, but at least it should remove this bottle-neck when all the workers are on the job. I have been informed by business people in North Queensland that the firms with whom they deal in Brisbane are now charging them waiting time. This is based on the delays that the carriers experience when they take goods to Roma Street for railing to the North. Waiting time is an additional cost that has to be borne by the residents of remote areas of the

State. That is why I emphasise, with all the force at my command, that something must be done. We have too many additional costs. We already have to pay sales tax on freight, although that is not a matter that I wish to enlarge upon today. The problem can be overcome, and it must be overcome. People in the remote areas of the State should not be asked to continue to meet these additional costs.

If goods are not railed from Roma Street but from one of the other centres where they can be loaded more quickly, there is still a delay of 3 to 3½ weeks before the goods arrive at their destination. I am sure that the Minister will agree that this is not good enough. I do not know what plans the Minister and his department have in mind for alterations to Roma Street. I do not know whether new central goods yards will be provided elsewhere. However, because of the urgency of the matter, I hope that planning is well in hand and that in the not too distant future something will be provided to overcome the present problem.

We have no guarantee that the railway system will be free of strikes from one end of the year to the other, or even from one end of the week to the other. When railway workers go out on strike at, say, Bowen or Townsville, the whole system is disrupted so that goods cannot be railed either to or from the North. I ask the Minister to give urgent consideration to waiving road-transport permit fees from now until the Christmas period so that various goods can be transported to people in the North. Because of industrial troubles and bottlenecks, the railways have proved that they cannot move the goods. In all fairness to the people of North Queensland, road-transport permit fees should be waived so that they will have the benefit of the goods they require at Christmas-time.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** Do you think the honourable member for Cairns would agree with that?

**Mr. BIRD:** I am not worried about the honourable member for Cairns. It is highly likely that he would not agree with me. No doubt it would deprive the Railway Department of some revenue, and probably it would deprive certain railway workers of some earnings. My first and foremost interest is for the people of North Queensland. I do not want them to spend Christmas without the goods they need at that time of the year. Two years ago, Townsville experienced a shocking cyclone and many of its citizens lost all their foodstuffs and other possessions. I should not like to see the people of Townsville have an "un-merry" Christmas again this year because they cannot get the foodstuffs and other articles they would like to have.

Whilst speaking of strike action, I must say that, in some instances, I do not entirely disagree with the decision of railway workers to resort to strike action. I believe that

in many instances they have a lot to put up with. I have said before that I think the Railway Department is a little archaic. I repeat that statement. It is rather antiquated in many of its systems, and I believe that they should be upgraded and, along with that, the working conditions of many railwaymen should be looked at. I have spoken in this Chamber on earlier occasions about the living conditions of many railway workers, and also about the office accommodation in which many people employed by the Railway Department are forced to work. I must admit that the Minister was good enough to visit my electorate only a short time ago and carry out an inspection of the railway goods shed at Ayr. On that occasion he saw at first hand just how goods are handled through a railway goods shed that is almost falling down. The walls are bowed.

Although I have pressed—I must admit successfully—for fans for the office workers; for filing cabinets in which they can put their paper-work instead of the old packing cases they had to use in years gone by; for better lighting; and, more recently, for the internal painting of the office, which I believe has now been carried out, the office accommodation is still not too good. I do not think there is anything more degrading and soul-destroying for a worker than to have to work in the conditions that, in too many instances, are provided by the Railway Department. I can only say that private industry would never be allowed to work employees under these conditions. I believe that, if the Railway Department expects to get anywhere near top efficiency from its employees it must progressively upgrade both their working conditions and their living conditions.

**Mr. Chinchon:** The office should be lined, not simply painted.

**Mr. BIRD:** This is so. The honourable member for Mt. Gravatt was with the Minister when he inspected the office, and it was agreed that it should be lined and given an attractive appearance. However, I understand that all that happened was that somebody went along with a paint brush and painted the walls. I do not know whether the persons concerned even stood very close to the walls. I believe it is an apology for a paint job, but I cannot criticise it greatly at this stage as I must admit that I have not yet inspected it. But I will certainly be up there to have a look at it as soon as Parliament goes into recess.

I say these things because I believe that if the railway system were updated and the whole system streamlined and brought to maximum efficiency, it would be for the good of the railways as they could then compete with the airlines and the bus companies.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** What do you think about intrastate shipping?

**Mr. BIRD:** I am not altogether sold on the idea of intrastate shipping. It certainly brought us reduced freight rates in years gone by, but it is not the fastest way of moving goods today.

**Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt:** Don't you think it should be optional?

**Mr. BIRD:** I would certainly say it should be optional. In fact, I go so far as to say that all types of transport should be optional—not only sea transport, but road transport as well. Let us throw the whole field open and see who can produce the best service, who can get goods to the North fastest and cheapest. As I said, if the Railway Department streamlined and updated its trains and other facilities, I think it could still compete successfully with the airlines and the bus companies.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** The other people should not be able to pick the eyes out of the traffic and leave the rubbish to the railways.

**Mr. BIRD:** I wholeheartedly agree with that comment.

While the Minister was in Ayr he inspected the local railway station, at which the platform is set at a very low level. Pressure has been exerted on him by me, on behalf of the Ayr Shire Council, and, more recently, the Ayr Pensioners' League, the chamber of commerce and other organisations, to raise the level of the platform and also to replace the station buildings at the earliest opportunity. The Lower Burdekin is a go-ahead area, but from the appearance of the Ayr Railway Station the impression is gained that the area is going backwards instead of forwards. Without doubt, the railway station is one of the worst buildings in the town.

I have already said that if the railways streamlined their operations they could compete successfully with the airlines and the bus companies. Anyone who has travelled from Sydney to Perth on the "Indian-Pacific", as I have, would readily acknowledge that, in this modern age, rail travel provides a comfortable means of transport, free from the worries and anxieties associated with motor-ing. It is also much cheaper than air travel. Rail travel is proving to be so popular that I understand that a third "Indian-Pacific" train is to be brought into operation to meet the demand for travel on the transcontinental line.

During this debate reference has been made to the facilities offered in the griddle car on the "Sunlander". I maintain that a dining car should be embodied in the train. It could provide a very satisfactory service if it followed the example set on the "Indian Pacific". Before passengers board the transcontinental train they are required to indicate whether or not they will have the meals that are offered on the journey. A passenger who indicates that he will be having the meals is required to pay in advance for them. This enables satisfactory catering arrangements

to be made for the number of passengers who require meals. A passenger who indicates beforehand that he will not require a meal on the train is not able to obtain one. As I said, a similar system could be operated quite efficiently on the "Sunlander".

Earlier in my speech I referred to the conditions under which certain railway employees are required to work. In my view, their union representatives are not looking after their interests properly. I admit, of course, that the interests of the running staff are looked after. However, no interest appears to be taken in the welfare of the fettleers and office workers, a number of whom have said to me, "We have come to you because our union representatives aren't interested in us."

**Mr. Bousen:** Don't talk such rot.

**Mr. BIRD:** I invite Opposition members to talk to the fettleers and office workers in my electorate. They will be told what I have been told.

The Minister is aware of the numerous representations I have made to him on behalf of these groups of employees. I sincerely make a plea on their behalf that on any occasion that they are forced to bring their complaints to members of Parliament for forwarding on to the Minister no action is taken against them. I believe that, in asking for better conditions that will enable them to work more efficiently, they are acting in the best interests of the railways.

As in previous years, I am concerned this year, too, at the prospect of railway strikes over the Christmas school vacation. The Christmas break is the only time of the year available to many workers to take their wives and families away on holidays, but I am prepared to wager that this year there will be a repetition of what happened two years ago. Holiday-makers will probably reach their destination, and then find themselves strike-bound. Many of these people do not have a great deal of money, and when they are strike-bound they have not enough ready cash to travel home by some alternative means. On a former occasion I said in this Chamber that, on returning from a visit to Melbourne, I learned at the South Brisbane station that a section of railway employees was on strike. On that occasion I saw workers' families stranded, without any means of getting to their homes.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. DAVIS:** (Brisbane) (2.41 p.m.): Before commenting on these Estimates, I shall deal briefly with the Minister's reply to certain comments made by the honourable member for Cairns on Tuesday last. The Minister told the honourable member that his attack on the Commissioner for Railways was reprehensible. Such statements make me laugh. Surely any member of Parliament has the right to advance in this Chamber views that he or she considers to be correct. While

I do not believe that we should attack public servants willy-nilly, as members of Parliament I think we should have the right to criticise, or praise, members of the Public Service hierarchy. We have frequently applauded public servants when their work has been to our liking. Surely the principle should work both ways. The honourable member for Cairns was quite in order in commenting on the Commissioner as he did. Although he was prevented by a ruling from the Chair from continuing in a certain way, I believe he was quite correct, and was acting in accordance with his duty as the Opposition spokesman on transport matters. He is certainly well qualified to speak on railway matters.

It is a fact that the Commissioner for Railways (Mr. Lee) blatantly ignored an order of the Industrial Commission. I have been in the industrial game long enough to realise that when an order by the Industrial Commission is blatantly ignored, either party has the right to approach it. In this instance, when an order was ignored an industrial dispute arose, and it subsequently spread. Of course, it is not possible to cover every avenue to ensure that a strike does not occur again. If an order placed on the men must be obeyed, it is only fair that the employer should abide by any such order. That was the main point in the speech of the honourable member for Cairns.

I do not intend to deal at length with the Commissioner for Railways, but I have a few comments to make about the Minister's handling of industrial disputes. When I asked a question without notice on 18 October, the Minister obviously anticipated it. It would not be difficult to do this when certain circumstances arose concerning a union with which I was, and still am, associated. My question concerned the safety issue that resulted in a ban being placed on the Roma Street goods yards by the Transport Workers' Union. The Minister made great play on his answer.

I mentioned to one of my colleagues that Government members obviously enjoyed what the Minister thought was a very smart and comical reply. I do not intend to read his reply in full, but he concluded by saying—

"Finally, I stress the point that no undertaking was ever given that the Transport Workers' Union would be represented on the safety committee. The members of the Combined Railways Union are the people concerned, and they are the ones who will be represented on the committee."

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Would you like to see the minutes of the meeting?

**Mr. DAVIS:** I'll tell you what I will give you shortly.

**Mr. Marginson** interjected.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I need no assistance from the honourable member from Wolston on how to conduct the Committee.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I shall shortly read for the Minister's benefit part of the transcript of the Industrial Commission hearing to indicate that, from the very outset of the safety dispute at Roma Street, the stand taken by the Transport Workers' Union was correct.

The history of events at Roma Street goes back many years. It is not something that has erupted over the last couple of years. It commenced nearly 20 years ago and has involved discussions with various Transport Ministers, including both the present Treasurer and the present Minister for Justice.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You were delivering bread then. It wasn't in your time.

**Mr. DAVIS:** It was in my time—when I was delivering bread.

**Mr. Frawley:** You can't count up to 10 unless you take your shoes off.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The honourable member for Murrumba must be rattled. He was the one who "ratted" yesterday over the Premier's motion being brought forward. He must be annoyed, and now he intends to butt in during my speech.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I rise to a point of order. I did not "rat" on anybody yesterday.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! Is the honourable member for Murrumba asking for a withdrawal?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Yes.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Murrumba denies the allegation and asks for a withdrawal.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I accept the ruling of the Chair and withdraw, even though the honourable member put it in writing, and also told us about it.

The honourable member for Burdekin mentioned the inefficiency that exists at the Roma Street goods yards and the resultant increased costs borne by business houses and purchasers of products delivered through them. The union bans at Roma Street dealt only with the safety issue. All that the union could gain was safer working conditions for its members. That is the crux of the matter.

I referred earlier to the Minister's remarks about the safety committee. Some interesting debate and arguments took place at the compulsory conference before the Federal Commissioner who controls the Transport Workers and Master Carriers' Award. The matter came before Commissioner Gough on 24 October. Represented were the Combined Railways Union, the Commissioner for

Railways, the Master Carriers' Union and the Transport Workers' Union. Commissioner Gough would be one of the best-respected members of the Federal Industrial Commission. So that it will be recorded in "Hansard", and to indicate the stand that the Railway Department takes in such matters, I shall first outline what Organiser Williams had to say on the main issue when the last ban was applied at Roma Street.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Don't forget to tell us that he—

**Mr. DAVIS:** I will tell the Minister, and other honourable members, what the Commissioner's ruling was so that it also is recorded. Then, next time the Minister tries to score off me, he will understand.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I will score off you tonight.

**Mr. DAVIS:** No, you won't.

Organiser Williams said—

"I received a message from Roma Street railway yard approximately 1.15 p.m. on 12 October 1973. I went to the rail and spoke to members from Mayne Nickless. It appeared that free shunting was taking place."

By the way, the Minister or his advisers said that this was not taking place. In fact it was, and some wagons got away and crashed into two wagons where men were working.

The report continues—

"Two men were inside one wagon and were severely shaken, and another man was between a truck and railway wagon when they moved through. Large quantities of beer were smashed in this free shunt."

The Commissioner said—

"What sort of follow-up do you have to these accidents within your union? A man is severely shaken up; what does that mean? It could possibly mean he has damage to his spine. This might come into evidence 15 years hence. What sort of redress have you?"

Mr. Bevis, secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, said—

"We are looking at this seriously at the present time. The man injured at Stephens—I think Mr. Smith can inform you on this."

Here is another quotation from the Commissioner in the same case. He said, referring to the union's case—

"What you have stated to date is quite horrifying, and I use that word with deliberate intent, that your members and presumably members of the Shunters' Union and the A.R.U. should be subject to these hazards week in and week out, month in and month out, year in and year out, for at least 10 or 11 years on your record. It is horrifying."

These are not my words; they are the words of Commissioner Gough as contained in the transcript of proceedings of the case.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** He has no State jurisdiction whatsoever.

**Mr. DAVIS:** He has jurisdiction over the men who work there, and the Minister knows it.

The Commissioner also said—

“I can substitute a ban if necessary.”

Let the Minister get that into his head if he thinks the Commissioner has no jurisdiction.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** He hasn't.

**Mr. DAVIS:** My word he has!

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Not in State jurisdiction.

**Mr. DAVIS:** My word he has! He said—

“I can substitute a ban if necessary from this Commission for the ban of your unions, to prevent them working in dangerous circumstances. However, those circumstances need to be defined. They are not to work in dangerous circumstances under an award of this Commission . . .”

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** That is, a Commonwealth award.

**Mr. DAVIS:** He continued—

“ . . . and there is no need for any ban of your union.”

He told the Transport Workers' Union to lift their ban, and, if need be, he would impose a ban.

I should now like to have recorded in “Hansard” the Commissioner's ruling after the case was over, and I do so to justify everything that was done by my union which was so glibly reported, and smartly answered, by the Minister for Transport when the union started talking about safety. The Commissioner's ruling—

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** He is a very good man to deal with, which is more than I can say about you.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The Minister has never dealt with me. The only time I tried to deal with him, he would not listen to me.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I have known him a lot longer than you have.

**Mr. DAVIS:** You have not. The Commissioner said in his ruling—

“I shall give my direction in this matter which is to ensure the safety of operations in the Roma Street railway yards in so far as the members of the three unions represented here are concerned. I have Exhibit B before me which sets out what would in effect be safety regulations covering movements of trucks and engines in that yard. If those regulations are not adhered to in such a way that safety of any member of those unions in those yards

is endangered, the operation of the Transport Workers' Award 1972 in so far as it affects respondents and their employees will be suspended.”

For the Minister's industrial education, the Transport Workers' Award 1972 is the binding award between the master carriers and the Transport Workers' Union.

The Commissioner continued—

“I hope that will not be necessary at any stage but I give that direction to the parties to the award. If it is necessary, I shall issue an order which I will understand to be by consent of the Master Carriers Association, respondents to that award, and of the Transport Workers' Union of Australia and I shall give it to you in writing.”

Now, here is the crux of the ruling—

“I do not think it will be necessary for me to give a direction so far as representation on a safety committee is concerned. I generally repeat my assurance given to the Transport Workers' Union that this compulsory conference will be reconvened as and when necessary if there is no representation of the Transport Workers Union upon a safety committee in the Roma Street railway yards.”

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Where he had no jurisdiction whatsoever.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Let us get a couple of things quite clear relative to industrial matters. The great majority of drivers who operate from the Roma Street goods yards are employees of master carriers, and 95 per cent of the master carriers are respondents to the Federal Transport Award. So the Minister should not try to tell me that a Federal Commissioner cannot say to the respondents to that award, “There is a ban on, and it is an official ban,” and that they then do not have to go into the yard.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You are right off the beam. I will tell you what the real position is.

**Mr. DAVIS:** We changed one thing officially within three weeks, and there is now union representation on the safety committee at that yard. That is exactly in line with what I said four weeks ago.

The Roma Street goods yards are antiquated and outdated, and it is going to cost thousands and thousands of dollars more each year to have goods carted from that area. When the railway yards were first established there, all the manufacturing industries were either in the city or nearby on the south side of the river. As the years have passed and land values have increased, manufacturing industries have moved out to the suburbs. So, day after day, for hours on end, trucks come through the Valley and the city to line up at the Roma Street goods yards.

**Mr. Harvey:** Unnecessary travel and unnecessary congestion.

**Mr. DAVIS:** The honourable member for Stafford is quite correct. In all the years that these yards have been in existence, loading facilities have not been improved. Time after time reports have appeared in the newspapers about the difficulties occurring there, under a number of Ministers for Transport, including the present one—and I regard him as a bit of a failure.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You would not be any better than I am. You could not even deliver bread.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I could do a better job delivering bread than the honourable gentleman is doing as Minister for Transport. I would get rid of more loaves than the Minister has of Bills. We have been waiting 18 months for him to introduce amendments to the Traffic Act, including one relating to people “dobbing” others in.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You will have to be very careful when we do amend it.

**Mr. DAVIS:** If the Minister's actions were as good as his words he would be the best transport Minister in Australia, but we have been waiting for a long time for him to do all the things he says he is going to do. So far he has been a failure, and if he does not do something about the Roma Street goods yards quickly, the blame for the difficulties will rest fairly and squarely on him.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I will appoint you a co-ordinator.

**Mr. DAVIS:** You could not appoint a better man.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I did not tell you what you were going to co-ordinate. I will tell you later.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I would certainly be a better co-ordinator than you.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! The honourable member and the Minister both know that I am very sensitive and do not like being left out of these discussions.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I was just saying, Mr. Hewitt, what a failure the Minister is, and what a good job I would do in co-ordinating the movement of goods at the Roma Street goods yards. I would certainly be able to do a better job than he has done so far as Minister for Transport. He has done absolutely nothing, as has been pointed out by almost every person connected with the Roma Street goods yards. The Queensland Chamber of Manufactures, the Master Carriers' Association and other people have all called for the establishment of a goods yard other than at Roma Street. As the years pass, it will become more and more difficult to remove these yards to another site. I suggest that

the new yards should be somewhere on the north side of the city. The department has sufficient land there.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I thought Stan Tapper would give you a better speech than this. He didn't write this speech.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Stan didn't write this speech. I will tell the Minister what prompted it. It was the words of Commissioner Gough, who really showed what a failure some of the top administrative officers of the Railway Department have been in trying to bring about industrial safety at the Roma Street goods yards.

**Mr. ALISON** (Maryborough) (3 p.m.): Before entering a debate in this Chamber, I usually endeavour to make some notes on the speech of the previous speaker. I was present for most of that made by the honourable member for Brisbane, but my scribbling block is a blank, so I have no comment to offer. However, the impression I gained was that he was blackguarding the Commissioner, the Minister, a few railway unions and everybody in general. I did not hear him utter one constructive thought.

I should like to refer firstly to the Vote for Railways. The estimated receipts for 1973-74 are \$150,000,000, with expenditure estimated at \$176,000,000. Those figures indicate nothing more than an expected surplus of expenditure over income of \$26,000,000. As an indication of whether or not the department is running at a profit or a loss, or as an indication of the efficiency or otherwise of the Railway Department, the figures are almost valueless and, in some instances, misleading. We hear the terms “net operating loss”, “net loss” and others banded around the Chamber, but I submit that in most instances they are used incorrectly. I will elaborate on that shortly.

The Queensland railways are probably the biggest business in Queensland. They should be treated and run as a business enterprise, with a proper revenue statement and revenue budget compiled for the ensuing year, and with projections into the future for revenue income and expenditure as distinct from capital income and expenditure. In this way not only would Parliament be able to look at some meaningful figures, but the Railway Department would be better geared to review its own operations. Whether it concerns the Railway Department or a corner store, a revenue statement really shows the net profit or loss of the enterprise. It does not just show the actual cash receipts and cash payments. It brings into account non-cash items such as depreciation to cover normal wear and tear, and perhaps extraordinary wear and tear on plant and equipment, transfer to reserves for obsolescence and that type of thing. Such items do not involve a cash outlay, but they have to be brought to account to arrive at a true total for operating expense, which can be

deducted from the income earned during the year, whether it be actually received or not, to arrive at the true net profit or loss.

Whilst I have suggested that the Railway Department accounting should be brought up to date and put onto a proper business-like basis, I appreciate that the railways must render service to the people and industries of Queensland. Therefore it would not be practicable, and indeed highly undesirable, to eliminate all areas of operations that are running at a loss.

The actual figures and Estimates we are debating today would appear to be actual cash receipts and payments in 1972-73, together with the Estimates for that year, and the Estimates of cash receipts and payments for 1973-74. However, I am a little confused when I see in the Estimates for 1973-74 that \$1,000,000 is allowed for demolished and obsolete assets written off. I get the impression that there must be some effort here to provide on a cash basis for some obsolescence of plant and equipment. One does not usually strike this in a cash budget. One comes up against this if a proper revenue statement is being compiled. Because this item is included, I get the impression that the Estimates are really neither one thing nor the other—a cash budget, nor a revenue budget. A revenue statement would bring into account actual earnings and actual expenditure, including non-cash items such as depreciation and reserves for obsolescence, and show a final net profit or loss. If a revenue budget was compiled for consideration by the Committee, as well as a cash budget, the whole railway accounting system would surely have to be geared to this businesslike approach, with beneficial results. It would have to be geared to produce the figures from one level of the hierarchy to another, winding up with the figures for the revenue statement.

**Mr. Harvey:** Would you agree that the receipts should be on an accrual basis, with revenue on a cash basis?

**Mr. ALISON:** Certainly not. One can't have it both ways. I was trying to make that point. One either has to have a cash budget or a revenue budget. They cannot be mixed or they do not mean a thing. I suggest that we should bring the railway accounting system out of the horse-and-buggy days and up to 1973. As I have already mentioned, the Railway Department is, to the best of my knowledge, the biggest enterprise in this State and it should be treated as such.

To further upgrade the administration and control of the Railway Department, I feel that the Government should appoint a board of management comprising representatives of the Railway Department (naturally), businessmen with wide experience of commerce, and a representative of the Railway Unions, the board being directly responsible to State Cabinet through the Minister for Transport. I believe that the position of Commissioner

as such should be replaced with a position of general manager directly responsible to the board of management.

Having said that, I wish to make it quite clear that I am not associating myself with the comments made a couple of days ago by the honourable member for Cairns, who made an unwarranted, slanderous attack on the Commissioner, using such terms as "incompetent" "mismanagement" and certain other slanderous remarks. I understand that the reason for this attack was that the Commissioner, being a very strong man, as he has to be in this position, just would not submit to the blustering tactics the honourable member for Cairns tries with him. We can understand the pique of the honourable member for Cairns. I completely dissociate myself from his comments. What I am saying is that the Commissioner's position, as such, should be replaced with a position of general manager directly responsible to a board of management, which in turn would be directly responsible to the Cabinet through the Minister for Transport.

I should now like to refer to the operating deficit of the railways and the fact that it is giving concern to the Government. In the last year an operating deficit of \$4,300,000 was budgeted for; in fact, the deficit was \$13,900,000 and this did not take into account interest on debt which was \$18,100,000 in 1972-73, and therefore must be viewed with alarm. I notice that in the Estimates under "General Establishment" there is a figure of \$15,300,000 for interest and redemption, and I imagine that there must be interest and redemption from some other fund as well. It seems that we have budgeted this year for a deficit of \$26,000,000 plus debt service, and this gives me serious cause for alarm. I believe that the time has arrived when all freight and passenger fares must be reviewed with a view to increasing the income of the department.

I am not for one moment suggesting that there has to be an across-the-board increase but, as I said, all freights and fares should be reviewed and, where it is considered judicious and where the traffic can perhaps stand an increase, every effort must be made to bring about these increases. Regretfully, the trend seems to be to centralise activities in the Railway Department. I say "regretfully" advisedly. I realise that, with the improvement in communications over the years, it has become absolutely necessary to centralise some administrative and control functions to improve efficiency. But I am not at all sold on the idea that in every instance more centralisation means greater efficiency or service. As a matter of fact, it sometimes means quite the reverse. With more centralised control, one gets more remote control and less efficiency and service to the people being served.

In my own electorate I have had a fight on my hands to save the railway workshops. I am now pleased to say that I have been

successful and that, within the last fortnight, the Minister came to Maryborough to personally inspect the situation with Mr. Jeffcoate, the Acting Chief Mechanical Engineer, and a very successful conference was had with the railway unions concerned. At this point, I should like to pay a tribute to the Minister for coming up at my request to talk to the unions and the men concerned and inspect the workshops with which many of these problems are associated, and for all the other occasions on which he has listened to me with consideration and courtesy and then done his best to help.

The conference that was held was very successful in that not only were many of the unions' problems clarified but also an assurance was given by the Minister that no further retrenchments would be made in the staff of the Maryborough workshops and that this year money would be spent on improvements to the workshop buildings as well as to the facilities generally. For many years nothing was spent on them.

I understand that improved lifting equipment is on its way to Maryborough for use in the workshops. In fact, it may have arrived. Again I thank the Minister for having come to Maryborough to see things at first hand as well as talk to the men involved. I now look forward to expenditure in this financial year on improvements to the dilapidated workshops. Although the buildings are quite sound, nothing has been spent on them for some years, and I want to see this deficiency rectified.

Some of the conditions under which the workshop employees are required to work are, to be charitable, not good. I do not believe that private enterprise would be allowed to get away with the provision of such conditions. I will continue to make representations to the Minister on behalf of the workshop employees, and I am confident that, as finances become available, the situation will be improved.

Even the residences of some of the railway officers in my electorate are quite old and in poor condition. I realise, of course, that new residences cannot be provided with the wave of a magic wand. Nevertheless, I hope that a programme of replacement is being implemented.

At this point I pay a tribute to the district superintendent, Mr. Misfeld, and his staff, who have on all occasions assisted me. I also sincerely thank the representatives of all the railway unions, such as the A.F.U.L.E., the C.R.U. and the A.R.U., for their co-operation and assistance. They and I have a two-way arrangement; when they require my assistance they come to me, and when I want to learn something about railway operations, I go to them.

I turn now to the Estimates of the Transport Department, which reveal that 19 police officers work under the control of the Commissioner for Transport. I believe this is another example of the misuse of police

officers. On other occasions I have urged the appointment under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner for Transport of traffic wardens to deal with all matters associated with traffic and transport generally. In the Traffic Act there seems to be an overlapping of responsibilities, in that the issuing by police of licences comes within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Transport, whereas the policing of the Act comes within the jurisdiction of the Minister in charge of police.

**Mr. Burns:** They do work for Main Roads and all the other departments. It is impossible for them to do everything.

**Mr. ALISON:** The present arrangement is certainly a shambles, but it could easily be rectified.

The administration of the Traffic Act should be placed squarely on the Minister for Transport, and a sufficient number of traffic wardens, skilled in the administration of the Act, should be appointed to police its provisions.

Recently a daily newspaper reported that so far this year a total of 370 persons had been killed on Queensland roads. For the same period last year the figure was 304. It is time that we stopped talking and, instead, took positive action to prevent this carnage on our roads, regardless of how unpalatable our actions might be to certain people.

A two-pronged attack should be made by reviewing penalties imposed for driving offences, particularly with a view to putting off the road those motorists who either cannot or will not drive responsibly, and by appointing traffic wardens under the jurisdiction of the Transport Department. In many instances the existing penalties are too light, and, moreover, the policing of the Traffic Act is not good enough. In making that claim, I am certainly not casting aspersions at the Police Department. Rather I am making a point that there are simply not enough police officers on traffic duties. What is the point in having a law to administer traffic if the Act is not policed? The Act may as well be thrown out the window so that all motorists, instead of half as at present, can do as they please.

The Police Department has enough on its hands in preventing and detecting crime without being required to police the provisions of the Traffic Act. Of course, any police officer who witnesses a breach of the Traffic Act should be required to take action under the Act. However, except in emergencies or to provide assistance to traffic wardens, he should not be assigned to traffic duty. Certainly the traffic wardens and the police would have to work together, because on occasions a driver could, by his actions, render himself liable to a charge more serious than that provided for in the Traffic Act. I have in mind particularly a charge of manslaughter.

In such instances there would have to be liaison and co-operation between the police and traffic wardens.

Traffic wardens should have power of arrest and all the other powers that police have under the Traffic Act. I am quite convinced that traffic wardens would not be a drain on the taxpayers. The fines imposed by them would more than pay their wages and those of the clerical staff who would be involved in administering this part of the Act.

The quicker we get "fair dinkum" with irresponsible, stupid drivers, as well as drivers who insist on mixing drinking and driving, the better it will be. Traffic wardens should have power to issue on-the-spot tickets. Possibly they should also have power to operate under the Litter Act and be able to issue on-the-spot tickets for litterbugging.

As it is obvious that local governments have not the slightest intention of properly administering the Litter Act, I believe that the Department of Transport should take over this field, which should be administered by traffic wardens. I believe that the minimum penalty for litterbugging should be \$20. We do not have to travel too far to see how easy it is for the human race to make filthy and "muddy-up" its environment. Any penalty of less than \$20 is strictly a joke.

A bold step should be taken in transport in Brisbane by establishing a co-ordinated transport authority. The Transport Department of the Brisbane City Council should be taken over by that authority. Whilst on that subject, I point out that it would be a good move—and it would create greater efficiency—if the sewerage, electricity and water supply functions were also taken away from the Brisbane City Council. Electricity supply and distribution should be taken over by the S.E.C., and separate sewerage and water boards should be established to handle these functions. They should be quite separate from the operations of the Brisbane City Council.

The Brisbane City Council has become far too big. I am afraid we have created such a monster in the Brisbane City Council that the little man in the street does not know where to start to attack it if he feels he has a grievance, let alone try to get some service, efficiency or redress.

The suggested co-ordinated transport authority for Brisbane and its environs should take over all transport, including ferries, railways, buses and any other means of transport that may evolve. The trains, of course, would still have to be run and generally maintained by the Railway Department, but the transport authority should have the overriding say on where trains run and where new lines, including underground lines, should be placed. It is about

time that we started to construct underground lines in the city area to speed up traffic generally and provide an efficient, suitable alternative means of transport to buses and motor-cars.

The power of the suggested transport authority should extend right to the border, through both the Gold Coast and inland areas. I am quite convinced that we must soon start on a fast electric rail service to the Gold Coast. It should not stop at Southport, but go through to Coolangatta. This could be a means of improving the service to interstate travellers.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER** (Archerfield) (3.18 p.m.): Today I want to raise once again the matter of a rail link to Inala. I give the Minister notice that I intend to raise this matter as often as is necessary to enable me to get through to him and his advisers the need for this rail link. The term "rail link for Inala" is really a misnomer. What I am actually proposing is a line from the main Ipswich line through Wacol, Inala, Acacia Ridge, to join the Beenleigh line at Salisbury.

The population that this line would serve at present would be well in excess of 75,000. This will be greatly increased by further development at Carole Park, the large area being developed at Inala by Thiess, and the continuing development at Acacia Ridge and beyond, to Ridgewood Heights. I expect that closer settlement will also occur at Pallara, in the Ritchie Road area. The first signs are there. The big land developers and speculators have moved in.

At the present time the residents of Inala, which, it should be remembered, is only nine miles from the G.P.O., must travel by bus to Oxley or Darra and thence by train to the city. The travelling time is usually around 55 minutes. That is not exactly speedy by 20th-century standards.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** There is a long wait for the buses, out in the open.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Indeed there is.

From Acacia Ridge it is necessary to travel by private bus to Moorvale, and there join the Brisbane City Council service to the city. This journey, of less than eight miles, takes slightly over one hour, depending on congestion at the Nyanda railway crossing. These slow, frustrating, broken journeys only encourage people to save up for a car and drive to work or into the city. This, in turn, further clogs the already-crowded Ipswich and Beaudesert Roads. Whilst I supported the construction of the Rocklea overpass, and I am all in favour of the proposed overpass at Nyanda, these projects do nothing to meet the root cause of the traffic problem, which is simply over-use of the motor-car and under-use

of public transport. There is no question that the line I am proposing would not be a financial success.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** What distance is involved in the link?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** At an educated guess, it would be about 7 miles.

As I have said, there is no question that the line I am proposing would not be a financial success. Leaving aside the other areas, from Inala alone 108,000 people used the co-ordinated service in the year 1972-73.

The trend overseas is to encourage the use of public transport, and, in particular, rail transport. But we do not have to go overseas to see that if people are provided with a fast reliable rail service they will patronise it, and patronise it well. The outstanding success of the Brisbane Exhibition rail service at show-time is a case in point. From memory, I think in excess of 400,000 people were carried by it this year. There is no doubt in my mind that, under the right conditions, people can be weaned from the use of the motor-car.

Digressing slightly, I noted that urban passenger journeys in the year 1971-72 were up 9 per cent on the previous year. I am sure the 1972-73 figures will also show an increase in the city use of the rail system. Now is the time to encourage and foster a return to the railways. But, of course, this Country Party-dominated Government is just not interested in Brisbane or its people. In fact, it does all it can to hold Brisbane back, no doubt at the behest of its backers, the Queensland Graingrowers' Association and the United Graziers' Association.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I do not want to interrupt, but let me say that I think you have a very good point.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I thank the Minister.

**Mr. Kaus** interjected.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I am happy when the honourable member for Mansfield interjects, because I cannot hear him. As I have said before, he is a rectum speaker; he speaks through his seat.

I notice in the Treasurer's Financial Statement that the Australian Government has agreed to assist the development of urban public transport systems by a grant of \$2 for every \$1 of State money, the first grant under this policy being for the new Merivale Street bridge. This being the position, now is the time for a case to be prepared and presented to the Australian Government for the Inala rail link. Apart from the financial consideration, other conditions are now highly favourable for the construction of this line. A spur line has been built under Ipswich Road to service the Wacol Industrial Estate. There is also plenty of undeveloped land right through to Salisbury. If construction

of this line is too long delayed, closer settlement will occur and costly resumptions will be necessary.

It is interesting to contrast this Government's attitude to passenger rail facilities with its attitude to the provision of rail links for commercial and industrial purposes. The shortsighted closure of the South Coast line in 1964 is a classic example of this. Condemned on all sides at the time as a foolish step, the closure was nevertheless carried out, and the rails were ripped up to make doubly certain that the decision was not reversed in the future. It was common knowledge at the time that the closure of the South Coast line was the pay-off to the big road-transport companies for their generous financial support to the coalition parties during the previous election campaign.

This Government is a "big-business" Government. Whatever big business wants, it gets. The Queensland Chamber of Manufacturers and the Queensland Employers' Federation only have to snap their fingers and this Government does handspings. People and their interests or welfare come last, if anywhere at all.

One would have thought that any Government with the slightest business acumen and foresight, let alone this one, with its self-proclaimed business brilliance, would have seen the advantages of connecting the Wacol Industrial Estate with the goods yards at Acacia Ridge. But no. True to form, this Government waits for a situation to develop and then reacts. The common-sense, practical economics of the situation indicate that this link, combined with the proposed linking of the South Brisbane and Roma Street lines, would provide for the maximum economic use of rolling-stock.

Now that one segment, the Merivale Street bridge, is to be a reality, I urge the Government to speedily build the missing link—and I am not referring to the honourable member for Mansfield—from Wacol to Salisbury, and so provide a fast, efficient, economic rail service for passengers and goods in these outer southern suburbs.

I want to turn now to a facet of the Railway Department that is causing me some concern, namely, the question of staff morale. I venture to suggest that never in the history of the Railway Department has there been so much staff dissension and frustration. This frustration is general in all levels of the service. I am sure the staff would cheerfully and willingly pass a "no confidence" vote in the administrative "top brass"—the yes-men for the Government. It is quite apparent to all who want to see that the "top brass" do not care enough even to attempt to solve some of the basic problems of the staff.

I make no apology when I say that a great deal of the blame for the spate of industrial trouble that affects the railways could be laid directly at the door of the present Commissioner, Mr. Lee. This Commissioner has proved himself to be one

of the most anti-union Commissioners of all time. A great deal of the present industrial strife is caused by his hostile and intransigent attitude. This gentleman provokes the unions, and then proceeds to play one union off against the other. Unfortunately, he is very successful in doing this. As a matter of fact, he is widely known as the "Talleyrand of the Public Service".

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** How many strikes will he instigate before Christmas?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** He provokes them. I would say that he is the instigator of most of the trouble in the railways, and the quicker he is transferred to another department, the better it will be. As a matter of fact, instead of allowing him to direct railwaymen, he should be transferred to Dirranbandi to direct emus.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You are making a serious allegation.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Nevertheless, I stand by it.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You say that he instigates strikes?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I do, and I say it advisedly.

In my opinion, the multiplicity of unions covering the railways makes them fair game for this kind of tactic. The sooner there is one union to cover all the staff of the railways, the better it will be for all concerned. Then perhaps we will see a little sanity prevail.

I have no doubt that the Minister, to use a current "in" term, is being "snowed" by the Commissioner. I suggest to the Minister that he spend a little more time in learning something about the workings and ramifications of his department. This will reduce his chances of being "snowed", and he will not then have to rely so much on dubious advice. The theme most prominent in conversations that I have with railway workers is that the general decline in the service offered to the public, and the running down of staff facilities, is being allowed to happen deliberately. The reason for this is very plain—the railways are being prepared for a take-over by the big free-enterprise transport companies and container operators.

**Mr. Burns:** Do you reckon they will sell them, or will they give them away?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Knowing this Government, I think they will give them away.

Notwithstanding the wide publicity given to the Moolabin complex, which was said to relieve the congestion at Roma Street, we find that F. H. Stephens and East West Freights were promptly given priority of locations and availability of wagons over the Railway Department's general customers, notwithstanding that their activities are in direct competition with the railways.

I shall now deal briefly with a couple of points to illustrate why railway staff morale is low. Does the Minister know that the stationmaster at the Kingaroy Railway Station (there are no prizes for guessing which electorate that is in) who, by the way, has interests in the largest apiary in the southern area, can get extra staff at will, and also be granted leave when required?

**Mr. Burns:** You know that if a Labor man goes there, they transfer him straight away. If anyone wants to be transferred, he should join the Labor Party.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Then he will be transferred to the back of Boullia, or some similar place. He will be shifted very smartly.

Even top men from the Commissioner's office have been told to keep away from Kingaroy. Obviously there has been a "hands off" instruction from "Joh". Can't the Minister realise the revulsion and anger that is felt by hard-working staff at other understaffed stations because of this sort of situation?

The matter of railway housing also shows room for a great deal of improvement. A friend of mine recently told me of the situation in Hughenden. To say the least, I can only describe it as incredible. There have been suggestions on more than one occasion that the department's houses are permitted to fall into such a state of disrepair that they are eventually condemned as unfit and sold by tender for removal. This is disgraceful; nevertheless, it goes on.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Right throughout Queensland, too.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Yes, right throughout Queensland. This solves a lot of problems for the Railway Department, but it certainly creates a great deal of hardship for the staff. As there is a shortage of private and Housing Commission houses for rental, a man on transfer cannot be sure that he will get a home. The quarters for single men are evidently in a very poor condition, with doors that do not close and similar defects. The alternative is private board or hotel accommodation, neither of which is overplentiful and which, in any case, is usually priced beyond the pocket of the average railway worker.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Hughenden is in Mr. Speaker's electorate, isn't it?

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** Yes, I believe it is in Flinders. Perhaps Mr. Speaker should give more consideration to representing his electorate.

Even if private board or hotel accommodation was available, it seems to have escaped the notice of the powers-that-be in Brisbane that most of these men are shift workers, which creates special problems. As anyone with even the slightest imagination

will realise, a shift worker must have proper facilities for sleep at the odd times that he can get it.

**Mr. R. Jones:** The accommodation position has come about because the Station Maintenance Branch has been allowed to run down.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** It has been a deliberate policy, embarked upon by the present Tory Government. The meal hours of a shift worker also create special problems.

The time has arrived when the staff are sick to death of being the "bunnies" for the department. It is high time that the tall poppies came down from their air-conditioned ivory towers and found out just what is happening in the department. They might also learn what the ordinary departmental employee is coping with, and perhaps then we will not have so many blunders occurring. Perhaps even fiascos like the lack of escalators at Brunswick Street Station will not happen again. It is almost inconceivable that so much money was spent on that station with so little concern for the ordinary traveller.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Shocking!

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** It is shocking. It is a disgrace. At a time when we should be using every means to encourage the use of the railways, we confront travellers at Brunswick Street Station with the choice of a ramp or 48 steps. Of course, there are lifts to the offices in the complex above, and the shops in the station concourse are let and are trading, so I suppose the first priorities were served after all. People do not matter very much to this Government, as I pointed out before.

**Mr. R. Jones:** There should be escalators.

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** That is so. In this modern day and age, it is farcical to expect people to climb up 48 steps.

In spite of what the Minister has been told, everything in the garden is not rosy, so I urge him to shake off his advisers and go out and see for himself just what is the state of the department and the service it offers to the travelling public.

**Mr. LOW (Coorooora) (3.32 p.m.):** It gives me a great deal of pleasure to say a few words on the Estimates for the Railway and Transport Departments. As a responsible member of the Minister's committee, I am delighted to be associated with the presentation of these Estimates and with the Minister's explanation of the running of the railways and the general administration of transport throughout Queensland. I wish to congratulate the Minister on his common-sense policy of administration.

First, let me say that I do not subscribe to the views expressed by the honourable member for Archerfield. As a matter of fact, I think that he will later regret that

he, as one of the younger members of this Assembly, made such a wild and vicious attack on the present Commissioner for Railways. I should say that his speech was not of his own making but was prepared by someone else outside this Parliament, who then handed it to him.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That is not true.

**Mr. LOW:** That is my conclusion. I think you will agree, Mr. Dean, that his attack on an officer such as the Commissioner for Railways is particularly regrettable when he is not able to come into this Chamber and defend himself. I shall leave the matter to the Minister, who will, I am sure, deal very effectively with the honourable member for Archerfield.

I wish now to deal with the matter of law and order in Queensland. I was astounded to hear recently that 30-odd strikes had occurred in the Queensland railways during the current financial year. That is a shocking record, and such industrial lawlessness must cease. I well remember when the wharfies engaged in similar industrial lawlessness. What happened to them? It put them out of business, and that is what will happen to the Queensland railway system if strikes continue. There will be widespread retrenchment, as there will be no work.

After making my speech in the Address-in-Reply debate, I was taken to task by the secretary of the Australian Railways Union on my references to railway administration, strikes, and so on.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You are an old railwayman, aren't you?

**Mr. LOW:** Yes. I wrote back a polite letter and told him and his members to pull up their socks. Employment is very important today, and I believe that every genuine, loyal railwayman has a responsibility not to be led by the nose by a few militant irresponsibles.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. LOW:** That was very good advice. I believe that the womenfolk of railwaymen will pull them into gear, because they are the ones who suffer the disabilities and financial loss.

The irresponsible stoppage last Friday caused a great deal of concern in the area I represent. At the present time there is a state of emergency in the sugar industry following the winter cyclone in July. Because of that stoppage the sugar mill was forced to close for 12 hours of good crushing time.

The Moreton Central Sugar Mill and the sugar industry in the Nambour district have stuck loyally to the railways through thick and thin, in good times and in bad times. Rail stoppages such as that on Friday last are the quickest way of putting millers and growers out of business. Accordingly, I wish to lodge a very strong protest. As one who

has had considerable service in the Railway Department, I make an appeal to the genuine railwaymen throughout the State to cease these stoppages.

As a matter of fact since the day I left the department to come into Parliament, I have received all copies of the "Weekly Notice" by courtesy of the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways. Through that publication I keep myself right up to date on what is happening in the department throughout Queensland. The Commissioner for Railways and the Commissioner for Transport are doing a fine job for the Government, as are the officers who are associated with them.

I should like to see a Brisbane Transport Authority established in this city. Never before has there been such chaos, not because of the administrators of the State but because of the lack of co-ordination. As we move round the city, we constantly hear people asking, "Why don't you do something about road, rail, air and water transport?" All forms of transport should be brought under one authority so that a properly co-ordinated service can be provided. It would also bring about a big reduction in running costs and fares. That would be a grand thing for Brisbane and the whole State.

I fully support the electrification of the railways. I am pleased to see the co-operation that we are receiving from the Commonwealth Government. I hope that this will continue, without any political hold-ups. Electrification of the Brisbane suburban railway system is urgently required. I hope that the service can be extended to Ipswich and to Nambour. I have made representations along these lines to the Minister. It would first require a survey, of course. We have to provide something better than the present chaotic traffic conditions on the road between here and Nambour, the main highway to the North and the Sunshine Coast. We can no longer tolerate bumper-to-bumper traffic. We should not only step up the rate of freeway construction, but also electrify the Brisbane suburban railway system as quickly as possible.

We have heard quite a deal of discussion about railway accounting. It is entirely different from orthodox, every-day, run-of-the-mill book-keeping. One has to be involved in it to know the purpose behind it. Many honourable members can quite honestly misunderstand the calculations and be right off the track in their comments.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I bet you never got past the early abstracts.

**Mr. LOW:** Let the honourable member mind his own business. The Minister for Justice was pretty right the other day when he said that he was a little pip-squeak. At the time he took offence. He should not be rude when someone is trying to make an intelligent speech.

**Mr. R. Jones:** That won't help you.

**Mr. LOW:** I know, but the honourable member should not be rude. If the books of the railways were examined, it would be found beyond doubt that, if the concessions for so many deadheads of all description, passengers and freight, were eliminated, the railway system would be a much more profitable undertaking than it is today. Concessions of every description are granted and the railway system has to suffer these losses. In order to get a true and proper assessment of the financial situation, we should institute a book-keeping system by which all concessions are credited to the railways.

Mention was made here the other day of large sums of money not being credited to certain divisions. This practice has been in operation for a long time with the guaranteed ledger accounts and so forth. Under this system accounts are established in one division and paid for in another. Brisbane gets a lot of credit for moneys that are collected here, but do not actually belong to the district. Transfer of debits and all manner of transactions take place, which makes the position very complicated.

Taking the railway service at face value I have always felt that it is a costly undertaking. But if it were not there in time of war, when it is so vital to the defence of this country, the whole nation would be endangered. Therefore, I think the Commonwealth Government should make an annual allocation from the Defence Vote for the upkeep of the railways. I think everybody realises what a tremendous job the railways did during the last war. These are all things that should be taken into consideration when we are discussing the Railway Department.

I now want to discuss some of the freight being transported today by road. It is not unusual when travelling our roads today to see large pieces of machinery, houses and so on being moved by transport vehicles. The trucks are overloaded, they put a strain on bridges, and they damage roads and block other traffic. I think it is time we decided that all large items of plant, houses and so forth should be carried on the railways and banned from the roads. They are dangerous not only to transport operators but also to other motorists using our roads.

**Mr. Davis:** How could a house be transported on a train?

**Mr. LOW:** I would not allow houses as such to be transported on any busy road. I would stipulate that they should first be dismantled.

**Mr. Davis:** They can do it outside normal hours.

**Mr. LOW:** They are certainly a damned nuisance, if you'll excuse me, Mr. Dean, to motorists travelling on our busy highways.

Before concluding, I should like to put on record that the Cooroy Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association recently complained about a hazardous corner on the Bruce Highway within the town of Cooroy.

The matter was investigated, but unfortunately it was found to be impossible to improve the corner. Apparently somewhere along the line a recommendation was made that the crossing gates should be closed, and people were advised to use a crossing that is situated approximately 16 chains south of the railway station.

I earnestly appeal to the Minister and the Commissioner for Railways not to proceed with the proposed closure of the railway crossing gates. For Cooroy, which is progressing rapidly and increasing in population, such a move would be a retrograde step. I certainly could not support it. I am aware, of course, that the Minister has delayed the implementation of the proposal to close the gates.

A request for the retention of the gates has been put forward by the Noosa Shire Council and the Cooroy and District Chamber of Commerce. As the local fruit-growers' association now realises that in complaining about the corner in the railway yards it has put forward a case that, if accepted, will react to the detriment of Cooroy, I hope that its proposal will not be proceeded with in the circumstances, as we cannot afford to have the gates closed.

In a communication that I received only this morning from the Cooroy Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, also objecting to the closure of the railway gates, the claim is made that recently a long load that was being transported through Cooroy became jammed against the railway-bridge railings and completely blocked the Bruce Highway for a period of between 90 and 100 minutes. I can confirm the assertion that the highway was closed for such a length of time, because on the date involved I was driving from Tewantin to my home in Nambour. However, if the crossing had not existed, I would have been completely hemmed in on one side of the railway line for quite a long time.

When the bridge was provided over the railway line, it was not the intention to eliminate the crossing gates. I think there is tremendous support for retention of the crossing gates. Therefore, the Minister would please the vast majority of local residents by not proceeding with the proposal.

I express pleasure at the fact that the Department of Transport is to be provided with new accommodation. The condition of the building in which the department is presently housed is deplorable. As the department is one of the greatest revenue-producers in the Government, it deserves better accommodation than that presently given to it.

It is very pleasing to see the interest displayed by the Railway Department in beautification of the area in Roma Street near the old fruit and vegetable markets. In these days, when so much emphasis is

placed on the environment, pollution and so on, such projects mean a lot to people. I commend all those connected with it.

**Mr. P. Wood:** What about the advertising hoardings on railway property?

**Mr. LOW:** For many years that has been a source of revenue to the Railway Department. I know that the Minister and his Commissioner are phasing hoardings out, but I have mixed feelings on them. In some locations advertising hoardings can be an advantage, but in others they are an eyesore. If they are placed higgledy-piggledy along a highway, they disfigure the whole area.

In conclusion, I urge the Minister and the Commissioner to stand no further nonsense from those who are leading honest, decent railwaymen into industrial disputes, which bring about misery and hardship.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. P. WOOD** (Toowoomba South) (3.51 p.m.): I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak on the Estimates under debate. It is obvious from previous contributions that many honourable members are concerned about road safety. I suppose that is natural in the sense that most honourable members, if not all, are motorists. In this sense we are all experts of a kind on road safety.

Today, I do not propose to solve the problems associated with road safety. I do not think that is possible. There is no single answer or simple remedy to the road toll—no easy solution can be offered—although there are a number of directions in which we can move in an attempt to overcome the problem. I wish to discuss a number of matters that I think may be useful, but in doing so I do not submit them as cure-alls.

Firstly, I wish to comment on the necessity to introduce driver education at schools. I do so with a certain amount of reluctance because school programmes are already overcrowded. There are always demands from all types of interested groups to enlarge the school syllabus. The suggestions that are made cover a wide variety of matters, and many of them can be justified. However, there is insufficient space in our school syllabus to cover everything that we would like to see included.

One of the fundamental things that we must do is educate our young people to remain alive after they leave school. All the statistics on road accidents and fatalities reveal that the young people in the community are most vulnerable. We must obviously do something about this situation, and the school is the place where this can be done. It has been suggested that we should give sub-senior and senior students driver education. However, this approach would not achieve very much because the number of students proceeding to sub-senior and senior level represents only a small proportion of the total

school population. This category includes only a minority of those who, in future, will be driving motor vehicles.

If we are to be serious in introducing some form of driver education in our schools, we must tackle the project at the grade 10 level. This means that we would be dealing with children at an age before they are eligible to hold a driver's licence. If we are to reach the greatest number of students, we must institute driver training at grade 10. It is virtually useless to start it at grade 12, because the majority of young people who will eventually be driving cars have already left school. The problem must be tackled at an earlier stage.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I do not know whether you heard my introductory speech, but I said almost the same as you are saying.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I was grateful to hear the Minister's remarks.

When we speak of driver education in schools, some people seem to think that we put all the students into motor vehicles and whiz them around on special training tracks and educate them in the mechanical skills of driving. This may come into it, but to my mind the most important aspect of driver education is the development of responsible attitudes. I know that the Minister agrees with that point. When we speak of developing responsible attitudes in students, we are really getting into the most difficult field in educating people. It is simple for me to say we should educate young people to be responsible, but evolving the method of achieving it is of the greatest difficulty imaginable. How do we educate young people to adopt a responsible attitude when driving a motor vehicle?

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** If they don't want to be.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** It is difficult.

The point I am making is that we are not even attempting to do this in our schools. I doubt if we are even experimenting. I should like to see in our schools some experimentation in the means of developing programmes to do what I am suggesting. I have no doubt that in our experiments there will be failures, and that we will not always succeed in what we are trying to do. But we will achieve nothing of a positive nature until we make the attempt. As I have already outlined, I know there is resistance in schools because of overcrowding of syllabuses and that sort of thing. But we have to experiment, possibly on a trial-and-error system. If one thing does not work, we should try something else. We must be prepared to accept that we will fail in some areas. This is inevitable. Because one programme fails, it should not be assumed that others will fail.

I am quite sure that mechanical skills can be learnt quite readily and capably by young people. But responsible attitudes

are much more difficult to develop. We have in the Education Department people who are capable of developing experimental programmes in this direction.

Alcohol education in our schools is completely inadequate, as is also the area of how motorists are affected by alcohol. This obviously would have to be one area covered in any school education programme. There is overwhelming evidence of the part played by alcohol in traffic accidents. Really, I do not suppose I need go into great detail in supporting that argument.

Some time ago, Police Department reports listed the various causes of accidents. They attributed so many accidents each to drunkenness, speeding, failure to yield right of way, and so on. In fact, it is extremely difficult to list the factors causing accidents. However, the most recent Police Department reports no longer attempt to attribute causes to accidents. A single accident could be attributable to many causes. A whole host of factors could be involved. But the overwhelming evidence is that in many cases alcohol is one of the contributing factors.

**Mr. Davis:** I would have to agree with that.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I am sure that the honourable member, with his involvement in the transport industry, would support my view.

As an example, figures over a 10-year period released by the Police Statistics Section in 1971 show that 84 per cent of all drivers killed in single-vehicle accidents in Brisbane had been drinking. Most alarming of all, the figures revealed that every driver between 21 and 24 years of age in that survey had drunk some liquor before being killed in a road accident. This is catastrophic. The same statistics revealed that post-mortem blood test figures issued by the bureau show that half the number of people killed on the road were above the prescribed alcohol limit. What I have quoted are figures produced by the Police Statistics Section, and they are confirmed by virtually the same figures in 1972.

A report released by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics showed that drink-driving is a major factor in road accidents, and not only those that are fatal. Breathalyser tests were carried out on 385 people involved in road accidents, and 358 showed positive readings. A total of 324 had readings of .08 or above. I do not think I need go into greater statistical detail to confirm that alcohol is a very serious factor in the road toll. It is a major factor in most road accidents, and, if an accident is caused by speeding or failing to yield right-of-way, in very many cases alcohol contributes to the speeding, carelessness or other driving deficiency.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Many accidents are not reported, and we don't know anything about them.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** That is right. Frequently accidents involve innocent people, and the cost to the community cannot be measured in any human or monetary sense. The effect of the road toll is quite disastrous. In view of overwhelming evidence of this type, more severe restrictions must be imposed on drink-drivers. At the moment, the legal limit on blood alcohol content is .1. Despite evidence that consumption of a smaller amount of alcohol seriously reduces the ability of a driver, we keep the limit at the fairly high figure of .1. I will support moves to reduce the concentration of alcohol that a driver may legally have in his blood, and I hope to see it reduced from .1 to .08. At the moment, if a driver has a blood alcohol content between .08 and .1, he loses his licence for 24 hours, and he probably would lose two points under the demerit system. If he is a provisional driver, I understand that he loses his licence for three months.

That, however, is not to say that because the penalty for having a blood alcohol content of between .08 and .1 is less than that for having a content above .1, people with the lower level can drive safely. I think we should tighten up by reducing the blood alcohol content from .1 to .08, and the policy of the Australian Labor Party supports such a move. In fact, it is incorporated in the decisions reached at the Surfers Paradise convention of the Queensland branch of the Australian Labor Party a couple of years ago. The party then decided that the breathalyser test limit of .1 should be reduced to .08. It would be nice to think that such a move would automatically deter people from driving when they should not. Of course, it will not do that, but it may deter some.

Many drivers have a drink problem. That has to be expected, because there are many in the community with such a problem and most people drive motor vehicles. I have read that a brain surgeon said in a 1971 report that anybody convicted of the offence of having a blood alcohol content more than .15 must have a drinking problem. However, in our present approach we are punishing the offender without treating the problem. I think we should establish procedures under which people who persistently offend against the breathalyser laws can be referred to a centre for assessment of their problem so that treatment can be made available to them. The form of treatment is a matter for medical practitioners, not for me. The point I am making is that at the moment, in our legislation dealing with drink-driving, we merely punish offenders. We do not treat the problem with any form of rehabilitation. I think that is a matter which needs attention.

In the few moments that I have left, I wish to make some comment on railway problems. I have had complaints, as I suppose

most honourable members have, about delays and frustrations arising from congestion at the Roma Street goods yards.

**Mr. B. Wood:** You would use trains more often than most members.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I think I would go through Roma Street more often than most members. I went through Roma Street last night, and I was back again this morning.

**Mr. B. Wood:** You are one of the department's best customers.

**Mr. P. WOOD:** I am a customer; but, as a passenger, I am not a paying customer. I do not think there are any paying customers here.

However, I do not pretend that, because I travel through Roma Street often, I understand from my casual observation what the problems are. I have had complaints in Toowoomba about delays in the consignment of goods from Roma Street, and such delays must have an inflationary effect on costs not only to people in Toowoomba but also to those in other parts of the State.

I understand that one of the problems is that the Railway Department has allowed private transport operators in the Roma Street goods yards to conduct their business on the bulk-contract basis of freight rates. That system has been operating for some time, and it seems that the presence of these transport firms at Roma Street has caused many problems of congestion and discord. There have also been shunting incidents and many stoppages.

I will acknowledge that the Railway Department has realised the problems caused by the presence of these transport firms and is making attempts to provide alternative accommodation at Moolabin, but I am advised that not all the operators have co-operated. The congestion at Roma Street urgently needs to be resolved, and I hope that the Minister, in his reply to the debate, will tell us what he and his department are doing to resolve the problems.

Relocation of some of the facilities at Moolabin should relieve the congestion at Roma Street, and should also remove traffic problems created by heavy vehicles in the city. More pertinently, it will allow customers doing business only with the Railway Department reasonable opportunity to conduct their business with a minimum of delay. That will, of course, be to the benefit not only of those at the other end who are experiencing a great deal of frustration. I understand that a complicating factor is the difficulty of persuading one of the firms—F. H. Stephens Pty. Ltd.—to co-operate, on the grounds that it expects the department to bear the cost of the alternative facilities at Moolabin.

The problems at Roma Street are having widespread effects, and I hope they can be resolved. I am interested in hearing the Minister's comments on this point.

Mr. KAUS (Mansfield) (4.8 p.m.): It is a pleasure for me to enter the debate on these Estimates. As this is the first occasion on which the Minister for Transport has presented Estimates for approval, I congratulate him on the way he introduced them. I also thank the officers of the Transport Department, the Railway Department and other departments that the Minister administers for the assistance I have received from them over the past 12 months.

Today I wish to refer mainly to transportation. It is generally recognised that the cost of congestion on urban roads has been increasing in terms both of lost time and of higher vehicle-operating costs. New and improved roads must help to enhance the environment of our cities and other areas and, in particular, areas such as the central business district. These improvements also contribute greatly to road safety.

Nevertheless, land-use transportation studies have confirmed the need for a major investment in improvements in public transport, while not neglecting investment in urban roads. Many of the important urban roads in Brisbane carry predominantly local traffic, and these are the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council. The Government has seen fit to aid the Brisbane City Council by implementing the construction of freeways and expressways as part of a general contribution to traffic improvement. I stress that point, as many people think that the Lord Mayor of Brisbane is responsible for the freeway construction, and he takes credit for it. It should be pointed out time and again that this is a Government responsibility, and that it is the Government that is doing the job. That is not to say that the local authority does not have a responsibility to ensure that complete dependence is not placed upon the freeway system, and that attention to other than these special road systems is not neglected.

I have a few roads in my electorate that need attention, and it is about time the council got on with that work. Kessels Road is one, and the Mt. Petrie-Capalaba Road is another. Only about half a mile of road needs attention, but it is in a shocking state. Saturday-morning shoppers at Garden City certainly have to suffer. The Commonwealth Government has seen fit to approve in principle assistance to State Governments to update urban transport. But it is the State's responsibility, particularly in the capital city of Brisbane, to ensure the provision of a properly integrated and efficient system of public passenger transport to meet the needs of this special area.

It is quite evident that reliance cannot be placed on the Brisbane City Council to update its passenger-bus services. Nor can we rely on the railways alone to find the finances to meet the need for improved rail services. The setting up of a Metropolitan Urban Transit Authority to co-ordinate and integrate all transport services in the Brisbane area is essential if Brisbane is to get a modern

transport service. Some suburbs of Brisbane do not have a bus service. The Lord Mayor told a couple of my constituents in MacGregor that that suburb is a two-garage-house area, and that therefore they did not need any buses. What a shocking state of affairs!

It would be unrealistic to expect that improvements will be effected in the short term. As the Minister has indicated on more than one occasion, the work of updating Brisbane's transport must proceed in stages, and that for the first five years concentration is to be centred on electrification of the existing railway system. This improvement alone, as long as passenger comfort is assured, together with the co-ordination of bus services and possibly the introduction of an integrated fare system which will avoid the necessity for passengers to obtain tickets on the various services, should do a lot to improve the over-all service. It is important that public transport be, and be seen to be, as a really effective competitor with the private motor vehicle. Because we have not paid sufficient attention to public transport over the years, there has been no "dis-incentive" to use the private motor vehicle. It seems that we have been led to believe that the private motor vehicle is the only form of transport for the city. Experience in other parts of the world has shown how wrong this approach can be.

What we should be concerned about is moving people, and not confusing the issue as between people in cars, people in buses, people in railway carriages or, for that matter, people in ferries on the river. It is the way that people are transported from one point to another that is important, not the type of vehicle used. There must be a "mix" of public transport that will provide for all forms of transport, including the private motor vehicle. But in the light of knowledge that is now available to us, it would be sheer folly to use all our resources in catering only for the motor vehicle.

Getting back to ferry services, I should like to see our natural highways being used for commuter services. I have in mind a hovercraft-river-bus service, say, from Ipswich to Brisbane and from Brisbane to Southport. What has happened to the hovercraft service to Southport that was spoken about? It was supposed to start operating last year. Again, there could be a service to Noosa. A river-bus service that is soon to be used in London for the first time is a high-speed service on the River Thames, between Greenwich and Westminster. It represents a significant step forward for the British hovercraft that is to be used. It is a well-designed craft, embodying features designed to take maximum advantage of the hovercraft principle while affording the greatest possible economy of operation.

The significance of the service is that this will be the first time it has been operated on a scheduled year-round commuter service in competition with existing road and

rail transport. The craft can carry 65 passengers and is powered by three Cummins diesel-powered engines, producing 825 brake horse-power at a normal operating speed of 30 knots.

This service is viewed as a means of easing the pressure on existing transport systems serving London, and a similar system could be used with advantage here. Initially, the operating company proposes to run a 20-minute service in peak-hour periods. The hovercraft fare structure is to be kept competitive with the cost of travelling by existing transport systems. In fact, the more direct route of the hovercraft will save both time and money. The journey will occupy only 9 minutes, compared with 19 minutes on the more circuitous rail route in London. Such a system would have a similar effect here.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Have you seen a hovercraft in operation?

**Mr. KAUS:** Yes, in Western Australia, where there is a small one operating.

Elsewhere in the world, the HM-2 sidewall hovercraft has already been established in passenger-service operations in Italy, India, Brazil and Portugal. The last-mentioned country now has three HM-2's in operation. I think they are used essentially to cater for tourist traffic.

**Dr. Crawford:** What has happened to the hovercraft proposal here?

**Mr. KAUS:** I have just asked that question. I should like to see it instituted in other areas as well. No doubt the London service that I have mentioned will be closely watched.

We must avoid here the mistakes that have been made in the vehicle-dominated society of the United States. The crisis created by the imminent shortage of gasoline must make it evident that we should not follow the road travelled by that country over the past 40 years. We must look at our transport problems as a whole—not just the road problem, the passenger problem or the rail problem. We must look at the whole transport problem of the urban areas in relation to land-use patterns in order to identify the problems and examine their various solutions. This could entail the mixing of public transport, road improvement, car parking and parking restrictions with such things as rail-improvement, land-use and transportation studies. In fact, as I understand them, these matters are all included in land-use-transportation studies.

However, what we can do depends to a large extent upon available finance and, in the end result, the degree to which the Commonwealth Government assists will decide what progress we make. One matter that should be attended to is the parking of heavy vehicles. This can result in congestion and, in addition, it certainly does not meet environmental considerations. Somehow, we must relieve local roads of the obstruction

caused by the indiscriminate parking of heavy motor vehicles, which not only become a hazard but also hinder the free flow of traffic, whether it be during peak hours or at any other time.

It is wrong to allow development to proceed in areas that are not provided with transport services, and then expect either the ratepayers or the taxpayers to subsidise such services to those areas. In the development of any area, due regard should be paid to the available means of transport. Areas that cannot be provided with adequate transport services should be given low priority for development.

Over the years, expenditure on public transport has fallen far short of that on the construction and maintenance of roads. However, additional expenditure on roads will need to be incurred until we can strike a balance between it and expenditure on public transport services in urban areas. We must remember, however, that only in recent years has any realistic study been made of transport as a whole. As a result, we now have a better understanding of the problems involved.

It seems that while we are getting our urban transport plans under way we should also be looking at some simpler aspects, such as the provision of traffic lanes exclusively for buses, as well as priority for buses, the updating of interchanges at railway stations, and the provision of adequate parking space near railway stations. I am sure that the Minister is examining this latter aspect, and I have no doubt that, in the future, provision will be made at all railway stations for car-parking facilities. As well, we must examine our bus services to determine whether they are meeting the needs of the people.

I have received many complaints from bus travellers about inadequate services, and I have written to my local alderman to put him in the picture. Whereas previously the Brisbane City Council ignored my letters, nowadays the present alderman pays me the courtesy of replying, and it is pleasing to note that the council investigates the complaints that I bring to his attention.

Finally, it is no secret that in the urban areas both car-ownership and the registration of commercial vehicles are on the increase, with the result that there is a greater demand than ever before for urban road space. Our road programme cannot hope to satisfy this demand completely. Irrespective of the rate of road construction over the next 10 years, traffic congestion is bound to increase. The rate of increase is hard to forecast, and perhaps such congestion will turn a greater number of people to rail transport, which, by the use of its own corridor, is able to avoid the congestion that occurs during peak hours.

Our objectives should be to reduce the volume of traffic while maintaining the volume of journeys, to improve their quality, to improve the operational efficiency of the

transport system by selectively discouraging less-essential traffic, and to avoid unnecessary disturbance to the environment by the impact of traffic.

Somehow we must deter those who have little need for their vehicles to journey to the city from using them. As parking controls, for example, are the responsibility of local authorities, some direction should be given by the Government in this area. I am not particularly in favour of inner-city parking stations, because I believe that they only add to traffic congestion. I have always favoured suburban parking areas, and I suggest that eight or 10 of them could have been provided at a cost equal to that of providing the few underground parking stations in Brisbane.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** How far out would you suggest they should be?

**Mr. KAUS:** Not a great distance—perhaps within one or two miles of the city.

Ideally, the amount of parking provided in the central area of the city should ensure that the capacity of the access road is not overtaxed, and that the mixture of traffic making long stays and short stays is suited to the business and other activities of the area concerned. No doubt we could learn many lessons from overseas, where the problems are greater than they are here. Compared with many overseas countries, we have 25 years' grace. We should take advantage of this period and apply known solutions before the situation gets out of hand.

**Mr. Harvey:** What about reserve lanes?

**Mr. KAUS:** We could well have reserved lanes for buses. We have a similar facility now, but it could be improved.

Thanks to the freeway system, it takes me only seven minutes to get home after Parliament adjourns. I am very fortunate in that I can use the South-east Freeway. I congratulate the Minister and his department on the wonderful work being done in this field.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH (Cook) (4.26 p.m.):** I first wish to place the record straight. I was astounded at the force of the attack mounted by the Minister on the honourable member for Cairns. He said that in his 16 years in Parliament he had not heard any other member speak in such a way, or ask the Commissioner to resign. I draw his attention to a debate in "Hansard" during the 1957-58 session, in which Mr. Gilmore, a Government member, when speaking on railway matters, had this to say—

"I have said that people avoid the railways. We must look to the cause. In the ultimate, it boils down to management. It is the duty of the Government now to review the appointment of the Commissioner because he is the manager. He stands condemned in the eyes of all men

who know railways, and who have seen railways because he has neglected his duty. Though he may have been appointed for a long time at a high salary, it would be cheap to replace him now with an efficient businessman."

I emphasise that those remarks were made by a Government member. The Minister was very outspoken. I thought it was quite unfair of him to say that the honourable member for Cairns was doing something that was altogether wrong or almost criminal. I ask the Minister to recall what was said in 1957-58 so that, in future, he may not be too hasty in attacking honourable members on this side, particularly an ex-railwayman. Mr. Gilmore was a well-looked-after tobacco farmer.

I now turn to a more constructive field and pay tribute to a man who is probably never thought of in this Chamber but who is often in the thoughts of the many people who travel to Roma Street by train. I speak of the railway gardener who has done a magnificent job in preparing a beautiful garden that must put train travellers in a restful frame of mind. I pay a tribute to him and the many other people responsible for beautification of railway stations, houses and gardens. I am certain that those who voluntarily enter the railway-garden competition receive a lot of assistance from the railway gardener. Although vandals on many occasions show anything but interest in his work, he carries on keenly throughout the year. I thank him sincerely for his efforts.

I do not hand out thanks very often but, when I do, it is deserved. I now give thanks, as a member of Parliament, to the officers of the Minister or the Commissioner for their courtesy and efficiency in dealing with requests for special privileges for people who are not able to speak for themselves. I include ticket officers in my electorate, who almost bend over backwards in meeting my requests. I mention particularly Mr. Walton, the district superintendent in Cairns, who is the best ambassador the Railway Department has ever had in the North. He has attracted a great deal of business to the department, is easy to approach and is a practical and good railwayman.

A milestone in the railway service was passed this year. The Queensland Railway Ambulance Corps celebrated its diamond jubilee in right royal fashion. In November, the team won both the interstate team and individual competitions. In this regard, I should like to record the service given by some of the pioneers of this wonderful organisation. They are the men who enlisted the support and engendered the zeal and energy of many other railwaymen in giving this service on a voluntary basis. In other States, there is a certain degree of compulsion to attain a standard of first-aid knowledge, whereas in Queensland

there is not. Yet we more than hold our own in running competitions and in winning team and individual competitions.

The first person I mention is Mr. Austin Price, who was the ambulance officer from 1914 to 1937. I came to know Mr. Price in 1937, when I commenced my railway ambulance service. I had heard a good deal about him and had learnt so much of his great zeal and effort that I respected him greatly.

He was followed by Mr. R. C. E. (Dick) Smyth, who was the railway ambulance officer from 1937 to 1960. During that period, I came to know him very well because I was keen on teamwork and attending ambulance classes. Like his predecessor, he travelled throughout Queensland, often at great inconvenience. Frequently, he travelled into the night to hold small classes in places like Chillagoe and Pefferd in the North and towns in the Far West. He died only a few years ago. He was a very keen member of Mr. J. L. Mason's team in 1920, which was one of the best teams ever to represent Queensland.

Mr. Arthur Myres followed Mr. Smyth and was in charge from 1960 to 1964. He was an outstanding man from Ipswich. He was good in competition and had a flare for administration. He introduced what I would call modern punch into the railway ambulance field. His death in 1964 was unfortunate.

Mr. Matt. Hopkins, of Townsville, who followed Arthur Myres, was in charge between 1964 and 1969. "Matty" as we called him, was very dedicated. His one and only hobby and love was ambulance work. As both an honorary bearer and a member of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, he did a wonderful job in Townsville. It is fitting to point out that the team that Mr. Hopkins was managing at the time of his death won the interstate competition.

The present railway ambulance officer, Mr. Arthur Carvolth, of Townsville, came to the job in 1971. Like Matty Hopkins, he, too, talks, lives and breathes ambulance work, and his one thought is for the improvement and expansion of the railway ambulance movement in Queensland.

I mentioned earlier that Queensland railway ambulance officers have more than held their own in competitions. The movement started in 1892, which means that it was functioning in Queensland before the Q.A.T.B. and the St. John Ambulance. The diamond jubilee that is now being celebrated is the 60th competition for the Commissioner's shield. The centenary of the service will be in 1992. In the last 10 years, Queensland has won seven firsts, two seconds and one third in the teams' competition, and three firsts and three seconds in the individual championships, in competition with

railway ambulance teams from the whole of Australia. It can therefore be seen that there is no necessity for any bolstering of the wonderful efforts of the railway first-aid movement.

It was discontinued during the war years, which means that five years were taken from its service life. It is still very important. It is still a voluntary organisation, and, with a man like Arthur Carvolth at the helm, success is assured. He is, of course, backed by a good corps committee. This sits in Brisbane, and down through the years for as long as I can remember railway commissioners have always been very interested in first aid. This is how it should be, because of the assistance that can be rendered by railway ambulance officers in accidents. I well remember the Tamaree railway smash, where two mail trains collided head on. There happened to be an ambulance team on one of the trains, and they did a wonderful job between Tamaree and Gympie in seeing that passengers received good first-aid treatment.

Much has been said today about deterioration of railway services. It is not my intention to push the Railway Department further down. I want to be a little constructive. I ask the Minister not to let the Railway Department reach the low ebb of the Works Department. There is plenty of work for railwaymen to do. At 30 June 1970, these were the numbers of Railway Department employees—

South-eastern Division	10,827
South-western Division	2,584
Central Division	4,880
Northern Division	4,662
	<hr/>
	22,953

As at 30 June 1971, the comparable figures were—

South-eastern Division	10,587
South-western Division	2,417
Central Division	4,965
Northern Division	4,568
	<hr/>
	22,537

There was a slight increase as at 30 June 1972. The figures were—

South-eastern Division	10,561
South-western Division	2,355
Central Division	5,215
Northern Division	4,612
	<hr/>
	22,743

There has been a slump in the numbers to 30 June 1973. They are—

South-eastern Division	10,251
South-western Division	2,288
Central Division	5,314
Northern Division	4,496
	<hr/>
	22,349

In other words, the 1973 figure is 604 fewer than that of 1970. That means that there are now 604 fewer families connected with the Railway Department, and how many fewer apprentices? These are the things that worry me, and the things that I am asking the Minister to halt. I ask him to restore railway operations to a first-class, up-to-date service. As to one small section of the department, that of station maintenance, the answer to my question on 10 April this year showed that at Cairns, as at 30 June 1971, 22 were employed, and that as at 10 April 1973, 17 were employed. That shows the trend to elimination of apprentices—the very people needed to further decentralisation. People want their sons to remain in their own district and work there, yet the honourable member for Burdekin and a number of other honourable members have mentioned the deterioration in station buildings.

There are many instances of shortsighted policies, and nothing is more damaging to the prestige of railwaymen than a failure to provide service at terminal stations. I am referring particularly now to rail motors. When rail motors arrive at terminal stations, it is not unusual to find that no drinking cups, no paper towels and no toilet paper are available. Recently, on a popular Sunday run, these items were all unavailable. There was no sign of a porter at the terminal station. The guard sold tickets to the passengers as they were sitting in the rail motor.

What is needed is clean, efficient travel. More passenger-luggage trolleys are needed, and up-to-date information must be available to passengers. We do not want a timetable such as the one I have here, which was first printed on 1 November 1971 and, according to the information inside, revised in 1972. I rang the Railway Department today and was told that one cannot buy a timetable. Why? Something is wrong somewhere. Something like "Ask the man in grey" is needed. People must be confident that they can obtain information when they arrive at their destination. They must not be expected to sit and wait and listen to the loudspeaker system. In fact, it often is very difficult to hear what a person says over a loudspeaker system.

People travelling for the first time and people travelling with large families are inclined to be nervous. They should be given every assistance, because the department does not want them to look back on the trip as a terrible experience. Up-to-date information about the trip and refreshments must be provided for them. People travelling on rail-motors between Bundaberg and Brisbane have not the use of even one refreshment room. What are they expected to do? Carry a primus stove, as drovers did?

I noticed in the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways a very good photograph of the up-to-date railway station at Rockhampton. I say, "Congratulations!

It was sorely needed." Although that new building is wonderful, I ask why similar buildings, perhaps on a smaller scale, cannot be provided in other places. Can't they all be improved gradually, instead of being allowed to run down?

Some years ago, in one of the Government departments, I listened to a report on the Wilbur Smith traffic plan, and I was overjoyed to hear that it recommended a return to public transport, especially rail transport. We must go back to the railways; we can go back to the railways. We can take cars off the road.

I went to Beenleigh recently by rail, and the train just joggled along quietly. I look forward to the day when trains on that line will run express, stopping only at the terminal station and perhaps one other station. The honourable member for Archerfield referred to the service on the Ipswich line. I have travelled on those trains and they are "shockers". They are overcrowded, and one sees people lined up waiting for a train that does not stop at two or three stations. The answer is rapid transport, because people are becoming sick and tired of driving their cars to town. Rail transport could be made acceptable by the provision of parking and shelter at stations to enable people to get from a train to a bus without getting wet. There could even be shelter over the buses.

It might be said that the suggestions I have made are matters for the city council. However, we should not wait till electrification takes place before taking action. In the light of present circumstances, we might have to wait a long time for electrification.

This morning I gave notice of a question to the Minister for Transport relative to K-wagons, and I will probably get an answer to it tomorrow. Right up to the tip of Cape York Peninsula I hear the same cry—"We can't get K-wagons". I ask the Minister to ensure that existing wagons are kept in use and that there is an increase in the number of new, up-to-date cattle wagons. Out of season, they can, of course be used for other purposes, but they are essential for the transport of stock. I was very surprised when the first question asked at a graziers' meeting I attended in Coen was "What can you do about K-wagons?" The answer came from the secretary, who read a letter stating that there was a shortage of K-wagons all over Queensland. I can understand why shortages occur at certain times. Greater numbers of cattle are being produced and they have to be transported to abattoirs. The days of droving are over. Cattle transport is very lucrative, and the wagons can be used for other purposes when the season is over.

I now make an appeal to the Minister. When people in remote areas are due for their holidays please do not deny them their leave because of the unavailability of relieving staff. I ask the Minister to increase the strength of the relieving service. Nothing is

more frustrating for a family than to look forward to holidays and then suddenly find that they have to be cancelled. The strength of the relieving staff needs to be maintained, as it was in the old days. There should be better liaison between the administration and the outside employees.

I hope that the reduction in the number of employees in the department will receive the Minister's attention. We want the department build up so that it can provide the wonderful service that it provided previously.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (4.46 p.m.):** This would be the first occasion on which we have had the opportunity of discussing the Transport Estimates with the present Minister at the helm. I take the opportunity to commend him for travelling around the State to see at first hand the problems in the railway system. He is one of the very few Ministers who has been able to spare the time to cover every mile of the State's rail network. This has given him an opportunity to meet members of the various railway unions, graziers and other railway users, from whom he has been able to learn at first hand about the problems they face.

**Mr. Wright:** That is a reflection on previous Ministers.

**Mr. MILLER:** It is not a reflection on previous Ministers. All Ministers work very hard. However, this Minister has gone out of his way to set time aside and travel the State by train. In the past, most Ministers have used the airlines to travel from point A to point B to have a look at a problem. But this Minister, for example, has not just gone to Mt. Isa to look at a problem in that city. While travelling to Mt. Isa, he has seen the problems at various places en route. He is to be commended for that.

It was very encouraging to hear the comments of some honourable members opposite, particularly those of the honourable members for Toowoomba North and Lytton, who referred to the problems of alcohol and drink-driving. Perhaps the honourable member for Lytton was a little more political in his approach than was the honourable member for Toowoomba North. By being political, he spoilt what otherwise I would have referred to as an excellent speech on the problems of alcohol and drink-driving. I will deal with one or two points he made.

First of all, I do not believe that the Government is apathetic in its approach to drink-driving. It is the drivers themselves who are apathetic. In the very near future the honourable member for Lytton will see what this Government is prepared to do. He and the honourable member for Toowoomba North—and all other honourable members opposite—will have an opportunity to support the legislation that this Government will be introducing to overcome some

of the problems on the roads. The Government will be taking the action it believes is necessary to overcome these problems. The honourable member will very shortly have the opportunity of supporting the Government in its action.

The honourable member said that not many drinkers know how many 7 oz. glasses of beer are necessary to reach a blood-alcohol level of .08. I cannot accept that statement. I believe that most people realise through Press advertisements—

**Mr. Burns:** How many are necessary?

**Mr. MILLER:** I would be very surprised if the honourable member's electors have not read the newspapers. The Minister for Transport has carried out quite an extensive advertising campaign in the Press informing the people of Queensland of the number of drinks necessary to reach a blood-alcohol level of .08.

**Mr. Burns:** How many are necessary? I don't think you know.

**Mr. MILLER:** After the education we have had over the years and the number of speeches I have made on this very problem, I hope the honourable member will not be so naive as to ask me how many drinks are required to reach a level of .08. He should realise that I do know.

The honourable member went further and blamed the profit motive for road accidents. Irrespective of whether accidents occur in Australia, Russia, Poland or anywhere else, it surely is not the profit motive that causes them. It is not the fact that private enterprise controls these industries, but the fact that people will drink and drive. They will own motor-cars and they will speed. The fact that these industries are run by private enterprise has nothing whatever to do with the problem we are facing in Australia. I am quite sure that Russia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, or any other country under the Communist flag, face the same problems as we do here.

The honourable member went on to say that, just as drink-drivers are sent to goal, so should car manufacturers be goaled. Does he believe that it is the manager of the plant who should be goaled, or should it be the operator on the assembly line? Should the worker go to goal or should the boss? Let us face facts. It would be absolutely impossible for the employer to be sure that every one of his employees on the assembly line did the right thing. To put that idea forward is I think, quite ridiculous. On the whole, however, I agree with what the honourable member said. I believe he made a worth-while contribution to the problem of drink-driving, and I commend him on his speech.

I now want to refer to the Roma Street goods yards. I realise, of course, that quite a number of speakers have already raised this matter, but let us face facts. The railway industry would be one of the largest

in the State, and as such, it is only natural that it will have growing pains and will encounter problems.

**Mr. B. Wood:** It has been growing for a fair while.

**Mr. MILLER:** And it always will grow. Industry, when expanding, always has growing pains, no matter what type of industry it is or whether it is run by the Government or by private enterprise. This is a growing and expanding industry and it must have growing pains, so let us not be stupid about it.

I consider that the personal attack on the Commissioner for Railways (Mr. Lee) was disgraceful, to say the least. I have heard honourable members opposite attack the Government because they disagree with what was going on in a department, but I have never before witnessed a personal attack such as we heard during this debate. I have no doubt that the word has gone out from the unions, "Commissioner Lee will not co-operate with us. He disagrees with what we put forward. Get Lee." As I say, never before have I witnessed such a personal attack, and I hope that never again will I see a repetition of it. It was nothing more than a personal attack on a man who has no opportunity of standing on the floor of this Chamber and putting forward his point of view.

**Mr. R. Jones:** Rubbish!

**Mr. MILLER:** The honourable member for Cairns knows full well that I am right. On previous occasions, irrespective of the position held by the person at whom members of the Opposition are directing their criticisms, they have attacked the Government as a whole. I have no objection to that procedure. However, during this debate the Opposition conducted a personal attack on the Commissioner for Railways. If I am wrong, I hope the next Opposition speaker will put me right. Again I claim that the attack made on the Commissioner for Railways was the only personal attack made on an officer of the Government during my eight years in this Chamber.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I rise to a point of order. The remarks were not of a personal nature. Rather were they criticism of the Commissioner as an administrator.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Wharton):** Order! The honourable member has no valid point of order.

**Mr. MILLER:** The honourable member is only trying to waste my time.

The Commissioner for Railways controls a very large organisation and has responsibilities to it as well as to the Government. It is quite obvious, therefore, that he cannot agree to every suggestion put forward by the unions. It is equally obvious that

on this occasion the unions have sent out the message, "Get Lee." There is no doubt about that.

I want to deal now with the situation that has arisen at the Roma Street goods yards. I have here a submission handed to me by one of my constituents, Mr. Arch Bevis, of the Transport Workers' Union. Whether it is put forward by an Opposition member or a Government member is of little consequence. The fact remains that the union has made serious allegations against the Railway Department in relation to the situation at the Roma Street goods yards.

During the eight years that I have been in Parliament I have visited the Roma Street yards three or four times each year, usually towards the end of the year, to collect Christmas trees for the churches in my electorate. Never in the past have I been delayed in entering the yards. However, this morning I was forced to park in Roma Street and walk to the yards to locate the Christmas trees, and then carry them back to my car. I was appalled at the build-up of goods waiting in the railway yards for consignment.

I spoke to a couple of persons there—I do not know whether they were transport drivers or Railway Department checkers—and they assured me that this build-up of goods has occurred only since the Transport Workers' Union commenced its blitz in the Roma Street goods yards. Whether this is right or wrong, I cannot say. All I know is that this morning I could not drive into the goods yards because of the long queue of trucks waiting to get through the gates.

If the submission that I have here is incorrect, I should like to be told so. I believe that I have an obligation to put it forward and to give the Minister an opportunity of answering it. The union has made some serious allegations that should be answered so that everyone in Queensland may know the true position.

I agree with the first submission about the siting of the Roma Street goods yards. In the past it was ideally situated, but Brisbane is growing and industrial areas are being developed farther and farther out. I am not sure whether the answer lies in having two yards, or in having one huge yard. I visualise problems of joining up trains, with accompanying delays. Perhaps it is imperative to have one large goods yard. Wherever it is sited, it must be much larger than the present one and also be more accessible to transport drivers. Industry is suffering as a result of the present delays, and when industry suffers the general public pays for it. I therefore hope the Minister will seriously consider re-siting the Roma Street goods yards.

The first charge made by the Transport Workers' Union deals with the loading of poisonous and dangerous goods at Roma Street. It reads—

“Special ‘poison’ wagons are provided for the transport of poisons or dangerous goods but no attention is paid to the safety precautions necessary in the stowage of such goods. Because of this, incompatibles such as potentially explosive material and flammable material, are stowed together. Also, because of poor supervision and a system of ‘radar checking’ that will be explained later, poisons can be, and are, put into non-poison wagons. This can result in foodstuffs being contaminated and other goods damaged.”

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Has that happened?

**Mr. MILLER:** I am not aware whether it has or not.

With this submission, Mr. Bevis sent a report from Organiser Williams substantiating the claim. I believe I should read the report, in these terms—

“On Wednesday, 28th March, 1973, at 9.30 a.m., railway truck No. 36420B on No. 21 road was being loaded with sugar in paper cartons. Also loaded into the same truck and packed up against the sugar was a carton clearly marked ‘Poison’ in red letters. The contents of the carton were (Rametin H). Also clearly marked on this carton’s safety precautions—‘this poison should not come in contact with the skin also avoid breathing the dust from it’. Apparently this poison is used for sheep dipping.”

I hope this is not happening.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Is there a date on that report?

**Mr. MILLER:** It is dated 28 March 1973.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Do you know him?

**Mr. MILLER:** I know of Organiser Williams, but I do not know him well.

When a man makes such a very serious charge, and quotes the truck number and road number and gives a date, it should be investigated. The Minister will recall that when he was in Mt. Isa someone made a similar charge and claimed that poisons and foodstuffs were placed in the same rail wagon. I should like the Minister to investigate this charge thoroughly and, if it is well founded, ensure that such a thing does not recur.

I will skip a few of the allegations as my time is running short and there are one or two serious charges that should be answered. In dealing with checkers, the submission states—

“It is a common experience of truck drivers in a line-up to be by passed by checkers for no good reason, or at least no reason that is explained to them. On such occasions a checker or some other official will simply take a truck out of the line up even though such truck be

near the end of the line up. Quite often such trucks taken from the line up are loaded with goods that are good to eat or drink or have some other desirable quality. It is said that trucks are sometimes taken from a line-up in this manner for a monetary consideration.”

That is a very very serious charge to lay against—

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Let me point out that these charges were made by Mr. Bevis and Mr. Tapper of the Transport Workers' Union in writing—as you have it there—as well as verbally. I put the matter into the hands of the C.I. Branch.

**Mr. MILLER:** I hope that, if the Minister has received any reply from the C.I. Branch, he will inform the Committee of it in his reply and that, if he has not as yet received a reply, he will inform us as soon as it comes to hand. This is a very serious allegation not only against the Transport Department but also against checkers who, it is claimed, are accepting bribes. This employee of the Railway Department, who is no doubt a member of the Australian Railways Union, is being accused by the Transport Workers' Union of receiving bribes. It is very desirable that this matter be cleared up once and for all. I believe that the union would like a clear statement on this matter.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I want to be fair. The Transport Workers' Union knew I intended to take this action and was quite happy about it.

**Mr. MILLER:** That is very good.

Organiser Williams submitted another couple of submissions that highlight the delays at Roma Street. I refer to a report from him dated 22 March 1973, in which he names Alan Groom of T.N.T.

(Time expired).

**Mr. LEESE (Pine Rivers) (5.7 p.m.):** It never ceases to amaze me that, every time an Opposition member is in any way critical of the administration of a Government department, the pathetic cry comes from Government members that he is attacking the State's top administrators. Are our administrators to be placed in ivory towers so that Opposition members are not allowed to carry out their responsibility of probing into the administration of various Government departments?

Honourable members may be interested to know that the honourable member for Cairns (Mr. R. Jones) has received numerous telegrams from all over Queensland congratulating him on his actions in this Chamber. Many Government members approached him after his speech and congratulated him on his forthrightness. So much for the remarks of some Government members, who have not the forthrightness to be critical of any Government department.

**Mr. R. Jones:** If I am challenged, I will name them.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! If the honourable member for Cairns continues to behave like that, he will be named.

**Mr. LEESE:** I shall use some of my time to discuss safety within the railway system and would like to highlight a matter which is of considerable importance.

On 22 May this year, I wrote to the Minister for Transport, pointing out the prevalence of passengers travelling on the suburban stainless steel trains with their elbows protruding through windows. Obviously, this is a dangerous practice and could result in an accident. In fact it has resulted in accidents. I realise that railway by-law No. 372 does make it an offence to have any part of one's body protruding through a door or window of a moving train. In my view, it is still a dangerous practice on the side of the train away from the platform, even if the train is stationary, I would agree that anyone who knowingly allows any part of his body to protrude through the doorway or window of a moving train is foolhardy to say the least.

I am of the opinion, however, that it is the design of the stainless-steel carriages used on suburban lines that is at fault. As honourable members will be aware, the windows of the carriages open from the bottom and, with our climate, more often than not passengers travel with the windows open. The ledge of the window-sill is at a convenient height for resting elbows, which makes it far too easy for passengers, through no real carelessness of their own, to inadvertently allow their elbows to protrude beyond the carriage alignment, particularly if they are reading, and during peak hours when carriages are crowded.

In my letter to the Minister, I requested the fitting of some type of guard to stop this practice. In his reply to me, the Minister pointed out that when the stainless-steel suburban carriages were introduced, aluminium bars were fitted across the window. However, as a result of acts of vandalism, in most instances the guards were knocked away from the pillars of the carriages so that the loose ends projected from the carriages, thus creating considerable danger to passengers in passing trains. The Minister went on to say that this was considered to constitute a greater hazard than the carelessness, as he put it, of a few passengers in resting their elbows outside the windows. The bars were therefore removed completely from the carriages.

The need for arm guards must have existed when the carriages were constructed, otherwise why go to the expense of fitting them, even though, through vandalism, it was decided later, in the best interests of safety, to remove them? The questions that I ask are these. Was due consideration given to the effect of removing such bars, and was any consideration given to incorporating some other safety device to

prevent passengers from inadvertently protruding their elbows whilst resting their arms on the sills? For instance, surely the carriages could have been so constructed that, instead of the windows opening fully from the bottom, the first six inches or so was fitted with a fixed light, with the window opening above it. This would have prevented all possible chance of passengers' elbows protruding through windows. The fact that elbows can be seen protruding from steel carriages of any suburban train, particularly during the warmer weather, provides sufficient evidence that a safety factor is still required.

The amount of damage caused by acts of vandalism is well appreciated. For instance, many of the upholstered seats have been slashed. If the same negative thinking persists, I suggest that we will eventually go back to wooden benches. In his reply, the Minister tends to hide behind railway by-law 372, which states that any passenger who projects or leans his head, limbs or body, or any portion thereof, out of any window, door, or other opening in a railway carriage whilst the train is in motion, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding \$10. I suggest that the by-laws are long due for updating, particularly this one, because, in the first place, it apparently relates only to male persons and, in the second place, only to those in a moving train. It would be a very interesting situation if, whilst sitting in a stationary train, a person received injuries to an exposed limb that was hit by a passing train.

The by-laws, incidentally, are available only in the country time-table. If a passenger wants to refer to the by-laws, they are not available. They are not printed in the suburban time-table. As the honourable member for Cook said, it is very difficult to obtain a country time-table. How members of the public acquaint themselves with the by-laws, I do not know.

The penalty law is, of course, designed to safeguard the railways. This is as it should be and is very necessary, but the safety of passengers should be of prime importance, and I suggest that it must come first.

In his letter to me, the Minister indicated that in isolated instances injury has been sustained in wooden suburban carriages, and there is good reason for that. However, it bears no relationship to the problem with the steel carriages, which arises—I must reiterate this—because of the very convenient height of the sill and the fact that the windows are designed to open from the bottom edge. Although it is an offence, in the steel carriages it is very easy for a person to inadvertently allow his elbow to protrude, particularly when the trains are crowded in peak hour. This is obviously recognised by the authorities, because at no time is the by-law or regulation policed, the act being completely ignored by officers of all ranks at all times.

The situation is a very dangerous one, Mr. Lickiss, and I contend that the removal of the bars, which were designed to eliminate this very act, without any adequate alternative safety arrangement being made, was an act of negligence on the part of the State railways. I would therefore urge the Minister to make a positive approach and thoroughly investigate all aspects of the matter, with a view to eliminating the hazard. It has become a prevalent habit of a large majority of commuters—old and young alike—to travel in this fashion. They are completely unaware of either the regulations or the by-laws, or of the dangers of such a habit, and it is quite clear that the department has little desire to bring the matter to their notice, because there are no warning notices displayed in the carriages.

In contrast, the N.S.W. Railways retain the steel bars across the window, even though we are informed that acts of vandalism are far more frequent in New South Wales than in Queensland. In New South Wales it is still thought fit to display the following notice in every suburban railway carriage—

“Warning. Do not lean out of the windows or doors. Keep wholly within the car. When standing near the doorways, keep a firm hold.”

I reiterate that I consider the present design of the stainless steel railway carriages used in Brisbane constitutes a serious hazard, and I ask the Minister to take urgent steps to have these carriages modified in such a way that the hazard is removed. As an interim measure, I ask him to take steps to warn rail commuters of the danger. One way in which this can be done is by placing clear warning signs in all carriages. To my knowledge, there have been three serious accidents in the past three years—possibly there have been more—in which people have had one or other of their arms injured when protruding through a carriage window.

Another matter pertaining to safety that I think is worth mentioning is safety standards adopted in certain railway workshops, and the Banyo Railway Workshops are one example that comes readily to mind. With the National Safety Council and the Department of Occupational Safety stressing to private enterprise the need for safety on the job, it could reasonably be expected that a Government instrumentality would be setting a high standard in industrial safety. However, that is not the case at Banyo.

The general housekeeping of the workshops is, to say the least, scruffy. Air lines are lying all round the floor, under foot. They are not just small low-pressure lines; they are 2-inch high-pressure air lines, which constitute a serious hazard. There is no overhead piping for compressed air. There is a shortage of benches for people to work on, hence a lot of gear is left lying round the floor. This untidy housekeeping can be a major cause of accidents. There is nothing

orderly in the workshop. Rubbish is lying everywhere. It compares badly with the constructive manner in which the nearby S.E.A. building is laid out. Incidentally, that building was owned at one stage by the Railway Department. The Banyo workshops have been allowed to deteriorate, and are now in a very dilapidated state.

If everything is organised and laid out correctly and with some thought, not only does it make for a better working environment but there is less chance of accidents. This is a Government department, and it should be on top in safety matters. No doubt all honourable members will have seen the National Safety Council posters depicting various workshop hazards. They are meant to be taken notice of, but apparently they are ignored in this particular railway workshop.

There are no proper exhausts on the off-hand grinders, hence the silicone dust from the grinding wheel is not drawn away from the operator. As well, there is no exhaust system over the welding bays. A point that I have raised previously is that there are nowhere near enough portable shields to protect workers from welding flashes, which, of course, are a cause of serious eye damage. Another point I raised previously was that no safety glasses were provided in the workshop. I am pleased to say that within a week of my mentioning the matter they were supplied.

It would seem that there is no regular programme of checking slings. Men work under those slings, which carry up to 20 tons. It could be said that the workers should have more sense, but at the same time the employer, too, has a responsibility.

All these points have been highlighted in National Safety Council campaigns as serious hazards that can and should be eliminated from the workshop. But instead of setting an example—a standard for others to follow—the Minister's department in this instance is failing to provide even the basic requirements for safety on the job, which, I would point out to the Minister, is as important as safety on the road.

Before leaving that subject let me give one more tip to the Minister. Fuels such as petrol and other highly flammable substances are used at Banyo workshop, but to my knowledge no fire extinguishers are provided. If there are any, they are well hidden, because they cannot be seen as one walks through the workshop.

**Mr. Frawley:** Did you go down there and see this?

**Mr. LEESE:** The honourable member for Murrumba should not interrupt, but I do not mind his doing so because I know that he and the honourable member for Redcliffe are very worried about the chaotic

condition of the transport system in Redcliffe. It is in such disorder that the chairman of the Country Party in Murrumba—I understand his name is Mr. Peter Morris—felt that he must publicly state that, if the Government did not get off its backside and do something about transport in Redcliffe, both the honourable member for Murrumba and the honourable member for Redcliffe would lose their seats to the A.L.P. at the next State election. They are indeed worried, so I ask all Opposition members to make allowances for that when they come in with their inane interjections.

On a number of occasions I have raised with the Minister the need for an additional railway station at Strathpine North. The present station is sited in South Strathpine at the industrial estate. It does not meet the needs of the community, particularly aged persons and mothers with young children. The vast majority of the work-force commute to the city and, in the main, they travel by car. They have a very good reason. The station is too far away for them to walk to, so they get into their cars and, once in them, decide to carry on to the city. If the station was more centrally situated, it would go a long way towards winning commuters over to rail travel.

The department owns a good block of land, ideally situated in the residential area, but the Minister has advised me that, due to lack of funds, it is not in the position to provide a station there at this point of time. It is a pity that the Minister did not include proposals for the upgrading of this North Coast line in Queensland's submissions to the Federal Government, and, of course, the submissions should also have included a proposal for a loop-line from Petrie to Redcliffe.

**Mr. Frawley:** We will agree with you there.

**Mr. LEESE:** I expected the honourable member for Murrumba to agree with me on that. He was not saying this when he was first elected to this Chamber. It is only the Clontarf branch of the A.L.P. that has managed to bring the honourable member round to this way of thinking. He realises how dicey his seat is, particularly in the Kippa-Ring area. I receive many telephone calls from residents of the Kippa-Ring area asking me to make representations on their behalf because they cannot get assistance from the honourable member for Murrumba. This is a daily occurrence.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I rise to a point of order. I ask that that statement be withdrawn. The residents of Kippa-Ring do not ask for assistance.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mrs. Jordan):** Order! The honourable member has no valid point of order.

**Mr. LEESE:** I suggest that, as an interim measure, if sufficient funds are not available, the Railway Department could build a simple—

(Time expired.)

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT (Chatsworth) (5.28 p.m.):** This Minister is a particular friend of mine; I respect him very highly. Therefore, when I make a few passing caustic comments about parliamentary procedures he will know that I do not mean them in a personal sense. I emphasise, Mrs. Jordan, that they are passing comments because I would be the last person to trespass upon your tolerance.

Having sat through Estimates debates once again, I am more than ever firmly of the opinion that the parliamentary procedures here are pathetic, pitiful and puerile, and the sooner we look constructively at them in order to update them and make them meaningful, the quicker will this Parliament work in a useful fashion. I think it is quite intolerable that three days should be allotted to each Estimate. It is an enormous misappropriation of time, particularly when we have so little time left for the legislative programme.

I have an obligation to you, Mrs. Jordan, to relate those comments to the Estimates under debate, and I will attempt to do so. I have long been of the opinion that, if there is to be parliamentary reform, it must flow from the top. It would appear that, with the best will in the world, back-benchers achieve little. We pontificate and make speeches here, but I have now arrived firmly at the opinion that innovation must come from Ministers who share this view.

Therefore, I want to say to this particular Minister that, in the short time he has held this Ministry, he has been an innovator. He has been sympathetic to proposals put to him, and I have heard him described in the most laudatory terms. I have been told that he has put things right and has gone out of his way to listen to points of view and, in every sense of the word, to be an innovative Minister. I pay him every compliment for that, but if ever we need anything in this Parliament it is an innovative Minister so far as procedures are concerned. I point out to the honourable gentleman that he has a great opportunity to apply his many talents in this regard.

When we consider Estimates, he would know the procedures that prevail. He presided over this Committee for too many years not to know them more intimately than any other person in this Chamber. I would think that secretly he would concede my point about the over-generous allocation of time to each department's Estimates. As well as introducing reform in this Chamber, I submit that in the consideration of his Estimates he can also be innovative outside the Chamber.

In recent years the Senate has set up several Estimates Committees. Although they do not meet in the Chamber, their proceedings are recorded verbatim. I am not convinced, however, of the need for this. They confer with the relevant Minister and his departmental officers (I am relating these comments to the Estimates, Mrs. Jordan, please be assured of that), and the various details of the Estimates are explained to them. I suggest to the Minister that there is nothing to inhibit him if he wishes to take a similar step.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mrs. Jordan): Order! Will the honourable member please get back to the Estimates. He has strayed a little from the path.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** The Minister could ask his departmental officers to explain his Estimates, which are presently under debate, to representative members from both sides of the Chamber, who would be given the opportunity of understanding them in depth. This is infinitely more desirable a procedure than debating a lump sum, as we presently do.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** This is humbug.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** If the honourable member for Windsor believes that this is humbug, I invite him to debate the matter with me any time he likes and anywhere he likes. We will see where the flow of sentiment lies.

My colleague the honourable member for Maryborough was one of the few honourable members who today attempted to touch upon financial matters relating to these Estimates. He conceded his inability to probe them in depth, because, as he said, there is certainly no in-depth presentation of the figures. Putting politics aside, I suggest that, with his distinguished academic background, he would be ideally suited to the task of meeting departmental officers and of talking about these Estimates to ascertain what is involved in them and how the various expenditures that are incurred are justified.

As one who readily claims to be the arch-critic of our present parliamentary procedures, and desperately looks for change, I put this proposal to the Minister in the hope that I will find a pioneer.

Having said that, without for a moment deviating from relevance, I now attempt to become even more relevant and apply myself very briefly, and in fleeting moment, to the matters under discussion. I touch firstly upon the road toll. This subject has been covered quite adequately today, and I venture to suggest that there is hardly any disagreement at all on any of the submissions that have flowed forth. The Committee has expressed continuing concern about the road carnage, which is allowed to continue year after year, and the Parliament has continually to ask itself what it can do about it.

Those honourable members who claim that we have become blasé about the statistics of this matter are quite correct. We are so cynical and so inhuman that we look at the names that appear in the Press and, unless we know the people involved, we have no thought of horror at all at the fact that they have been killed on the road. We simply turn to the next page.

The honourable member for Lytton tried to assess the cost to the community of the road toll in terms of life, suffering and deprivation. I suggest that the assessment of the cost would be a Herculean task. By way of interjection I asked the honourable member, "What about the university student who just completes his course?" I posed that question because in recent times a young man in one of my Young Liberal branches who was studying for his degree as Master of Engineering met his death on the road. What is the cost of that?

The cost in terms of putting that boy through the university and maintaining him while he was studying can be assessed. But what is the cost of all the lost productive years of a boy of 24 who has gone for ever? What an enormous contribution he could have made. I reflect on his intellect to tell the Committee that some two weeks after he was killed his brother was honoured by being named a Rhodes Scholar. That is typical of the intellect of his family.

How can that loss be measured? I am sure I do not know, yet somehow we have to assess it and try to stop the carnage. What can we do about it? It is an extremely sobering experience to pay one's last respects to a young person who has died. A few years ago, a former Cabinet Minister in this Parliament lost a young daughter in similar tragic circumstances. She was a girl in the full bloom of life—a wonderful girl, suddenly gone.

Tragedy hits us in a very real way when we are among the mourners—I sometimes wonder if that is the sort of experience we should expose these young fools to when they indulge in high-speed driving. If they could be taken to one of these funerals or, perhaps more importantly, into hospital wards to see the injured people suffering, they might learn a lesson. Sometimes those who die are better off than those who live on as paraplegics and suffer shockingly and shamefully for years. They are the least fortunate; they are the ones who suffer to a greater degree.

What are we to do about this? Every positive proposal submitted in this Chamber should be looked at on its merits. The problem is bigger than politics, and it affects every last one of us. I have three children—I am one of a family of five—and the Statistician tells me that on the law of averages one of my family—including me—will be involved in a road accident in the course of a life-time. That is a terribly

stark fact to face head on. Of course, we do everything to lower the risk or to avoid being one of the statistics, but when we reduce the risk to the terms of one in a family of five being involved in a road accident, it is a sobering exercise.

I know the good will that motivates the Minister. He will look at all proposals and assess them, and, if there is some value in them, he will certainly act on them. I am convinced that road engineering plays a major part in the road toll. Far be it from me to move away from the Estimates under discussion, but it is passing strange that the road strip from Brisbane to the Gold Coast has the lowest accident rate of any road strip in the State. This must be related directly to good engineering and wide roads. It is a strange fact that the incidence of fatalities and accidents in the city is remarkably low. That could be the basis of some studies.

The Minister has been particularly enthusiastic about the defensive driving course. He is to be highly commended for this, but he is not content to rest on his laurels. I know he is looking for ways of extending the course in every possible way, and his officers share his enthusiasm. I am strongly of the opinion that this course is playing a very useful part in containing the prevalence of accidents.

If we are to combat this problem, in the final analysis it calls for a unified approach by all members of this Parliament. A short while ago I said the problem was bigger than politics, and I repeat that simple proposition. If it is to be beaten by penalties, let us impose heavy penalties and not mess around with it. Let us close our ranks and realise that when people say, "You are being a little too hard," we are not being hard, but simply realistic.

The honourable member for Lytton referred to people who drink on Friday nights. I enjoy a certain camaraderie with some of these people. But they have a sense of responsibility and know when to go home. It is not the fellow who drinks for half an hour in close proximity to his home who is the real problem; it is the one who "battles on" for hours after his usual tea-time and then drives home with his tummy empty of food and full of beer, when the roads are empty of traffic and it is easy for him to put his foot down on the accelerator. He is the fellow we have to worry about.

When the Minister falls heavier on drink-drivers later in the session, let us all get behind him as one. Let us support the simple proposition that we will get these fools off the road. If we save one young

life, such as that to which I have just referred, any measure is worth while and we should all be a party to it.

**Mr. Burns:** What about a joint parliamentary committee on a question such as this? It isn't political.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** If the honourable member for Lytton is trying to embarrass me with that suggestion, he will fall far short of the task.

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** I know that the honourable member is not really trying to embarrass me. I have argued and pleaded for joint committees for as long as I have been here. If the honourable member thought a joint committee could serve any useful purpose in this connection, I would be with him, boots and all. I certainly agree that it would do no harm, and I would be a party to it. Let us have no fear about that.

The euphoria of unanimity in this matter is overwhelming, and I depart from it with some reluctance. Nevertheless I must, because there has been introduced into this debate a viciousness of attack which I deplore. I will have no part of it. Rather will I resist it to the utmost. It was only a week ago that my ministerial friend, the Minister for Works and Housing, who controls the Police Department, came under a heavy, sustained, vicious and unnecessary attack. That was bad enough. But at least it was a Minister of the Crown, sitting on the front bench, in a position where he could defend himself, who was attacked. Even that prior condition does not apply to this debate. We have seen a senior public servant attacked and vilified in the most shameful fashion. I have been searching my memory to find a precedent, and the precedent probably would be when Mr. Duggan attacked Mr. Pat Killoran in about 1957, so long is it since it has happened.

The honourable member for Cairns, realising the seriousness of what he has done, has tried to run for cover. By way of a point of order, he tried to crawl into his funk-hole, and we might let him do that. But the honourable member for Archerfield will enjoy no similar escape. He made a statement this afternoon which must be flushed out and met head on. He applied full responsibility to the Commissioner for Railways for provoking strikes.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** And he has.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** He repeats it. Isn't that wonderful?

I was so staggered at the time that I interjected and made him repeat the accusation. He accused the Commissioner for Railways of provoking strikes. Let us recognise the seriousness of this allegation and put it in its proper perspective. The Commissioner for Railways is governed by Acts

of Parliament, and he does not dare trespass outside the bounds of those Acts of Parliament. He is responsible to the Minister.

The matter can be simply resolved. If those honourable members think that this public servant has provoked strikes and has moved outside the Acts that govern him, there is a clear responsibility upon their parliamentary leader to indict that public servant in this Chamber. The Leader of the Opposition has one of two choices at his disposal, and he must act upon them. Either he must bring in a specific indictment in this Chamber against the Commissioner for Railways, or he must repudiate his parliamentary colleagues. He must do one or the other. If he remains silent, he is himself condemned.

This is one of the most shameful events that has happened in my relatively short time in Parliament. I would suggest it is one of the most shameful events that has happened in the history of this Parliament. Let me put it on record once again. The honourable member for Archerfield, by way of speech, and later by interjection, said that the Commissioner for Railways has provoked strikes. The decision clearly lies at the feet of the Leader of the Opposition, the man who leads the Australian Labor Party in this Parliament. There is a clear obligation on him, because charges of this nature cannot be allowed to go unsustained. If he does not attempt to sustain them or repudiate those who made them, he himself is found wanting.

On that unhappy note, I commend the Minister on what he has achieved in the short term that he has been a Minister. I sincerely hope that he will act on my advice and become an innovative Minister as far as parliamentary proceedings are concerned.

**Mr. JENSEN (Bundaberg)** (5.45 p.m.): I could not agree more with the submissions made by the honourable member for Lytton on the carnage that is taking place on the roads, and its cost to the community. I also agree with his recommendations that something be done to reduce the road toll. There are two points on which I should like to comment.

Mention was made of fitting governors to motor-cars. I am not an engineer, and I do not know much about the governing of motor-cars. However, I can say that every motor-car manufactured today has at least three gears, and in the third gear cars have a speed of at least 60 miles an hour. Why then provide a fourth gear, or overdrive? It was said that motor-cars cannot be governed. A tractor can be governed, so a car could be manufactured that could not exceed 60 miles an hour.

**Mr. Frawley:** Keep the handbrake on and you'll be all right.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am making my submissions, and I am trying to make some suggestions. Honourable members opposite do not want to do, or suggest, anything.

The other thing that I want to say in support of the honourable member for Lytton is that this Government could lead all others in Australia by declaring one day a year as a national day free of accidents. We all know that Belgium, Holland and Denmark now have one day a week in which, because of the present petrol shortage, no motor-cars are on the roads. Why should we not have one day a year free of carnage on the roads? One day a year is all that would be needed to bring the position home to those who show no responsibility in their driving, and have no respect for the privilege of having a licence to drive. Why should they not be made to sit up and take notice of the situation by the Government setting aside one day a year in which they are unable to use their cars?

**Mr. Frawley:** The hotels could be closed for that day, too.

**Mr. JENSEN:** That would not matter. That is rubbish. That might account for 50 per cent of accidents; I am talking about preventing 100 per cent of accidents. In any case, with the present oil position, there might have to be days on which cars cannot be used. Here is an opportunity for this State to lead the rest of the Commonwealth, not follow it as it usually does, in declaring one day a year on which there would be no carnage on the roads.

If the Government wants to do something about louts who tear around in motor-cars with loud exhausts and screaming tyres, let it impound their cars. I said that a year or two ago, and I say it again now. In the early days, horses and cows of farmers who flouted the law were impounded. If louts in motor-cars flout the law and tear up and down the streets with loud exhausts and screeching of tyres, let us show them that this conduct will not be tolerated. For a first offence, let their cars be impounded for a week.

Of course, half the cars driven in this way are owned by the parents of the drivers, and, if those cars were impounded, the parents would take some notice of the situation. If a lout is fined \$10, his parents may not even know about it. These fellows are better paid than most of us, and they can easily pay fines of \$20 or \$50. Those are just a couple of points that I wanted to throw in with the remarks of the honourable member for Lytton, because his submissions brought to the notice of the Minister a number of matters that need attention.

I have only 20 minutes in which to speak, and I have a lot to say about the Railway Department. My contribution will, in fact, deal mainly with the railways. I refer briefly to the financial review in the annual report of the Commissioner for Railways. The Commissioner highlights the achievement, for the tenth successive year, of a working profit. The anomaly, to me, is the gross capital indebtedness. It continues to increase, and it is now \$344,113,328,

which is an increase of \$13,772,244 on the figure for the previous year. The working profit of \$4,972,336 is small compared with the increase in capital debt.

**Mr. Alison:** You have it all back to front.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I do not care what the honourable member for Maryborough has to say about this. I have the facts before me. I could refer to the increase in revenue and the record haulage of goods, and to the fact that revenue from the haulage of coal increased by \$9,900,000. What was the increased in expenses? That is not shown.

The report shows that working expenses increased by \$13,540,000, but it does not show how much of that was attributable to coal haulage. Other revenue charges were \$17,500,000, of which \$15,300,000 was for repayment of special loans, and these are mainly for new lines for the transport of coal. It would appear to me that the increase in the gross capital indebtedness each year is directly proportional to the increase in the export of coal, and I should say that anyone looking at the figures would also come to that conclusion. The report does not show what happens on the special coal lines, but I am sure that there would be accounts in the department giving details of what these lines are costing the State—the indebtedness, the loans, and the revenue. There is nothing in the report about repayments on these new coal lines.

If one turns to Table 3 on page 15 of the latest annual report, one sees that \$15,000,000 in interest and redemption on special loans is charged against the whole of the railway system, instead of against particular lines. When debt charges and low freight rates are taken into consideration, I wonder whether the new coal lines are paying.

If one then turns to page 19 of the annual report, one sees the revenue and working expenses for each division—southern, central, northern, and so on—and one can ascertain whether a certain division is making a profit or a loss. That table also deals with the operations of the Cairns Railway and the Normanton Railway. There is a special report on the Normanton Railway, which is a very small line, showing revenue of \$3,752 and expenses of \$39,034. Why is there not a report on the operations of the railway line from Goonyella to Hay Point, showing what it cost to build the line, how much is being written off each year, and what profit is being made on that line? In my opinion, similar information should be provided for the Greenvale, Blackwater and Moura lines.

Each time a new coal line is built, an increase is shown in the gross indebtedness of the State. The Greenvale line is to be built shortly, for one purpose. Will a report on the operations of that line be included in the annual report, as a report on the Normanton railway is now included? Will it show how much has been spent on

that line, how much is to be written off each year, the low freight rates, and so on? Will that line pay? Will it be a charge against the whole railway system of the State, as the other coal lines are?

As has been stated time and time again in this Chamber, honourable members do not know what profit is being made on these special coal lines. I believe that each line, and what one might refer to as each little subsidiary line, should be shown separately in the report, especially when the Government is spending millions of dollars on such lines. They are not shown now, and I want something done about that.

I raise that matter because I am very concerned about certain aspects of the report of the Commissioner for Railways. In fact, the whole of Queensland is concerned about freight charges for coal haulage. We are never given the figures. We do not know how coal freight rates compare with those for other primary products.

**A Government Member** interjected.

**Mr. JENSEN:** The figures have been asked for in this Chamber many a time, but they have not been given.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Of course they have.

**Mr. JENSEN:** If I ask the honourable member for Windsor later on, he might give me the figures.

The Minister knows what has been going on with regard to the Bundaberg Railway Station. I raised this matter in my first speech in this Chamber in 1969. What happened when a small crane was sought for the Bundaberg Railway Station? Submissions were made by me and the station-master for a mobile crane. I have here a letter dated 18 November 1971 from the previous Minister for Transport, which refers to my personal representations for a mobile crane. Men have to push trucks with their backs and hands. I wrote to that Minister again in May 1972.

I had written to him on 8 October 1971 about the railway station and goods yards. I said then that I hoped that these things would not be overlooked in his Estimates for 1972-73. I wrote to the present Minister on 12 July 1972, after he had taken over from the previous Minister, attaching photostat copies of submissions that had been made to Mr. Knox. In the last paragraph of my letter I said—

“Further, Mr. Knox, when in Bundaberg, promised a mobile crane for the Goods Yards. When following up on this promise at a later date, he informed me that the finances would not permit at that time; however, it would be provided in this year's budget. I hope that your Department has not overlooked the supply of this crane.”

On 11 October 1972 I referred again to this crane. I said—

“It would now appear that the crane has been overlooked, or the Department is not going to honour Mr. Knox’s promise.

“Would you kindly advise me when the crane will be supplied to Bundaberg as it is essential to facilitate the work loading of the goods yard.”

**Mr. Alison** interjected.

**Mr. JENSEN:** The honourable member knows that there is one in Maryborough. When Mr. Knox was in Bundaberg 18 months ago, he promised to get it up from Maryborough. He never honoured his promise, because Mr. Lee would not allow him to. I will have more to say about that shortly.

**Mr. Hooper** wrote to me in the following terms—

“Further reference is made to your personal representations in regard to a request for provision of a mobile crane at the Goods Yard at Bundaberg.

“As promised, I have made enquiries into this matter.

“Investigation of the question of providing a mobile crane has revealed that it would be more economical to continue the practice of hiring a crane rather than incur the expense which would be involved in the purchase of a machine.”

At least he gave me that much. I wrote to him again on 22 November 1972, just one year ago. I said—

“I thank you for your letter, dated 20 October, 1972, with reference to a mobile crane for the Goods Yard at Bundaberg, and appreciate your concern on the economics of this.

“However, I believe that consideration should also be given to service to customers and the additional value of such a crane to assist in placing loaded wagons in position for unloading at the Goods Shed.

“Men have to strain themselves pushing wagons into position. Railway customers have informed me that they have to hire a crane at \$7.50 an hour for unloading and it takes 20 minutes for the crane to arrive, if immediately available. There is a waste of time for the customers, in addition to paying for 20 minutes each way for the crane from the firm to the Goods Yards.

“The Railway Department’s charge for their own crane, I believe, would be 50c per ton. It may be worth considering raising the charge in special areas to offset any loss. The customer would save money because there would be no delay as at present when hiring a crane from private industry.”

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

**Mr. JENSEN:** Before the dinner break I was reading from a letter I had written on 22 November, the last paragraph of which said that, if the department could not afford a crane, it should at least give Bundaberg an electric or hand winch. In the last part of his reply of 27 November 1972, the Minister said—

“Your renewed submissions will be examined and I shall write to you again at a later date.”

That is one year ago and I have not yet received any further information.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I have been up there and had a look at it.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I know, and you did not reply to my letter.

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

**Mr. JENSEN:** Mr. Lickiss, I was just about to tell you about the present Minister. His predecessor tried to be helpful, as has the present Minister, but that is as far as they can go. Either the Commissioner takes no notice of the Ministers, or the Ministers speak with tongue in cheek. The Commissioner says, “I am here permanently.” The Minister is here today and gone tomorrow. Except for one visit to Petersen’s pre-cut factory, the Commissioner has not been to Bundaberg since I have been in Parliament, and he did not go near the railway station. Because of the disgraceful state of the Bundaberg Railway Station, the people of Bundaberg are sick and tired of him.

For the last 40 years we have been running a railway picnic; this is the first year, for 40 years or more, in which the picnic has been postponed. Why would the people of Bundaberg postpone that picnic if it were not for the raw deal they are getting from this department? That is the only reason.

**Mr. Lee:** They are all on strike.

**Mr. JENSEN:** They are not but they should be. It is very interesting to know that we have publicised the railways, but we are not publicising them any more. I have here pages and pages of submissions I have written on the white-ant-ridden station at Bundaberg. This Minister and his predecessor have both been there and have seen the goods office in Bundaberg. I have shown it to both Ministers but have received no satisfaction whatever. The Minister informed me in a letter that plans had been drawn up for a new goods office. Provision for it was supposed to be in the Budget, but it was not included. I wrote to the Minister about it a month ago, but have had no reply. What have I done? I have photostated all of these letters and have sent copies to the Premier in an effort to get some action, because I know that Mr. Lee

controls the Minister. The Minister tried to do what he could for Bundaberg, but could do nothing.

I know the situation in the railways because I travel here by train every week. I do not use the airways as most honourable members do. I travel down here every Monday night and I know what happens on the "Capricornia". Griddle cars have been mentioned in this debate. The griddle car is closed after leaving Gladstone and Bundaberg has been left cold. Now the Minister is about to open up Gympie so that the people can obtain a cup of tea, but he has to open it up with a liquor bar. For years now people boarding the train at Bundaberg and Maryborough have not been able to obtain anything to eat or drink between 11 p.m. one day and 8 a.m. the next. I have asked the Minister repeatedly to keep the griddle car open, but the invariable answer is "No, it loses money." I do not care about the loss of money. Now the department is going to open Gympie with a liquor bar, to give some sort of satisfaction to people using the railways. Why are travellers deserting the railways and travelling by bus? For one reason only—the rotten service. If the State Government Insurance Office can spend \$1,800,000 on a 7-storey building in Bundaberg; if the Main Roads Department can spend \$400,000, if the Primary Industries Department can come in; if the Government can afford to erect a new high school and new technical college, why have we this white-ant-ridden station which is a disgrace to a progressive city like Bundaberg?

In conclusion, I say that I was disgusted with this Minister a couple of weeks ago. He did not have the decency to inform me that he was coming to Bundaberg. I know Ministers in the Country Party—not Liberal Ministers—who, even if they are simply passing through Bundaberg, inform me that they are going through by plane or car so that I can meet them if I wish to talk to them.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** Would you like me to tell the Committee what you did when I went to Bundaberg?

**Mr. JENSEN:** You can tell them what you like.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. NEWBERY** (Mirani) (7.20 p.m.): Before dealing in detail with these Estimates, I wish to thank the Minister for the assistance he has given me since his election to Cabinet. I also express appreciation to the Commissioner for Railways (Mr. Alva Lee) and the Commissioner for Transport (Mr. Kevin Seeney), as well as to their staffs, for the courtesy they have shown me over the years. I would be remiss if I did not also pay a tribute to the General Manager of the Central Division, Mr. Jim Goldston, who has always been ready and willing to assist me when called upon to do so.

I wish to devote my remarks to the benefits accruing to the Mirani electorate from railway operations. Over the past four years tremendous expansion has occurred in my area. The forerunner to this development was the construction of the Goonyella line. The route chosen was, geographically, the ideal one, and very few people were inconvenienced by the construction of the line. Disturbance was caused to canegrowers whose farms the line traversed, and I venture to suggest that some inconvenience was suffered by those graziers whose lands lay in its path.

We are now, of course, looking to the future. A controversy did arise in the area over rumors of the proposed laying of a further line to carry export coal from Hail Creek and the new Thiess Peabody Mitsui mine. However, the fears of the local people have to a large extent been dispelled by a proposal to duplicate the present line. I suggest that duplication will be a more satisfactory means of meeting increased demand than the laying of a second line, miles distant from the present track. Because there will be no need to resume land for the duplication of the track, it will not cause inconvenience to anybody.

I look forward to the development of Hail Creek and the T.P.M. mine, which will necessitate not only duplication but also the laying of spur lines to Nebo and beyond. I should imagine that, as a result of this, Nebo will be provided with a railway station—a prospect that, years ago, would not have been entertained by anyone. Of course, with the tremendous development that is occurring in the Mirani electorate as well as in adjacent areas, anything can happen.

It is expected that within five years the Utah Development Co. will be exporting approximately 20,000,000 tons of coal each year. Such development will bring with it the building of even more railway lines. While the State is getting new railway lines, paid for by overseas companies, it is also making a very reasonable profit that is in excess of the redemption payments on the loan.

I have been told that four additional loops are to be provided in the Jilalan area, near Sarina. I raise this matter because the Railway Department has not supported the construction of the access road to the Gurnett area to overcome a long-standing problem. When an additional siding is provided—I know of only one place where it can go—this problem will be overcome. The people in the area will then receive justice, inasmuch as the road to Sarina, which has been lengthened considerably by the construction of the Goonyella line, will be shortened. At the moment, they have to travel an extra 2½ miles in an eight-mile trip and incur considerable extra expense and inconvenience. I have written to the Minister seeking his support in this matter, and I again ask him to examine it closely and see if something can be done to help these people. As the extra 2½-mile journey

has been caused only by the Goonyella line, I believe that the Railway Department should shoulder the full responsibility for resolving the difficulty.

During the past 10 days I have received advice from the Minister about the cattle-trucking yards for the Nebo district. I publicly thank the Minister and his department for deciding to build these yards, and assure him that both the Nebo area and the Railway Department will benefit greatly from their construction in this excellent cattle-producing area.

For some considerable time, amidst tremendous and pleasing development, I have been trying to overcome compensation problems facing landowners with properties adjoining the Goonyella line, which in no way benefits them. Most of the trouble has arisen on the Sarina side of the range, and the landholders are suffering inconvenience, severance, destruction of property and loss of land. The Minister's department is far too slow in finalising the compensation claims following land resumptions. Some farmers have lost cane and cattle land, as well as fences, the latter being the responsibility of the contractor.

Drainage has been ruined, and waterholes in creeks have been filled as a result of erosion. In one place creeks have been filled with gravel, with resultant flooding of the surrounding country. In times of flood, the farms can be eroded because the creeks have been filled with gravel and the water has to go somewhere else. It is to be hoped that the coming season is not too wet or a couple of farmers on this railway line, east of the Koumala Range, could suffer severe erosion damage because the creeks are filled in. This will cause a drainage problem.

I shall refer to several cases without mentioning names. During construction, one farmer lost 19 cattle through the neglect of the contractor, who in this case has done the right thing and compensated the farmer for the loss. The creek on this property has been filled in as a result of erosion.

Another farmer has also been seriously affected. In the first place his property was divided by the North Coast railway line and the sugar-mill tramline. It has now been divided by the Goonyella railway line. He has suffered great inconvenience and damage to his property.

Another farmer along the line suffered considerable damage during construction of the line. Fences were washed away and the subcontractor left other fences down when he went onto the property to fix them. During one night, 11 of the farmer's cattle wandered onto the railway line and were hit by a train. Although the cattle would be worth about \$1,400, he has claimed only \$910. He informs me that he applied for compensation on 14 and 15 January 1972, but so far has had no reply.

Another farmer whose property has been completely divided by the railway line has drainage problems. All these farmers are desirous of having their claims finalised as soon as possible. I realise that the department might have a problem in doing so, but it is a shame that there should be so much delay. In some cases, farmers are still paying rates on the resumed land.

The Minister mentioned that 37 of the 41 people who are entitled to lodge claims have done so. As at the date of the Minister's reply to me, eight claims still remained to be finalised.

I am informed that the contractors, Fluor (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., travelled the full length of the railway line after the completion of the contract and have finalised all claims, which were for damage, not land resumption. However, the claims made on the Railway Department are not yet finalised. I ask the Minister to do everything possible to finalise them, especially those involving drainage, because the wet season is imminent. The landholders along this railway line did not request its construction, and they should be compensated without delay.

I feel that this is a State responsibility, and I should like the Minister to make sure that these people are not out of pocket for the benefit of the State. They should receive every consideration, and the inconvenience to them should be reduced as much as possible. After all, they are getting nothing out of this development, whilst the State is getting quite a lot.

I am pleased to see that the department is doing a very good job in improving conditions for its employees in my area. I must make specific mention of the staff at Coppabella. I have made several representations on their behalf, and I thank the Minister for what he has done to make living conditions in the dryer areas, where flies are certainly bad, very much better. Fly screening and street lighting have been provided in this area.

Another matter of importance was the Minister's decision a week or so ago to allow the old amenities building to be handed over to the employees for use as a clubhouse. They will now have a clubhouse on a piece of land. The department was also quick to accede to the request for blinds in the single men's quarters, thus providing these employees with an additional comfort.

Another thing that I should like to mention is housing for railway employees. As honourable members know, a tremendous amount of work has been done in providing housing for these employees in Sarina. In the first instance, houses were bought throughout the town; then came the tremendous development on the hill at South Sarina. The Railway Department, through the Housing Commission, now has many beautiful homes for its employees.

Another matter that I should like to mention concerns requests by railway employees for permission to buy their own homes. I have had several requests to approach the department on behalf of railway employees who wanted to buy their own homes. I ask the Minister to follow up those requests as soon as possible, because in Sarina at present there are railwaymen who are endeavouring to buy their own homes. This is excellent, and I should like the Minister to hurry matters along and do everything possible to assist these employees to get into homes of their own.

Railwaymen employees in Sarina are settling in very well. Sarina is growing as a result of the great influx of railway staff. As the member for the area and chairman of the Sarina Shire Council, I am delighted to have these people in our midst. They are settling down very well, and are very fine citizens.

Another matter that has been brought to my attention by railway employees concerns the rules and regulations of the Railway Department. I refer to clause 7(c) on page 9 of the railway rules and regulations, which provides that if a railway employee obtains a medical certificate for sick-leave purposes, the nature of the illness must be shown on the certificate. Some bad feeling has arisen because the employees think that this regulation infringes their rights.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (7.41 p.m.):** At the outset, Mr. Lickiss, I express publicly to the Minister, through you—I have already done so privately—my thanks for the personal interest he has shown in matters affecting railway employees in my area. There has been a considerable amount of criticism of the Minister and his administration in this Chamber, but I can only speak for myself. In my opinion, the present Minister for Transport, with his personal approach to many matters affecting railwaymen, is like a sweet breath of spring compared with the former Minister.

I refer particularly to small improvements in and around the Mackay railway station. Since first being elected to this Assembly, I pushed for repairs to be made to the platform at the Mackay railway station, but all my representations were ignored. As soon as the present Minister saw the platform, he, as a builder, realised the problems it created for the employees. He acted promptly, and the repairs cost only about \$5,000. He also approved of repairs being made to the Railway Refreshment Room quarters. At a cost of only about \$1,000, lining and bird-proofing was provided for the comfort of the staff.

New toilet facilities were badly needed for the shunters at the Shakespeare Street shunting yards. During wet weather, the shunters there had to duck and dive through the rain about 20 or 30 yards to the toilet from their hut, and there was no lighting at night.

New toilet facilities are now being provided, again thanks to the Minister. Improvements were made to the station smoko room at Mackay, and again this Minister was responsible.

Of course, I am also grateful for the construction of the new trainmen's quarters at Mackay, which serve the running staff from Bowen to St. Lawrence. They have almost been completed, and they are in the correct spot. Despite the criticism of the Commissioner in this Chamber, I will say that, before the last election, when my Liberal Party opponent was really pushing a barrow to try to have the trainmen's quarters moved from their projected new location, the Commissioner had enough sense to listen to me and to hold fire on the project till after the election.

Some improvements that I suggested to the Minister have been embodied in the quarters, and the building has turned out to be a very fine structure. People in the neighbourhood are extremely happy about it, the railwaymen are very happy about it, and even the person who originally objected through my Liberal Party opponent has climbed on the band wagon and now agrees that the structure is an asset to the area. I take this opportunity of inviting the Minister to Mackay at some convenient time to officially open the building, so that the people of Mackay can pay tribute to him.

However, other improvements are needed. One that the Minister has indicated will be carried out, but which has not been effected to date, is the relocation of loading facilities in River Street, Mackay. They are creating a dangerous traffic hazard. Recently this area of Mackay has developed as an industrial area. With the opening of the Lands Department's reclamation scheme and the construction of a prawn-processing plant for the Fish Board adjoining it, traffic along River Street has increased considerably, and the unloading of timber, cement, fibro and building materials at this point is definitely dangerous.

Accidents have occurred in the area, and some people have come very close to being hurt. The Minister has already indicated to me that certain adjustments are to be made once the drainage work in the areas is completed. This is known as "Gray's Gully", after my Liberal opponent at the last election, and is of no real use at present. The need for the relocation of this siding is becoming rather urgent, as also is the need for bitumen surfacing of the steel and door-to-door goods yards in Mackay. With the tremendous volume of goods now going through this facility, it must be a great asset to the Railway Department. A bitumen surface would be in the best interests of the department and a particular advantage to its customers, including the industries located nearby. Another thing we are waiting for is the release of the rail relocation report.

Like a lot of other things, it is gathering cobwebs in the archives. The people of Mackay still want to know about its contents.

The new trend towards longer trains is creating trouble at crossings. I refer particularly to the crossings in Mackay at Juliet and Forth Streets, Milton Street and Nebo Road, and Shakespeare and Gordon Streets, which are particularly bad spots.

Another matter I raise is the need for a better deal for hundreds of staff members in northern areas. I am not now trying to steal the thunder of the honourable member for Wynnum, but I urge the provision of shorts and open-neck shirts for certain staff members in the Railway Department. The New South Wales Railway Department has already done this. If it is good enough for New South Wales, it is good enough for Queensland. In Queensland we still see the issue of the old woollen "strides" to stationmasters, night officers and running staff. They have to wear heavy woollen socks to soak up the perspiration that runs down their legs inside their heavy "strides". Terylene shorts, drip-dry shirts and long socks would make an excellent uniform for railwaymen.

I am concerned at the drop-off in the number of long-distance rail passengers. It is no use saying that the "Sunlander" is a modern train. It is now 20 years old. Having been in operation for almost 20 years, it is no longer a modern train. I was rather surprised recently at a full-page advertisement I saw in a major weekly magazine. It was headed, "Rediscover the modern, pampering, wonderful experience of travel by train." There was a photograph of a drink-waiter serving drinks in a lounge. The advertisement read—

"Families, honeymoon couples, businessmen and tourists are discovering the comfort, reliability and sheer good fun of going by train. There's always been a special magic about a train journey. The excited farewells, whistles blowing with the train carrying you through plains and wooded valleys and along glorious coastlines.

"Today—new things have been added. Clean, beautifully appointed, air-conditioned carriages. Panoramic windows that show you an Australia you've never seen before. Lounge-chair comfort. Private sleeping apartments."

Certainly that is where any possible reference to the "Sunlander" ends.

The advertisement continues—

"Sophisticated dining-cars where waiters serve you gourmet meals and the best of wines. Club bars and private suites. Your own shower."

It lists the "Indian-Pacific" and the "Southern Aurora", and then mentions the "Sunlander". Interstate travellers must get an awful shock when they board the "Sunlander" in Brisbane. It certainly does not live up to what is stated in that advertisement.

People are looking for relaxation when they are travelling, whether it be by aircraft, bus or train. I believe that we in Queensland are driving them to planes, and buses, and the dangers of the motor vehicle.

It has been stated that most of the passengers on the Queensland railways are non-paying persons. There are 22,000-odd railwaymen and 140,000 pensioners who use the railways from time to time. Many children travel for half fare on the railways, and many members of religious organisations use the railways.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. CASEY: The honourable member for Bundaberg would be the greatest supporter of the railways in this Chamber. I personally travel by plane because it is the quickest way to get to and from my electorate, and I do not have to put up with the humbug of the frequently altered "Sunlander" time-tables. Certainly a tremendous number of people travel free on the railways. Nevertheless, I believe we have to do what we can to encourage people to patronise the railways, as much in the interests of road safety as anything else.

What is wrong with the railways being modernised and tying up, say, with a rent-a-car service, whether one travels interstate or intrastate? If one boards an airliner, before it lands the hostess asks over the intercom system if anyone wishes to order a car. She advises passengers to simply press a button and a car will be ordered for them. What is wrong with the Railway Department starting this type of service to encourage people to travel by rail and use cars at their destination?

This should be done in the interests of road safety, if for no other reason. I think it was the honourable member for Chatsworth who, earlier today, mentioned that the majority of accidents did not occur in the metropolitan area or on the Gold Coast Highway, but in the country areas. And why doesn't the Railway Department offer a baggage-handling service on the same basis as that offered by airlines? What is wrong with encouraging people simply to carry an overnight bag on the train and attaching a baggage car, as used to be the case on the old "Sunshine Express", in which people can put their baggage and collect it at their destination? Passengers, particularly pensioners, who certainly are using the railways as a free service, have to struggle backwards and forwards with heavy luggage.

As for the dining car, I think we should get the Consumer Affairs Bureau onto the department for false advertising. Let us have a look at the menu on the "Indian Pacific". It reads—

"Shrimp cocktail; Baked schnapper; Roast turkey and ham; Roast pork and apple sauce; Apple charlotte; Trifle; Wines and liquors."

There is breakfast in bed for anyone who wants it; there is a piano on the train for social activity. In actual fact, the journey becomes part of the traveller's holiday. It gives the businessman an opportunity to relax and families an opportunity to enjoy themselves. What is the "Sunlander's" menu? On the griddle car I suppose the main menu would be sausages with mashed potatoes and peas; pie and gravy, mashed potatoes and peas; mince with mashed potatoes and peas; and anyone who wants a variation gets peas and mashed potatoes. As for "railway" tea, I am afraid it is still either as murky as the Fitzroy River or so weak that it is as clear as the waters of the Great Barrier Reef.

Let us jazz the service up a little bit. We could start by giving the waitresses a better and more attractive uniform. Instead of putting the old "RRR" on the uniform, let us put them in an attractive uniform something like those worn by airline hostesses—and call them "stewardesses" or "hostesses" instead of the old "RRR". And what is wrong with serving airline-type meals on the "Sunlander" and fitting seats with a drop-down tray similar to those on an airliner?

The honourable member for Mirani is not here at present, but he should remember, as some other members should, that on the day of the opening of the Goonyella line we were served a magnificent meal on the train. It was served, quite simply and easily, on trays that we placed on our knees. It might have cost a little more but it provided a service that passengers would enjoy. This is done on trains in other parts of Australia. Why can't we do it here? And what is wrong with providing each passenger, as he joins the train, with a brochure along with his ticket containing a small time-table and describing points of interest along the line and including a menu. Any comforts enjoyed by passengers on the "Sunlander" have to be taken on the train with them. It is impossible to obtain a decent meal. As for getting a beer, it costs \$1.20 and to get one you have to buy a meal. I can go to Roma Street and if I want to, I can take on the train an Esky loaded with three or four dozen cans or bottles of beer. No-one would stop me.

**Mr. Jensen:** I have taken that matter up by a question to the Minister.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I do not think the honourable member for Mackay requires the assistance of the honourable member for Bundaberg.

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** And he certainly does not require the assistance of the honourable member for Lytton.

**Mr. CASEY:** However, passengers cannot buy beer on Queensland trains unless they have it with meals. This comes as a shock to interstate passengers, who are used to better facilities in their own States.

Figures show that over the past five years the number of rail passengers in the Central and Northern Divisions has dropped by almost 36 per cent and the number of interstate rail travellers by 25 per cent. Although I believe that a sizable proportion of the drop-off in the Central and the Northern Divisions is the result of a change in the "Sunlander" time-tables, a large share of the market has also been taken by buses. To combat this, our railway services should be "jazzed up" to provide better facilities for the travelling public.

To revert to the drop-off in the number of interstate passengers, I suggest that Queensland is being undermined by its partner, the New South Wales railways. A new service, known as the "Gold Coast Motor-Rail Express" has been introduced to provide a daily rail service from Sydney to Murwillumbah. The return journey connects with a similar service from Sydney to Melbourne. The train is made up of two sleeping cars, three air-conditioned sitting cars, a buffet-dining car and, as well, special wagons, each of which is capable of transporting from eight to 12 motor vehicles. Passengers are able to "pick-a-back" their cars to Murwillumbah, and then drive to their destinations on the Gold Coast. Furthermore, the passengers arrive quite relaxed and fresh after a fast rail journey instead of having to endure a long and tedious drive.

As 75 per cent of Queensland's tourists travel to this State by road, we should institute a motor-rail service to Central and North Queensland, both in the interests of road safety and as a means of increasing railway revenue. Such a service would encourage travellers to "pick-a-back" their motor vehicles to their destinations.

In the first four or five months of the Sydney-Gold Coast motor-rail service, approximately 2,000 motor vehicles were transported. At present the service is going ahead like wild-fire. I suggest that a similar service in this State would be a great encouragement to people to visit Central and North Queensland.

Before concluding, I want to refer briefly to the introduction into Queensland of centralised traffic control, which has proved to be a great boon to the Railway Department. It is presently being used on the Gladstone-Moura and Gladstone-Blackwater lines, as well as on the Hay Point-Goonyella line, where it seems to have been more successful than on the other lines. I do not know the reason for this; nevertheless, it is an eye-opener to anyone who views its operations. The system is controlled by one person, and has rendered unnecessary certain duties that were previously performed by railway employees.

Apparently C.T.C. spells an unhappy future for stationmasters and night officers. The situation must be examined closely by

the Railway Department, because it is possible that, in the future, centralised traffic control will be used on the "Sunlander" route. In other parts of the world the system is used on long-distance trains. I suggest that earnest consideration be given to the welfare of those railway employees who may be displaced by the institution of the C.T.C. system.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BROMLEY** (South Brisbane) (8 p.m.): Mr. Hewitt,——

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Mr. Hewitt,——

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): I am sorry, but the honourable member for South Brisbane beat the honourable member for Mulgrave to the call.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Will we toss for it?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have called the honourable member for South Brisbane.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** If the honourable member for Mulgrave cares to oppose me in South Brisbane, he would not be in the race. If he bides his time, I will not take very long.

**Mr. Armstrong:** If you do, I will move that you be not heard.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I do not think we should pay too much attention to the honourable member, wherever he comes from.

**Mr. Bird:** If it is from anywhere outside Brisbane, you wouldn't know where it was.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Where the honourable member comes from——

**Mr. Bird:** Let's face it. You wouldn't know where it was.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Mr. Hewitt, is the honourable member allowed to carry on like this?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I suggest that the Chamber come to order.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I agree with you completely, Mr. Hewitt. The Chamber should come to order. If the hooligans on the other side of the Chamber who keep interjecting remain quiet,——

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will not refer to other members as "hooligans".

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I did not refer to anybody——

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member did refer to other members by that term.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I referred to them in the plural.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have told the honourable member that the term is unparliamentary.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I agree that they are completely unparliamentary.

Before I was interrupted, I intended to say that I dearly wanted to speak tonight about road safety, because about an hour and 22 minutes ago I was in a fairly serious accident involving my car and another one. As a result, I will probably have to call on the services of the honourable member for Wavell when I complete my speech. The accident happened at Greenslopes, and I might say that I used my indicators to show that I was turning right.

These Estimates provide the only opportunity for me to raise in Parliament a matter of considerable importance to people residing in the East Brisbane and Kangaroo Point areas.

**An Opposition Member:** They are very good areas.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** They are.

I am concerned about people who reside in those areas, as well as others who use public transport to get to them or have to travel from there to the city. They are very upset over a decision by the Minister and his department that prevents them from using Bayside buses. I raise this purely parochial matter because it greatly concerns the affected people. The decision prohibiting people from electing to travel on these buses is monstrous. They provide the best and cheapest service.

I do not carry a torch for any bus service. I am interested only in seeing that these people receive justice. The way they have been stood over dictatorially and prevented from using the buses of their choice is scandalous. I was under the impression that this Government skited about its policy of allowing some freedom of choice. I was obviously mistaken, but I suppose I should have known better. Without doubt, the Minister and the Department of Transport have not only adopted a dictatorial attitude but have also denied the right of the people to use these buses to get from place to place. This problem arose some time ago. I repeat that I am only interested in getting a fair go for the people, although I suppose I am also interested in getting a fair go for the bus company.

I have here some letters to which I shall refer briefly. I have to get this message over in this Chamber because I have not been able to get anything done by correspondence. This matter originated on 27 October 1972, following a suggestion by Brisbane City Council officers. I point out that I hold no brief for them either when they make such suggestions. Bayside Bus Services were

informed by the Department of Transport, in the last paragraph of this letter signed by the secretary—

“I have by direction to advise that your application to re-route these buses via Latrobe and Lisburn Streets is approved on and from 6 November 1972.”

The reason given by the Brisbane City Council was that Wellington Road and other streets in that vicinity were to be made one-way streets and that the buses would have to be re-routed.

On 9 March 1973—and after this I was plagued by people who rightly claimed that they were being denied the right to travel on these buses—Mr. Wood, of Bayside Bus Services, received a letter from the Department of Transport reading—

“Dear Mr. Wood,

You are also advised that a restriction will be placed in your Licences prohibiting the picking up and setting down of passengers for the section corner of Lytton Road and Latrobe Street and the City on the inbound journey and the picking up and setting down of passengers between the City and the corner of Lytton Road and Latrobe Street on the outbound journey.”

That means that people could not travel on these buses, either to work or on the way home.

The letter continues—

“The restriction with respect to the picking up and setting down of passengers within this section will come into effect immediately.”

That was a disgraceful decision. After that, my phone ran hot and I also received numerous communications and letters from people complaining about it. And rightly so.

I raised the matter by way of question in this Chamber, and the Minister kindly suggested that if I wrote him a letter he would look into the matter, which he did. I sent him a copy of one letter, and unfortunately, in all future correspondence the Minister referred to the complaint from that one constituent, even though I had informed him that many people were complaining.

One lady wrote to me setting out the whole of the trouble. She pointed out that people could not get on the buses at these streets, and that they could not get off them. The situation where people could use these buses had been allowed to continue for years. The people in the area wanted these buses because the Brisbane City Council would not provide adequate public transport for them. Whilst I am not happy with the Minister for Transport or his department, I am not happy with the Brisbane City Council, either.

**Mr. Jensen:** We'll sack the lot of them, will we?

**Mr. BROMLEY:** We should sack some of them, but I am not saying which ones.

After I raised this matter and sent copies of the letters to the Minister, I thought something should have been done. One letter that I sent to him was in fact a letter written by a lady who was acting on behalf of other people living in the vicinity of Kangaroo Point and East Brisbane. Rightly, she complained, and at some length. I forwarded to her my question and the Minister's answer, but that did not make her very happy. She wrote me a long letter, which unfortunately I do not have time to read now. However, she was quite right in complaining, and I do not blame her for doing so.

On 12 March 1973, Bayside Bus Services—

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. I think some members should be pulled into gear occasionally.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! That is for me to judge, not the honourable member.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I do not know whether it is the way they have been brought up, or whether they are getting a little tired of debating the Transport Estimates. Nevertheless, I think you are quite right in pulling them into line.

As I was about to say, I received a letter from Bayside Bus Services. I shall quote only parts of it. It reads—

“Reference was made for equal parity of fares with the Brisbane City Council, and one condition was that the section known as the ‘High Hat Corner’ be moved to Latrobe Street and Lytton Road and the 20 cent section to apply from there.”

I point out, briefly, that the bus company did not want to charge the same fares as the Brisbane City Council. In fact, it was prepared to charge less. However, it was forced to charge the extra fare for the same type of section.

In addition, the Minister, or the department, said, “You aren't going to pick up these people. They aren't going to be picked up at all.” In other words, people living in Lytton Road and streets in that vicinity were denied the right to public transport. I think that is a rather shocking state of affairs, and I ask that something be done to rectify it. The department has copies of all the letters, so the Minister has access to them. No doubt he will look into the matter.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about the extra money they get from their fares? Do they give it to charity?

**Mr. BROMLEY:** It is not a case of what they charge in fares. I am saying that they do not pick up these people. They were not allowed to pick up any of the people who were complaining. The department said that the final pick-up point on the inbound journey would be the corner of Lytton Road and Latrobe Street, and the same would apply on the outbound journey.

I now quote from a letter of 6 April from Bayside Bus Services. It reads—

“The restriction on the outbound service between North Quay and the Lytton Road-Latrobe Street corner is hard to understand as Wellington Road has always been, and still is, the outbound route from North Quay for Bayside Bus Services.”

The buses come into town along certain streets and proceed out of town along those same streets, but they are not allowed to pick up any passengers.

The Brisbane City Council, whose job it is, in my opinion, to supply adequate transport at this stage, is not supplying enough transport at the right times and, consequently, people living in this area are stranded. Bayside Bus Services provide a fairly good and regular service, and I have with me a copy of their time-table. I have with me letters from Bayside Bus Services and from people who have written to them, and also copies of letters from the Minister, the department and other people.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! Once again I advise the Committee that the level of audible conversation is not acceptable.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I will say this for you, Mr. Hewitt: You are a pretty good chairman.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** I am managing very well without the honourable members' congratulations.

**Mr. BROMLEY:** I was going to write a letter congratulating you; but, so that everybody would know, I thought I would say it here publicly.

As my time is fast running out, I shall deal now with some of the latest correspondence. Unfortunately, although I would have preferred to speak, as I said earlier, about the railways and other aspects of transport, such as road safety, that come under the Minister's control, I have to use my time in dealing with a local issue because of the number of people who have written to me about it since the beginning of March.

Recently I received a letter from Mrs. Krannin of 40 Park Avenue, East Brisbane. She refers to Bayside Bus Services and complains about the attitude of the department in not allowing her to use the buses of her choice. A roneoed sheet was circulated recently, and I shall read it now because I think it is important and gives some indication why people wish to use Bayside Bus

Services. If people go to the trouble of sending a copy of a roneoed sheet to a member of Parliament, I think it shows that they are really upset and that they want something done. It says—

“The State Transport Commission has prevented Bayside Bus Services picking up from Latrobe Street to City inbound.

“This action restricts the public's right to choose their own transport.”

Of course it restricts the public's right to choose. That is the very point I am trying to make—that the people should have the right to choose from whatever transport is available. In my opinion, it is foolish for the department or the Minister to refuse a bus service the right to pick up people when its buses go along certain streets, and also when the Minister, in common with other honourable members, is complaining that there are too many motor vehicles on the roads. In this instance, many of the people who are so upset do not own cars, which their letters clearly indicate.

The roneoed sheet continues—

“In future, residents between Latrobe Street and Lytton Road corner will be restricted to travelling by Brisbane City Council buses only unless issued with a permit by the State Transport Commission at phone 52 3491. All residents in these areas could protest to their local member, Fred Bromley 97 2426, also to the Transport Commission.”

(Time expired.)

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** (Mulgrave) (8.19 p.m.): I am pleased to have the opportunity of taking part in the debate on the first Estimates introduced in this Chamber by the Minister for Transport, and the fact that I am a member of the Minister's committee adds to my pleasure. In these times the Minister has a very difficult task, as I will endeavour to point out.

I was very disappointed that I was not able to accompany the Minister on the very extensive inspection he made of the State's railway system this year. Fortunately I had the opportunity of joining him on the last leg of it. It is very good to see a new Minister devoting so much time so soon after assuming office to travelling over the major part of the State's rail system. He visited even the very remote areas. Although I was unable to accompany him on all of his journey, I hope that in the near future I will have the opportunity to go out into the remote parts of the State with him so that we can make ourselves familiar with the problems that face the people in those areas.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** Honourable members opposite do not understand what people in the back country have to put up with. I

am sure they would act differently if they had to witness some of the hardships that are suffered in those areas.

I was able to join the Minister on his tour to Mt. Isa. One never stops learning about the system when one goes into those western areas. The Minister met deputations at all hours, and listened to the problems being experienced by customers of the Railway Department. All types of problems were put up to the Minister, and he faced up to them very well.

We can all be critical at times of such a vital State link as the railway service. There is always room for criticism and improvement, but we have to remember the small population and the vast area of our State. We have to remember that Queensland has approximately 6,000 miles of railway line. Just imagine the problems associated with maintenance alone, and it has to be financed entirely out of the Railways Vote and loan funds. Roads are a different matter because some other authority pays for them. We have to remember that much of the railway system is very old. Light rails have been used on many sections, and rolling-stock is run down. All of us have old buildings in our electorates. We can all be critical of old railway buildings, because naturally we would all like to have modern buildings.

I realise some of the problems facing the Minister and the Commissioner. It is a matter of setting the correct priorities and endeavouring to get sufficient money to overcome the problems. I know that we will all probably annoy the Minister from time to time by suggesting that we should have priority for something in our electorates. Rail travel is a very important means of transport to many people in the State. People in the remote areas who do not have the same alternatives as those who live in more populous areas should receive some priority. I hope that the Minister and the Commissioner will give due consideration to those people.

I share the view that the railway is a very important part of our everyday life. Having seen other forms of transport in operation, we should now be able to distinguish between what should be carried on the railways and what the Railway Department should not be interested in. In saying that, I am referring to some of the trivial little things that road transport or perhaps somebody else could handle much better. But if we are running the system as it ought to be run, it should not be possible for anyone to filch from the railways some of the products that can be carried in bulk, such as coal, minerals, grain and other commodities.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I am getting a little tired of warning the Committee that there is too much noise in the Chamber. I call again for silence.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** They are very rude, Mr. Hewitt. If they listened, I am sure they could learn something.

The railways have a very important part to play, and we should do all in our power to encourage rail transportation of the freight to which I have referred. However, I feel that there is a very grave obligation on this important system to take note of its responsibility to the public of Queensland and the customers to whom I have referred. Knowing the service it renders to some people in areas far distant from Brisbane—hundreds of miles and in some instances thousands of miles—I can only say that the industrial unrest experienced over recent months, which holds up the system for days at a time, is simply shocking. Some of these disputes are only very remotely related to the conditions of employees.

**Mr. Jensen:** "Directly" is the word, not "remotely".

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I would say "very remotely" in some instances. We have to ask ourselves how long people will put up with this sort of treatment. If they can survive with one or two trains a week, it could be said then that is all we should run; but that is not so. We all know that the demand on the railways is great, and that if the system does not render some sort of reliable service, people are prone to look for an alternative. I am sure that people will start to do this.

Honourable members know as well as I do that there is a responsibility on workers to perform their allotted task. Many people in this State carry on under very irksome conditions, but if the recent state of affairs persists, the day will come when they will bail up—and they will have every reason to do so. If certain action is right for one section of the community, it is equally right for another, and I know that, if the time comes when some of these vocal members are called upon to tighten their belts because they have nothing to put in their mouths, they will be the first to want to do something very drastic to those who are causing trouble. They should remember that the other party to a dispute is entitled to a fair deal.

Only yesterday I read in the Press of a delegation—I gave notice of a question about it this morning—which came back from overseas and said that conditions in Australia were the best in the world. Anybody following the industrial scene over the last few months would find this hard to believe, because scarcely a day passes without industrial trouble somewhere or other. I appeal to those involved to remember their obligations to the people of this State. I am not concerned about who is at fault. We can blame the employer or the employee, but the result to the public and the customer, to whom we owe an obligation, is the same.

Queensland has a very good system of conciliation and arbitration. Members of the Opposition must be fully aware of the fact that both sides to a dispute cannot win. A harmonious atmosphere can prevail only if people are prepared to compromise. However, a compromise cannot be reached by one party alone.

The people who reside in the remote areas of the State are not able, like city-dwellers, to drive to the local store to purchase their foodstuffs and other commodities. If conciliation does not prevail in the current dispute, a number of Queenslanders will have a very miserable Christmas.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** interjected.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The honourable member is only a "city slicker" and would not know.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You're a hayseed.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I am quite content to be described as a country bumpkin or in any other terms that the honourable member wishes to use. I have no desire whatever to be related to him and his fellow "city slickers".

If the essential services of this State are not allowed to operate smoothly, thought might even need to be given to closing them down and, in their place, instituting a system that will work. The days of the bullock wagons were better than these present times. Although a bullock wagon might have taken a long time to reach its destination, at least it got there.

Other persons who suffer from repeated industrial disputes are the primary producers, particularly those who grow perishables, such as bananas, pineapples, papaws and tomatoes. Unless they reach their destination within a short time of being consigned, they are utterly worthless. A number of irresponsible persons think it funny to hold the primary producers to ransom and even deprive them of their livelihood.

In the Northern Division there is a peculiar system under which control is centred in both Cairns and Townsville. The result is that the responsibility for goods that are consigned from certain areas closer to Cairns than Townsville, is placed in the hands of the Townsville office of the Railway Department. I suggest that the southern boundary of the Cairns district be moved south to an area halfway between Cairns and Townsville, south of Tully.

I also urge the Minister and the Commissioner for Railways to make every endeavour to have Queensland's sugar crop transported by rail. I fully realise, of course, that in the present economic situation there is no hope of achieving this. However, I find it very hard to believe that road transport can provide a better service than the railways. I cannot see why sugar cannot be carried by rail at a cost similar to freight charges levied on minerals. After all,

although sugar is not produced throughout the year, the industry supply the bins or containers and thereby offset the cost to the Railway Department. I am sure that the sugar industry would come to the party if it was offered rail freight charges at a level lower than road transport costs. From time to time sugar mills have wanted to use road transport because they can get cheaper transport.

**Mr. Jensen:** Why do they want to?

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The honourable member knows better than I do why that is so. He also knows of the losses incurred by the Railway Department in the Mackay area, which are attributable to road transport. That problem arose many years ago when rail freights were raised savagely and the department lost a tremendous amount of business. I see no difference between carting coal and carting sugar, and I should like the Minister to examine the position closely.

The following is a summary of sugar peaks in various mill areas—

Mill Area	Tonnage
Hambleton	82,000
Mulgrave	72,000
Babinda	76,000
South Johnstone	84,500
Tully	86,000

The Goondi area is very difficult to handle. There is a possibility that, before long, expansion programmes may be undertaken in these areas. It is therefore vital to the Railway Department and the industry to get sugar-cane back to rail transport at a reasonable price. However, I warn the Minister that the sugar industry wants no part of rail transport if we are to be faced with industrial strife, because it cannot store sugar indefinitely. If we are to think seriously about rail transport, we must urgently consider building a spur line to the bulk-handling facilities in Cairns.

**Mr. B. Wood:** That should have been provided years ago.

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** The honourable member could be dead right. I might agree with him. However, it has not been provided.

I suggest that consideration should be given to it in the very near future, because an industrial area will be involved. If action is not taken quickly, the department will be forced to pay prices for land similar to those being asked in Brisbane.

The 2 ft. line running from South Johnstone to Mourilyan should be upgraded to a 3 ft. 6 in. line, with provision for expansion in the not distant future.

The Minister was kind enough to accompany me on an inspection of railway facilities at Atherton. I am sure that,

like me, he realised that the Railway Department building is very old and does not meet today's requirements. While I appreciate problems elsewhere in the State, I believe that we must consider renewing these railway facilities as quickly as possible. While we were in Atherton I brought to the Minister's attention—I have not checked on whether it has been attended to as yet—the dangerous situation of the goods shed.

I am sure that all honourable members are disturbed about the carnage on our roads. We cannot afford to lose useful citizens who are mainly just coming to the prime of life. Some people say that the road toll is caused by drinking or speed, while others hold different views. I believe that the main factor is speed, aided and abetted by over-indulgence in alcohol. I find it hard to believe, while we have a speed limit of 60 miles an hour on our roads, that we should allow manufacturers to build cars that can travel at over 100 miles an hour. When talking to knowledgeable people about this matter, I have been told that standard equipment and tyres on cars are not designed for high speeds. If people want to travel at high speed, they must modify their cars in many ways. I urge the Minister to act urgently, in conjunction with his colleagues in other States and in the Federal sphere, to reduce the top speed that cars can attain. I can remember one Holden model that could be flogged and belted, but would not go faster than 80 miles an hour. That is the type of vehicle we want. Some people claim that power and speed can get a driver out of trouble, but if everybody is on the same level, a driver can still get out of trouble.

**Mr. D'ARCY (Albert) (8.40 p.m.):** I am anxious to speak to these Estimates because the Government, under a succession of Transport Ministers, has relegated the railway system, particularly in the metropolitan area, into second place. In 1957, this Government inherited from the previous Labor Government a railway system that was full of promise and looked like developing into a metropolitan network that would have made Brisbane one of Australia's leading cities in the field of transport. Since then, however, the Government has left Brisbane bereft of a decent transport system.

We now have congestion on our roads and the construction of freeways. Every night a huge volume of traffic passes Parliament House to get onto the freeway so as to reach the fast-growing outer suburbs of Brisbane that are not serviced by rail. Electoral figures prove conclusively that the fast-growing electorates are not in the centre of Brisbane. They are the electorates of Redlands, Albert, Salisbury, Wolston and Pine Rivers, all of which are on the fringe of Brisbane. The Government has completely neglected the people of those areas in the provision of transport.

As I said, when this Government took office in 1957, a promising transport system was in its embryo stage. The Labor Government had spent almost \$23,000,000 on electrification.

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

**Mr. D'ARCY:** The honourable member for Windsor can interject, but when I was a boy I can remember travelling along the Windsor railway line and noticing the big cuttings, which are still there today. The Labor Government spent a tremendous amount in that area. Had it remained in power, Brisbane would by now have had a magnificent railway system. The city area would not be polluted as it is, and it would have been one of Australia's leading cities in the transport field. The north-side and south-side services would have been linked by a tunnel under the river. Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and other fast-growing electorates would have been serviced.

**Mr. Harvey:** The whole Moreton region.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** The whole Moreton region would have been serviced. That is the situation as it was in 1957. Today, after almost 16 years of Tory rule, the people of Brisbane are neglected.

I have not seen any railway advertisements recently, but before the election many advertisements appeared on television. They were straight-out political propaganda by the Government. They were an election gimmick. The cost should have been shown in the accounts as "campaign funds". What did we see in those advertisements? We saw, not metropolitan passenger trains, but huge coal trains in which the Japanese had a large interest. Those trains were rolling in from the West carrying coal, not passengers. As I have said previously, if the coal industry failed or the price of coal dropped, those lines would be useless to the State. Yet, even with the profits from them, the Railway Department returned a huge deficit of almost \$32,000,000. Taking into account interest totalling \$18,000,000, the net deficit was almost \$14,000,000.

And the deficit is increasing, despite the Government's constant claims, which are made every time attacks are made on coal royalties, that profits are being made from the operations of the Railway Department. That is complete and utter nonsense. The railways are losing money to such an extent that, when the Treasurer introduced his Budget, he said that the deficit was causing him some concern. It should be causing every Queensland concern, too. There is also an estimated deficit of \$26,000,000 for the coming year.

Where is it all going to finish? The Government has failed the State in the provision of transport facilities, particularly in the metropolitan area. The Wilbur Smith Report, which was commissioned by the Government,

recommended that the Brisbane railway system be electrified. This has been promised by the Government parties time and time again at elections. On the last occasion, Government members were running round the corridors saying, "This is good for three elections yet." In spite of those promises, nothing has been done. Where has any appropriation been made for electrification of the Brisbane metropolitan railway system?

The attitude of the Government is nothing but an attempt to fool the people of Queensland. We see it in the platitudes of honourable members who make statements such as, "The Commonwealth Government will bail us out." That was their election cry, and that is what they are hoping for. All that the Government is doing is grasping at straws. Every time the Federal Minister for Transport makes a statement, State Ministers grasp at it and look for some way of turning it against the Federal Government, at the same time claiming that the State Government wants more money for transport services.

The point I am making is the failure of this Government to supply the people with adequate transport services, particularly in the Brisbane metropolitan area and provincial cities. Queensland is one of the few States where the Government has not assumed responsibility for transport services in the capital city. The Government now does not want to "buy in" to a system that it has failed to do anything about.

One problem that the Estimates fail to recognise is the pollution that will develop in the coming decade from the use of motorcars, particularly for transporting people to and from work in the city. The Government has also completely failed to recognise the problem presented by the carnage on the roads, again resulting from the use of motorcars. This is a problem in Brisbane and other Queensland cities, and the Government is doing nothing about it.

The platitudes and buck-passing of the Minister have been particularly evident in this session in his covering-up of the Government's failures in the provision of rail services. This is particularly evident in my electorate. Every time the sensitive subject of the pulling-up of the railway line to the South Coast is mentioned in this Parliament, the Minister and his colleagues from the area—the honourable members for Surfers Paradise and South Coast—"go to water" and start talking about what the Commonwealth Government might be going to do in this matter. However, they fail in their attempts to cover up the fact that it was this Government's Transport Minister who in 1964 had the South Coast line pulled up.

The line now ends at Beenleigh, and some time ago, while visiting Beenleigh, a party that accompanied the Minister saw the tracks of the old main line to the South Coast where they cross the road at the Fiveways. In my opinion, the Government has sadly neglected

the Beenleigh line and is denying the people of Beenleigh, Kingston and other fast-growing suburbs an adequate rail service. During our visit to Beenleigh, the Minister commented to me on the age of the carriages coming into the railway yard. The honourable member for Redlands (Mr. Baldwin), who represented the area before it was included in my electorate, often notices one carriage on which he carved his name in 1933. He told me that seeing his initials going up and down the Beenleigh line reminded him of his schooldays.

People from the Beenleigh-Kingston area—and there is an increasing number of them—who undertake the long trip to Brisbane each day by rail find that the old carriages in which they are expected to travel have not been properly cleaned or dusted. The Kingston Railway Station is probably one of the worst features of the line. Kingston is one of Brisbane's fastest-growing suburbs, and the station serves a large section of Woodridge and North Kingston, and even Slacks Creek, yet it has no platform. I have mentioned this to the Minister, but he has told me that it is not economic to put in a platform because too few people use the station. No wonder people do not use it! One can go to Kingston any day of the week and see young people who live in the area struggling to lift strollers and children from the dirt beside the railway line into the railway carriages. The people of Kingston and adjoining areas certainly deserve better than that. They are patronising the rail service, and traffic on this line is increasing rapidly—in fact, it will eventually cause the Government great embarrassment.

The honourable member for Archerfield made an excellent submission relative to a seven-mile extension from the Beenleigh line to Inala, and I hope he gets a better service on that extension than that now being provided for the people of the Kingston and Beenleigh areas. As I said, most of them are people with young families, and they travel to Brisbane every day to work.

The patronage of the service will not be only transient; it will continue to increase. Therefore, the Minister should begin studying the situation seriously and improving the service to meet future needs. It is not good enough for him to say that too few people use the trains on the Beenleigh line. If he provided better trains and a more frequent service, the number of people using the line would double. Of course, the Government is not interested in improving rail services; it is interested only in selling the State's natural resources to the Japanese.

The Government's tendency to close railway lines is regrettable, and it brings to mind the Minister's failure to co-operate successfully with the trade union movement. It is interesting to note that figures released by the Public Service Board showed that the number of railway employees as at 30 June 1972 was 22,727, whereas as at 30 June 1973 it was 22,341. That was a net loss of

386 employees. It is evident that the Government is not facing up to its responsibilities in this respect. Queensland's population is rising rapidly, particularly in the provincial cities and in South-east Queensland. It is in this area that the Government is failing to meet its responsibility to the people of Queensland.

I feel that we will get a railway line to the South Coast only if coal is discovered in that area. The Government would then rush in and construct a line to meet the needs of overseas interests. It has more concern for overseas companies than for Queensland workers and their families. In this day and age the South Coast should only be a 35-minute journey from Brisbane. Anywhere else in the world, a city the size of the Gold Coast would be linked with the capital city by an adequate transport service.

The Opposition shadow Minister (Mr. R. Jones) called for the resignation of the Commissioner for Railways. I know that Mr. Lee was certainly unpopular in the railway centres in which I worked as a teacher. Since he made his speech, the honourable member for Cairns has received numerous congratulatory telegrams and telephone calls for his efforts. The Commissioner for Railways must surely be held in contempt in the Rockhampton area.

**Mr. Frawley** interjected.

**Mr. D'ARCY:** If the honourable member so desires, I will read the telegram that the honourable member for Cairns received from Rockhampton. It states—

"Rockhampton railwaymen fully endorse your action in calling for the resignation of Lee. Consider that industrial unrest will continue in railway industry while he remains Commissioner."

That is very true. Industrial unrest has been rife in the Railway Department. We know that Tory Governments are expert in stirring up industrial trouble so that they can blame it on somebody else.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is reading from a piece of paper, not a telegram. I move that it be tabled.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Wharton): Order!

**Mr. D'ARCY:** No wonder the Commissioner deserves the contempt of railwaymen in Rockhampton. On 14 November he ignored the following ruling of the Industrial Commission—

"Commissioner Pont ordered the Commissioner for Railways to withdraw forthwith for a period of 24 hours any or all instructions that have been issued by the Commissioner and/or his officers that any employee refusing to work a train scheduled to travel through western areas for the purpose of by-passing Bowen, the trouble

spot, be suspended, and that any suspension already made be cancelled. 'This is to give an opportunity for my recommendation that the Bowen men return to work to be carried out. This order is to come into force immediately.'"

The Commissioner had the audacity to ignore that ruling by the Industrial Commission. It was no more than an attempt to stir up industrial unrest in the area. He did this successfully, and he has earned the contempt of the men who work in the industry. Many honourable members on both sides of the Chamber think the Commissioner should be replaced.

Let me turn now to the subject of road safety. As the honourable member for Lytton pointed out, this State is experiencing a period of alarming road carnage. More than 500 people have been killed this year. This is one problem that the Government has failed to face up to. By his activities, the Minister has shown that he is prepared to look at some of these things.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. ROW** (Hinchinbrook) (9 p.m.): I should, first of all, like to congratulate the Minister on his fair and capable oversight of his portfolio in the comparatively short time he has held it. It is a huge portfolio with many ramifications. I do not suppose there would be any portfolio more important to public activities or to the progress of this State, which is reflected nowhere more than in the efficiency of its transport systems. Nor has any portfolio been more maligned or abused, particularly by honourable members opposite.

When considering the transport folio, my thoughts naturally turn to railways, so I should like to give a few impressions on the Commissioner's report for this financial year. I congratulate the Commissioner on the very comprehensive report that he furnished to the Minister and thus to this Committee. The significant point it reveals is that the railway system, as always, has continued to play a very major part in community welfare and public transportation generally.

I congratulate members of the staff of the Commissioner and the Minister for the part they play in the administration of the Railway Department. One thing that impresses me greatly is the commercial operations of the railway system, which, broadly speaking, are not very evident to the general public. The degree of liaison that exists between the commercial branches of the Railway Department and its customers, the public, is to be commended. An excellent relationship exists between the Railway Department and its customers. I know that, under the provisions of the existing Transport Act, there are some restrictions which prevent the Railway Department from extending generosity to its customers. I regret this situation and I do not doubt that, in its wisdom, the Cabinet

of this Government will see fit from time to time to amend appropriate sections of the Act to allow expansion of the commercial branch of the Railway Department so that it can extend the service given to those who rely greatly on the commercial enterprise of the department.

We realise that, in some respects, railway services have to pay. I congratulate the Commissioner on the vast increase in profits from freight during the past year's activities, as revealed by his report. I think it is ridiculous for honourable members opposite to criticise the Railway Department about the deficit indicated in certain sections of the department's activities. It is just as valid to say that the Education Department or the Health Department runs at a loss. When one is obliged to provide a public service, one cannot always extract from the public a return commensurate with the service that is required. In a State as sparsely populated and as large as Queensland, it is impossible to create an over-all profitable activity where public service must come first in the consideration of a department, and this applies particularly to the Railway Department.

Notwithstanding the criticisms that have been levelled at the Railway Department by members of the Opposition, for the tenth successive year it has shown a working profit. In this widespread State, this is no mean feat. This year the gross earnings of the Railway Department amounted to the colossal sum of \$134,200,000.

**A Government Member:** The Opposition should apologise.

**Mr. ROW:** I wholeheartedly agree. Its criticism has been totally unfounded. One factor that militates against the profitability of commercial operations in both the private and the Government sectors is the granting of wage increases to those persons who are the loudest in their criticisms of the services provided by the State.

The increased earnings from the haulage of export coal reflects great credit on the Railway Department, which, in conjunction with private enterprise, is playing a vital role in the development of Queensland. It is ridiculous for anyone to criticise the Railway Department's operations in the transport of minerals and coal.

I should like to know what the honourable member for Albert would suggest we do with the coal that lies in huge quantities below the surface if we were not able to export it at world market prices. Anyone with common sense would realise that if the present rate of technological advances continues, dirty fuels, such as coal, will be wholly replaced by atomic power. Would the honourable member for Albert suggest that the then unwanted quantities of coal be used as foundations for houses? The increase in the tonnage of coal hauled over the past six years from 4,000,000 tons to

nearly 16,000,000 tons must confound the critics of Queensland's mineral export industries.

Turning to primary industries, I acknowledge the tremendous speeding up that has occurred in the haulage of livestock and perishables to market. This has resulted in their arrival at their destinations in near-prime condition. This is important not only from a commercial view point but also in the transport of animals, from a humanitarian aspect. These days the public are very conscious of the welfare of animals that are carried in railway wagons.

As one engaged in the sugar industry, I should like to pay a tribute to the Railway Department for the services that it has rendered to cane-growers. In bygone days a large proportion of cane was transported by rail to the mills. For many years prior to recent technological advances in the sugar industry the Railway Department was its mainstay.

I am pleased to say that railway participation in this great industry has been diverted to a new role, namely, the handling of bulk sugar.

**Mr. Casey:** Are you aware that the Railway Department makes more money out of carting sugar and sugar-cane than anything else?

**Mr. ROW:** That is a matter of great credit to the Railway Department and the sugar industry.

But for co-operation between the Railway Department and the sugar industry, neither of these great enterprises would be in its present position. It is wonderful to be able to say that private enterprise has been able to work hand in hand with a Government enterprise to produce a successful state of affairs. The Railway Department is entitled to make a profit from the sugar industry and the sugar industry is entitled to profit from Railway Department activities.

Earlier this year I had the privilege of travelling with the Minister and his party on a rail tour of south-western areas of the State. I was very impressed and gained a great deal of valuable knowledge about the operations of the Railway Department and its personnel. I record my sincere thanks to the Minister and all those people with whom I was fortunate enough to come in contact during the course of our tour. I was greatly impressed by the esprit de corps and willingness to serve and co-operate among Railway Department personnel. I was also very favourably impressed by the number of safety features which I found are being incorporated continually in the mechanical operation of trains. These technical advances are not generally known to the public. If there were more public awareness of progressive developments in the Railway Department, the public would be more appreciative of the State's great railway system.

One of the most significant developments is the co-ordinated rail and road container service. I was very interested to see in the Commissioner's report illustrations and comments on this type of service. Containerisation has become an international feature in the transportation of goods. The fact that the Queensland railway service has accepted progress, and is willing to co-operate with other forms of transport in furthering this form of economic development is very creditable.

There are many innovators in the transport field. In referring to the sugar industry, of which I have personal knowledge, I should say that practical people in the industry are responsible for much of the development in transportation and containerisation in that industry. The people in the Railway Department who have accepted these developments will not fail to recognise the local potential for developing a co-ordinated service of container transport. I hope to see the day when Queensland stands on its own feet in the manufacture and development of this type of transport.

**Mr. Casey:** Does the sugar industry buy all its own sugar boxes?

**Mr. ROW:** The sugar industry has designed all its own boxes, and redesigned most of the commercial machines that have been manufactured outside the State. I believe that any honourable member opposite who speaks critically of the sugar industry development in this field is, so to speak, biting the hand that might have fed him.

I have always been somewhat disturbed at the degree of competition—at one stage vicious competition—that developed between road hauliers and the railway service. I cannot help but feel that the road-permit system might have been used to assist the railway service in competing with road transport. Interstate road hauliers took advantage of certain non-conforming State regulations and were no doubt abusing Queensland's laws and roads to some extent. I do not for one moment suggest that road-haulage fees and permits were not essential in the establishment of satisfactory control of road transport.

Whilst permit fees are essential to provide State revenue, some discrepancies exist where the railway system is not developed in certain areas to the stage where it can successfully handle certain perishable goods. In his wisdom, the Commissioner for Transport acknowledged, through Cabinet, that certain perishable products should be exempt from road-permit charges. This applied to a large extent to certain vegetable products. The Commissioner is well aware of my representations to him, through the Minister, for further flexibility in the fees applicable to some primary products that we are struggling to have recognised as perishables and that

cannot as yet be transported by the railway service, except in comparatively isolated instances.

Until these commodities, which require special attention, can be handled by the railway system, with equipment designed specifically for their proper and satisfactory transportation, some flexibility and reason should be introduced. The Department of Primary Industries Marketing Division has its eye on this aspect of the matter. I hope that co-operation between that division and the Commissioner for Transport will remove some of the discrepancies I have mentioned. Such matters are important to many of our developing industries and newly developed areas in the remote parts of the State.

Another factor which would greatly assist primary producers and farmers would be an increase, from 25 miles to 100 miles, in the distance over which goods can be carried without payment of permit fees. This would eliminate some of the problems and promote good will, which in this field is probably as important as commercial considerations and legal technicalities. From time to time we pass laws that we believe are technically correct. However, in practice, they are found to be cumbersome.

(Time expired.)

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (9.20 p.m.): I inform the Committee that I will now reply to most of those honourable members who have spoken on the Estimates this afternoon and tonight. I appreciate the interest of the honourable member for Lytton in road safety. He quite soundly advocates a scientific approach of comparative analysis and research. This is heartening, as too often the approaches I receive are based on emotional and unsupported grounds. We have not embarked on any ambitious research programme compared, say, to that of the Traffic Advisory Research Unit of New South Wales. However, we have assisted and supported specific research projects by Queensland researchers, the results of which have been published at various times.

Currently, a study we have commissioned into the effect of compulsory wearing of seat belts in Queensland is nearing completion. We are collaborating with the Commonwealth Department of Transport in a study of the effectiveness of defensive-driving courses. Through the Australian Transport Advisory Council and its various constituent committees, there is a constant interchange of information. These people working in the research field here and overseas warn against duplication in research, and we are very conscious of the desirability of using to the full the benefits of research already undertaken, for instance, under the auspices of the Australian Road Research Board and the National Association of State Road Authorities, to cite two examples.

The expert Committee on Road Safety in its report to the Commonwealth Government recommended the promotion of a more vigorous co-ordinated and multi-disciplinary approach to research. The House of Representatives Select Committee also made recommendations as to desirable research procedures. The Commonwealth Minister for Transport has made certain announcements as to his intentions in regard to road safety, including research. We are already co-operating as I have indicated, and will continue to do so.

So far as the safety of the vehicle is concerned, I am pleased to be able to say that Queensland has called up in its Traffic Regulations all of the Australian design rules for motor vehicle safety which have been endorsed by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. Departmentally, as members will have noted from the Commissioner's annual report, we have had some success in seeing that the fittings of taxis by way of meters and radios comply with the spirit and intention of the Australian design rules.

The world is searching for a safe car, and experimental safety vehicles—or "E.S.V.'s" as they are known—have reached the prototype stage in various countries and are undergoing tests. One of the stipulations for the design of these vehicles is that they protect the driving seat occupants in an 80 k.p.h. (50 m.p.h.) frontal barrier collision. We are keeping in touch with these international moves.

I share the honourable member's concern over some unfortunate aspects of car and motor-cycle advertising. We have pursued a policy of drawing the attention of the party concerned to features which are considered undesirable. Some advertisements may have escaped my notice, and if they are brought to my attention the matter will be dealt with appropriately. A problem exists in the case of some apparently internationally syndicated advertisements where the advertisement in question is designed and released from outside the country with the addition of a local agent's name. On the positive side, we have also sought to advise advertising agencies and manufacturers of the desirability of incorporating safety devices in their advertisements, for example, ensuring that seat belts are worn.

The honourable member for Burdekin should be aware that a shortage of goods is not peculiar to North Queensland. Only this week, media publicity was given to the shortage of a number of commodities throughout Australia brought about by industrial stoppages in southern States. The prolonged strike in the power industry has been a major factor in seriously interrupting production of a wide variety of commodities.

Regarding the honourable member's comments on modernisation of railway station buildings, it is true that many of our station

buildings and goods sheds are old, but, as the honourable member would be aware, the replacement of these structures would in the aggregate represent a very substantial expenditure. The problem is that there are so many higher priority works that the loan money available each year is not sufficient to cover all that requires to be done. New railway stations are being provided to the extent that money can be made available. However, amenities in the form of water coolers, electric fans and heaters are being supplied, and the policy has been adopted of progressively air-conditioning station offices in northern and western areas.

The honourable member for Burdekin also spoke about the opening-up of road transport. I assure the honourable member, and other country members, that the Commissioner for Transport is waiving permit fees on the carriage of urgently needed goods, and he will continue to give special treatment to these special commodities during the next few weeks to help clear the backlog from Roma Street before Christmas.

The Commissioner for Transport is in constant touch with the Master Carriers' Association, as well as freight-forwarders and the wholesalers and agents supplying the northern centres in particular. If any honourable members know of a particular problem, the Commissioner for Transport will specially look at it under the present circumstances. But I stress to the Committee that prior consideration must be given to clearing the rail backlog and not just to cluttering up the roads with trucks carrying foodstuffs that would not, in normal circumstances, have gone by rail. There is not sufficient road-vehicle capacity to extend it to the carriage of all commodities by road.

For the benefit of the honourable member for Brisbane, who obviously does not read many newspapers, I stress again that large tonnages of manufactured goods, especially Christmas lines, come from New South Wales and Victoria. Sea freight can be, and is being, used to North Queensland ports, but many food lines are not available because of strikes in the manufacturing industries in those States and because of a world-wide shortage of cotton and plastic goods.

Again for the benefit of the honourable member, the Commissioner for Transport, at my direction, has been waiving permit fees for urgently required goods moved by road from Brisbane wholesalers. It is important to mention that a close liaison is being maintained with wholesalers. The same honourable gentleman said that the agents did not exist. I want to take this opportunity to stress that road freights are more expensive than rail-freight rates, and rail is generally preferred to keep down the cost to the retailer and consumer.

Reference was made to the role of the Commonwealth Industrial Commission in the Roma Street dispute, but I want to make it clear that the Commission has no authority over the Commissioner for Railways or railway operations. Jurisdiction of the Commission does not embrace other than Federal awards.

The honourable member for Brisbane, and other honourable members, will be interested to know that a job safety committee at the Roma Street goods yards has been established (the honourable member for Brisbane did not mention that), and the first meeting of this committee will take place at 9.30 on Monday morning next. The committee comprises two representatives of the Railway Department, three representatives of the railway unions, a representative of the Transport Workers' Union and a representative of the Master Carriers' Association. The committee will meet on the last Monday of each month and will continue for a period of six months, when its effectiveness will be determined.

In addition, I have initiated a proposal for the establishment of an "occupational safety council" for all land-transport industries in Queensland. This council is envisaged to be on similar lines to the Building Construction Industrial Safety Council and the Meat Industry Council. Its members will comprise representatives of the Railway Department, Transport Department, Main Roads Department, Department of Industrial Affairs, Brisbane City Council, Master Carriers' Association, Transport Workers' Union, Bus Proprietors' Association, Australian Tramway and Motor Omnibus Employees' Association, Combined Railway Unions, and the Queensland Railway Traffic Employees' Union, under the chairmanship of a person who is independent of the industry.

I was interested to hear the suggestion from the honourable member for Maryborough regarding traffic wardens. This question has been examined by my colleague the Minister in charge of police, and he is examining whether something can be done in this area. However, as the honourable member said, these wardens would need the power of arrest in administering the traffic laws. This power would need to be exercised wisely, which means that traffic wardens should in many respects have similar training to police officers.

The book of Ways and Means, incorporating the Estimates, is a Treasury document based on estimated cash receipts and estimated expenditure. It is in fact a cash-flow document. Demolished assets are items of cash expenditure representing the value of assets actually demolished or abandoned. A cheque for the amount involved is drawn and paid into the loan funds with a corresponding reduction of the capital account. The adoption of the commercial practice

of making a yearly depreciation allowance to offset the value of the asset over the life of that asset would involve an outlay beyond the extent of available finance. The existing practice conforms to Treasury policy. The earnings recorded in the annual report correspond with those recorded by any commercial undertaking.

Expenditure is based on a cash outflow as, with the exception of depreciation, the work involved in segregating expenditure as between a concluding financial year and the next commencing financial year would not be justified by the result obtained. For example, a cheque drawn before 30 June to meet payments actually made for salaries and wages paid after the close of the financial year is debited to the financial year in which it is drawn.

I come now to the honourable member for Cooroora, who raised the matter of the level-crossing gates at Cooroy. As a result of his earlier approach to me, I arranged for work on the closure of these gates to stop until his submissions on behalf of the Noosa Shire Council could be fully examined. I will certainly have the honourable member's plea for retention of the Cooroy level-crossing gates studied closely.

Regarding improvements to our existing lines, I point out to the honourable member that there is a planning team, and these are problems that have to be looked at as quickly as possible. Urban-transport improvements cannot be achieved overnight by waving a magic wand. There is a great amount of "nitty-gritty" work to be done before we see the results of our sound planning, and I stress the words "sound planning".

The honourable member for Cooroora said he would like to see railway electrification extended to Nambour. This is a special problem, and as we develop the Brisbane region urban transport system it will be kept under review. But, as the honourable member would appreciate, I cannot promise anything at the present time. There is a very big job ahead of us in this field, but I say again that the first steps have been undertaken and consideration and expansion will follow in due course.

I was pleased to hear the honourable member for Toowoomba South make a very valuable contribution on road-safety education in schools. With his experience in the education field, I will welcome any constructive suggestions he might make. As I said in introducing the Estimates, the officers of the Department of Education have been providing excellent assistance in mounting a course for the older students to give them an understanding of the road-safety problem and the need to develop safe-driving attitudes.

I also listened to the honourable member's contribution on the problem of drink-driving. I know from what he has said that he will

support the legislation I have announced, and I look forward to his participation in that debate also. Rehabilitation of drink-driving offenders is important, and the honourable member is quite correct in mentioning it. But the only way to identify the problem is by treating these people after a number of offences have been committed. The once-only offender generally does not need treatment. The persistent offender does. But the main issue, apart from medical treatment, is to prevent these people somehow from driving cars. Perhaps we should go as far as prohibiting them from owning motor vehicles in order to reinforce any absolute disqualification imposed by the courts. I would welcome the honourable member's views on this point.

The honourable member for Archerfield suggested a loop-line from Darra through Inala to Salisbury.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** interjected.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** Well, he included Salisbury and other areas.

I assure the honourable member that there are similar areas we must examine, but Inala will not be overlooked. However, it is important that we, as a responsible Government, do not scatter our resources too far before we get started on our current proposals.

The honourable member also suggested that I should travel around to find out about the railways and what railwaymen want. He is obviously not aware that this year alone, as was pointed out by the honourable member for Ihaca, I have travelled over all the main-line routes and many of the branch lines—a total of more than 5,000 miles. On each occasion the deputations that I received included a number from local branches of the respective railway unions as well as individual railway personnel. All matters brought to my attention by the deputations received full consideration.

The honourable member claimed, amongst other things, that the present Commissioner for Railways is the most anti-union Commissioner the State has ever had. I am therefore provoked into recording in "Hansard" a statement of these concessions which have flowed to railwaymen over the past five years—

Conversion of lower-paid salary staff to weekly wage rates to permit of entitlement to service incremental payments;

Return workings for trainmen at Mayne working to Gympie and Toowoomba, and trainmen at Gympie and Toowoomba working to Mayne;

Traffic inspectors' salaries to be \$10 per annum above the salary for special "C" class stationmaster plus value of house;

Reclassification of supervisors in diesel sheds, and signal and telegraph sections;

Time promotion for engineers to executive engineer class II level;

No opposition presented in respect of claims based on "like with like" comparison with Public Service, key Queensland awards and other States;

All classifications have benefited from increases on this basis;

Appointment of additional drivers, firemen and guards at many depots to allow of relief of trainmen after not more than 10 hours on duty, and to allow of rostered day off;

Where practice prior to award variation was to relieve after lesser period on duty, this relief still provided;

Air-conditioning of Cloncurry station offices and other station offices in western areas;

Establishment of guards' training schools and firemen's training schools;

Improved uniforms in general railway service and Railway Refreshment Rooms;

Issue of wristlet watches in lieu of pocket watches;

Programme established for construction of modern camp-wagons;

Away-from-home allowances for employees residing in hotel or boarding house not reduced when an employee returns home for week-end;

Construction of modern quarters, air-conditioned having regard to climate, for trainmen;

Construction of modern railway administrative building;

Long service leave, sick leave, annual leave, locality allowance, service incremental payments.

My colleague the honourable member for Chatsworth dealt very well with the honourable member's attack on the Commissioner for Railways, and I thank him for his contribution.

The honourable member for Mansfield referred to hovercraft operating on the Thames River in England, and I assure him that we are keeping a watchful eye on developments in this particular form of transport. However, at present the high cost of operating these vehicles, in addition to the noise factor, would not make them suitable for the Brisbane River, which has many residences along its banks.

I agree with the honourable member's statement about urban transport and the need for controlled use of parking facilities, especially in the central business district of Brisbane. His suggestions will be carefully examined, but, as he says, there is a problem of land usage and development of areas away from transport facilities. There is too much unco-ordinated development and lack of thought for the transport problems that are being constantly created.

If we experience a fuel shortage, many young married couples in these outer suburbs will have a real transport problem. I predict an upsurge in the sale of bicycles in the future to meet these problems, which are occurring in Belgium and Holland. Perhaps we would find a healthier population generally if we had to return to pedalling bicycles.

The honourable member for Cook spoke of the need for better facilities for passengers on our urban railway lines, and for interchange facilities between bus and rail. I assure him that these points are included in our plans for improvements in urban transport. These improvements will be carried out simultaneously as electrification gets under way. I agree that we must cater for the needs of passengers, and we will do so to the best of our ability as funds become available. Advantage will be taken of the latest developments in this field of passenger comfort, and the convenience of transit services. It is planned to have more express services in peak hours, with better signalling and communications systems, which are presently being developed. The Government will endeavour to obtain the best systems that have been developed in the world, and adapt them to our operations.

Turning now to railway matters mentioned by the honourable member, I point out that tenders, closing on 26 November, have been called for a licence to operate the Railway Refreshment Rooms at Gympie. If we are successful, these rooms will provide an intermediate point for refreshments between Brisbane and Bundaberg. I assure the honourable member that there is no current shortage of K-wagons. The peak season is over, and there is no delay in meeting current orders. There is a continuous programme for the acquisition of more K-wagons. An order for 100 such wagons is being delivered at present, and tenders have been called for another 100 wagons. These latter wagons will be larger, and will have 50 per cent more carrying capacity.

The honourable member for Pine Rivers spoke about elbows protruding from stainless-steel railway carriages. The matter of introducing a guard by which passengers would be prevented from sitting with their elbows protruding through the windows in stainless-steel carriages will be investigated. However, it might be difficult, with the fitting of the windows in the cars as they are now constructed, to provide an attachment other than bars.

I am not unaware of the representations that have been made for relocating the Strathpine Railway Station. This is a matter of according priorities in the allocation of finance for works of this nature. Regard will also need to be had to the possibility of causing inconvenience to those people residing near the present station.

The honourable member for South Brisbane spoke at some length on the subject of Bayside buses. There is no restriction

on the use of buses where the service follows the approved routes, and these routes are determined in consultation with Brisbane City Council traffic engineers. As to the restriction on picking up passengers on the route serviced by the Brisbane City Council, this was the result of strong representations from the council's Transport Department, which objected to Bayside buses operating over council routes and undercutting its fares. Bayside has never had authority in this section, and similar restrictions apply to other bus services operating to Brisbane city. I am sure Bayside buses would object just as strongly if the department permitted the Brisbane City Council, without proper compensation, to operate over Bayside's routes.

If the honourable member feels that the council's services are not adequate, he should direct his representations to that authority. Brisbane's Lord Mayor complains of the losses on his buses, and the honourable member, who represents the A.L.P., wants to increase those losses. If Bayside wants to buy into the council's routes, then let it make an offer to the council.

The honourable member for Ithaca spoke about shunting working roads. A list of instructions has been drawn up whereby any men working on such roads will be warned beforehand of the shunting movement which is to take place in order that they may stand clear. It has also been arranged for "No crossing" signs to be exhibited on roads crossing such sidings when shunting movements are to be made in order to warn drivers of motor vehicles to refrain from crossing the line. The list of instructions meets with the approval of the Transport Workers' Union, and should remove any cause for concern.

The Criminal Investigation Branch was advised of the allegations made by the Transport Workers' Union that railway employees at Roma Street were accepting bribes to give preferential treatment. The Transport Workers' Union and the railway unions concerned were advised that I proposed to place the matter in the hands of the C.I.B. I have not yet been informed of the results of these investigations.

I assure the honourable member for Albert that the line to Beenleigh will be updated along with other lines, and he will find that improvements proposed will be well worth waiting for. The urban boom has been spectacular over the last few years and essential services like transport, water, electricity, education, police, and so on, are all demanding the expenditure of increased funds. Sometimes it is a choice between a new school or a new station, and the honourable member knows what the priorities are in these cases.

Transport services—rail and road—are endeavouring to cope with increased demand, but from planning to operation of new services takes not months, but years. I am

sorry that the honourable member could not develop his contribution on road safety. Even his Commonwealth colleagues realise that a combined effort—non-political—is necessary to arrive at some solutions. Some of the answers may have political overtones, because no elector likes to have restrictions placed on him, even for his own safety. I hope that the honourable member will support any measures that may not be popular with some of our minority groups of irresponsible drivers.

Like so many honourable members opposite, the honourable member found it necessary to criticise, but his criticism was quite unwarranted. When dealing with the Railway Department, he was full of predictions about what Labor would have done if it had stayed in office. He was a boy in school in those days, and he is only a boy in Parliament now. He is now an assistant, in fact, of a "matchmaker" on the Coast, blessed by Senator Murphy. That was about the extent of the honourable member's contribution.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** My parliamentary colleague from Chatsworth made a contribution to this debate on the procedures of Parliament in Committee relative to Estimates. Of course, that is a matter for another place. I should like him to know that, so far as I am concerned, I am happy to do what I can to bring about some reform in that direction. He, like so many other honourable members, was concerned about the road toll. I know every honourable member in the Chamber is in the same category. He is examining some of the aspects of the defensive-driving course and his contribution recommending the course is very much appreciated. He dealt adequately with the attacks made by the honourable member for Archerfield on the Railway Commissioner, Mr. Lee.

The honourable member for Bundaberg was also interested in road safety and suggested a road-safety day each year. Perhaps he has something there. This may be worth looking into because in this way, we may make people a little more alert. He said that we should not wait for a lead from other States or the Commonwealth, but should ourselves give the lead. I remind the honourable member that, in the field of road safety, Queensland has done just that. To give one example, we instigated the defensive-driving course. Queensland gave the lead in that regard. The honourable member suggested impounding cars. I think I have dealt with that matter already. That suggestion, too, may be very helpful. The honourable member said that the working profit of the railways needed some explanation. I can only refer him to my ministerial statement on what the Leader of the Opposition had to say when he, too, could not

understand the accounting system that has been developed by the Railway Department and the Treasury Department.

I thank the honourable member for Mirani for his sincere appreciation of the work done by my officers and my personal staff. There is no doubt that the problems of land resumption on the Goonyella line are indeed great. I suppose most of us learn that, at times, we pay for progress. We regret the problems, but I assure the honourable member that, with the department, I will closely examine the few remaining resumptions that have to be finalised. The honourable member applauded the Government—particularly the Housing Commission and the Railway Department—on the very excellent quarters that have been supplied in the Jilalan and Sarina areas. It is a pity that some of the people who criticise so much of the accommodation provided by the department did not hear his contribution. I admit that there is room for improvement in some areas of the State. I would be less than honest if I did not say so.

I cannot say how much I appreciate the thanks expressed by the honourable member for Mackay not only during the debate but also in writing for the small contribution I may have made to the benefit of the electors of Mackay. He spoke of the trainmen's quarters near Mackay Station and how elegant and aesthetic they look. I will be only too happy to go to Mackay and open them. I will be only too happy, too, to examine the re-location of the traffic yards and rebitumining of the door-to-door area. He said that we must encourage people back to train travel. I agree. I know that there is room for improvement. I have travelled on the "Indian Pacific" and I know the "Gold Coast Motor Rail Express." He suggested something similar in Queensland. I can assure him that we are looking into this matter. He referred to C.T.C. and the displacement of staff. Again this is something we must pay for in these days of electronics and other forms of development. It is regrettable. We are hopeful of extending C.T.C. throughout the length and breadth of our busy coastline.

The honourable member for Mulgrave was laudatory in his remarks about me and my staff and particularly laudatory about the railways in the Cairns region and the district superintendent there. He suggested that sugar could come back to the railways from road. As I indicated to the honourable member for Cairns, we must get sugar back onto rail because it is the type of transport that rail can handle adequately. He was also concerned with industrial stoppages. I am sure that no Government member is not.

He suggested that the Cairns railway district be extended farther south to make it larger. We will most certainly be examining that possibility before the launching of Greenvale in the middle of next year, because traffic will increase in the Townsville area when Greenvale comes on line. He also

mentioned Atherton station and goods shed. I investigated this for him. The goods shed is quite a solid structure. I understand his problem. An unfortunate incident occurred there. He brought it to my attention and I hope it has been rectified by now.

He was concerned also with speed limits on our roads. Anything that honourable members may have heard about non-uniformity in this regard is not in accordance with fact. At the Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting in July last year, it was agreed that 100 km would be the upper limit on the open road, with 60 km in built-up areas. Queensland, some other States, and certainly the Commonwealth were geared to this. In July this year an attempt was made to raise the upper limit to 110 or even 120 km. I say here and now that the Commonwealth stood fair and square behind me to retain it at 100 km. Although there was general agreement that the code could be 110 km, nobody would comply with it. In the past, Queensland has been the only State to comply with the National Traffic Code, which is 60 and 35 miles an hour. There is no difficulty in this respect. It has been suggested that when a driver crosses the border he will enter another area. New South Wales and Victoria have different systems of prima facie proof in respect of speed limits now.

I thank the honourable member for Hinchinbrook for his contribution and kind remarks. I realise his problems with the transportation of rice. I assure him that, together with the Minister for Primary Industries, I am doing everything I can to achieve some satisfaction in this area.

I would like to inform all those honourable members to whom I have not had time to reply that I will certainly answer their contributions if they have been worth while and constructive. I will answer them in writing and investigate all the issues they raised.

At 9.55 p.m.,

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 24 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Railways and Transport.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

Railways—

	\$
General Establishment ..	35,764,000
Railways and Transport—	
Balance of Votes, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account .. .. .	175,070,827

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 9.57 p.m.