

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 20 AUGUST 1974**

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**TUESDAY, 20 AUGUST 1974**

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

**PAPERS**

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

**Reports—**

Under Secretary for Mines, for the year 1973.

Commissioner of Land Tax, for the year 1973-74.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Proclamation under the Traffic Act Amendment Act 1974.

**Orders in Council under—**

State and Regional Planning and Development, Public Works Organization and Environmental Control Act 1971-1973.

Racing and Betting Act 1954-1972.

City of Brisbane Act 1924-1973.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

The Northern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1963 to 1964.

**Regulations under—**

Education Act 1964-1973.

Health Act 1937-1973.

Traffic Act 1949-1974.

Statute under the Griffith University Act 1971-1973.

Rules of Court under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1961-1974.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

**INITIATION**

**Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity): 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 Local Government Superannuation Act of 1964, as subsequently amended, in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

**CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

**INITIATION**

**Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity): 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 City of Brisbane Act 1924-1973 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

**BUILDING BILL**

**INITIATION**

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

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to prescribe standard by-laws for local authorities in respect of the erection of buildings and other structures, to prescribe the powers of local authorities in relation to certain buildings and other structures, and consequentially to amend the Local Government Act 1936-1974 and the City of Brisbane Town Planning Act 1964-1974 each in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

**QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE**

**FALSE MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION CERTIFICATES**

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

(1) How many complaints have been received by the Consumer Affairs Bureau that used motor-vehicle inspection certificates have been false?

(2) What is the main cause of complaint?

(3) How many of the complaints have, on investigation, been found to be either a deficiency in the system or a false return?

(4) How many prosecutions have been made because of these investigations and how many complaints have been found to be without foundation?

*Answers:—*

(1) “The Division of Occupational Safety has received 657 complaints regarding certificates of roadworthiness of which 590 have been investigated and the remainder are at present under investigation.”

(2) “Wheels and tyres, approximately 80 per cent.; braking equipment, approximately 75 per cent.; steering and suspension, approximately 77 per cent.; lighting and equipment, approximately 72 per cent.; exhaust systems, approximately 67 per cent.; and body, chassis and panel rust, approximately 52 per cent.”

(3 and 4) “I believe that the system is operating efficiently and I am tremendously encouraged by the effectiveness of the roadworthiness legislation. The committee which initially unanimously recommended

this Legislation and which reviewed its operation after a period of 6 months, unanimously agreed it was very effective in removing many unsafe vehicles from the road. It generally has been found, following investigation of many complaints, that the matters complained of are not associated with the inspection required for the purpose of issuing a certificate of roadworthiness. In some few cases it has not been possible to obtain sufficient evidence to substantiate a case against the approved inspection station or licensed examiner concerned. Since the introduction of the certificate of roadworthiness Legislation in October 1972, 351,881 certificates of roadworthiness have been issued. At the present time there are 1,079 approved inspection stations employing 2,812 licensed examiners. 11,187 vehicles (or approximately only 3 per cent. of all vehicles presented for inspection) after failing to pass an initial inspection also failed to pass a second inspection or failed to be presented for a second inspection. Follow up action was taken by the division in respect of these vehicles. These figures are indicative of the effectiveness of the Legislation. Of the 590 complaints investigated regarding the issue of certificates of roadworthiness it was found that no further action was necessary in respect of 357. Seven successful prosecutions were subsequently made and three further prosecutions were unsuccessful. The remaining 223 complaints investigated are at present under consideration for further action or further evidence is being obtained for prosecution or are in the process of prosecution. I would mention that a further 163 successful prosecutions have been made for breaches of the certificate of roadworthiness Legislation as a result of activities of the division's inspectors. These breaches in summary were in respect of—126 breaches, involving 57 used car dealers for disposal of motor vehicles without current certificates of roadworthiness; 35 breaches involving four approved inspection stations, for—forgery of certificates of roadworthiness (28 breaches); issuing false certificates of roadworthiness (3 breaches); not notifying the Chief Inspector of Machinery when licensed examiner resigned (1 breach); using premises not approved as testing station (1 breach); not completing certificate of roadworthiness correctly (1 breach); and disposal of motor vehicles without current certificate of roadworthiness (1 breach); two breaches involving two licensed examiners, for—(1) not completing a certificate of roadworthiness correctly; and (2) forgery of signatures of a licensed examiner. Following prosecutory action, one approved inspection station certificate has been surrendered, one certificate of approved inspection station has been cancelled, two licences as examiner have been surrendered, one has been cancelled and two have been suspended.”

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS FOR MARRIED FEMALE EMPLOYEES

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

(1) Are employers of married females required to pay workers' compensation premiums on behalf of those employees? If so, is the rate payable the same as that for male employees?

(2) In the event of injury to or the death of a married female whilst in employment, can compensation be claimed by the family of that employee only when it is proved that the family was wholly dependent on her?

(3) If the premium rate is the same as that paid for male employees and compensation cannot be claimed, will he give consideration to reducing the premiums payable?

*Answers:—*

(1) “Yes. Married females, if engaged under a contract of service with an employer, are ‘workers’ within the meaning of the Workers’ Compensation Act, and premiums are payable on their wages or earnings. The rate of premium payable is the same as that for male employees.”

(2) “If a married female is killed or injured during the course of her employment, or on a journey to or from her place of employment, the same conditions would apply as in the case of a male employee. In the case of the death of a worker, Section 14 (1) (A) of the Act sets out the amounts payable, which are related to the degree of proven dependency on the ‘worker’ concerned, with no differentiation between male and female.”

(3) “Premium rates are assessed on the basis of claims experience. In view of the foregoing information, the Honourable Member will appreciate that there is no case for consideration of any variation of premium rates for female workers as compared with males.”

#### EXCESSIVE INTEREST ON LOANS

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

(1) With reference to Orders in Council tabled on July 31, why was exemption under the *Money Lenders Act 1916-1973* given to Trans City Holding Ltd., Trans City Discount Ltd., Trans City Securities Ltd., Trans City Co. Ltd., Union-Fidelity Trustee Co. of Aust. Ltd., Queensland Cancer Fund, Burns Philp Finance Ltd. and Australian European Finance Co. Ltd.?

(2) Have any of these firms been guilty of lending money at more than the statutory maximum interest rate of 20 per cent.?

(3) Is he aware of the report in *The Sunday Mail* of June 9 that loans in Queensland totalling millions of dollars are apparently illegal because they have been made at more than 20 per cent.?

(4) Have any requests been received by the State Government to alter the Act to make retrospective provision for the protection of speculators who have been affected by our current laws?

(5) If the loans are illegal, does a borrower have any legal obligation to pay interest or repay the capital borrowed?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) "Trans City Holdings Limited, Trans City Discount Limited, Trans City Securities Limited, Trans City Corporation Limited, Australian European Finance Corporation Limited and Burns Philp Finance Limited were granted exemption from registration under the *Money Lenders Act* 1916-1973 in accordance with the policy of exempting companies who do not make loans to individuals and only make loans of substantial amounts to other companies. Union Fidelity Trustee Company of Australia Limited places money held upon various trusts on interest bearing deposit with banks and as the banks are offering higher rates of interest on deposits over \$100,000 than the maximum prescribed in the Money Lenders Acts the company applied for exemption. As the Act was never intended to apply to investments made by a trustee in recognised trustee investments such as bank deposits, exemption was granted. A similar exemption granted to Queensland Trustees Limited was published in the *Government Gazette* of March 14, 1970. The Queensland Cancer Fund was granted exemption on similar grounds to that granted the Union Fidelity Trustee Company of Australia Limited in that it was investing some funds in short term deposits and convertible deposits with banks at interest rates in excess of the maximum prescribed in the Money Lenders Act. In the circumstances the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs has not instituted proceedings against any of these companies. Also, the Honourable Member should be aware that the maximum rate of interest was repealed and notification of the regulation to this effect appeared in the *Government Gazette* of August 3, 1974."

(3) "Yes, I am aware of the report."

(4) "No."

(5) "In view of the complexity of the matter any person contemplating not paying interest on loans or repaying the capital borrowed should take legal advice before embarking on such course."

#### REGISTRATION OF LAND UNDER GROUP TITLES

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

(1) With regard to the new Regulation 7A of the Group Titles Regulations 1974, why was it considered necessary to give special powers to the Crown Law Office to vary the general provision enforceable by the Registrar of Titles, that a group titles plan cannot be registered where the parcel exceeds two hectares in area or contains more than 30 lots?

(2) What will be the minimum area of land allowed by the Crown Law Office in such a parcel and what is considered as the minimum acceptable ratio of home units to area of land in any group-title plan?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The Crown Law Officer was given authority to consent to the registration of group titles plans where the parcel exceeded two hectares in area or contained more than 30 lots if he considered that special circumstances existed to warrant consent."

(2) "No minimum or maximum area has been determined as this would be governed by the particular circumstances raised. The ratio of lots to the area of the parcel is subject to the ordinances or by-laws of the local authority. I would point out to the Honourable Member that there is no provision for registration of a plan for home units on any lot in a group titles plan."

#### DISTRICT AND SUPREME COURTS ACCOMMODATION, ROCKHAMPTON

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

(1) In view of previous promises to upgrade District Court and Supreme Court facilities at Rockhampton, will he now give definite details and state what type of complex is proposed and when work on the project will commence?

(2) Will he investigate the facilities at present available for the Supreme Court and District Court Judges and the newly appointed Public Defender, to ensure that the facilities are adequate for these persons and their staffs?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Due to the amount of money available and the priorities of other buildings it is not proposed to build a new Supreme and District Court building at Rockhampton at present. No indication can be given as to when finance will be available for a project of this size."

(2) "Action has been taken to improve the facilities available at the existing Supreme Court building. The Clerk to the District Court Judge has been re-located and approval has been given in principle for the air conditioning of the building. No indication can be given at this stage as to when the work will be carried out. A permanent Public Defender is not stationed at Rockhampton but accommodation is being sought for the Crown Prosecutor for the Central District of the Supreme Court who was recently appointed."

#### NEW SHIPYARD, MARYBOROUGH

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

(1) In view of the Commonwealth Australian Labor Party Government's welsling on the promise made to the people of Maryborough by Mr. C. Jones, Minister for Transport, that the Commonwealth Government would "go it alone" and construct a new shipyard at Maryborough and the repeated incorrect statements by Mr. Jones that the Queensland Government would not assist in any way, has any formal request for assistance been received from the Commonwealth Government?

(2) Will he assure the Maryborough people that the Department of Industrial Development was ready at all times to assist with technical and other advice and assistance in the construction of a shipyard at Maryborough?

*Answers:—*

(1) "So far as I am aware, no approach for assistance has been made to the State Government by the Commonwealth Government following the statement credited to the Federal Transport Minister that his Government would be prepared to 'go it alone' in establishing a new shipyard at Maryborough."

(2) "My Department is working in the closest collaboration with Walkers Limited in an endeavour to assist the company to maintain employment opportunities in Maryborough at the highest level. In particular, we are actively pursuing possible avenues such as licensing arrangements which might assist Walkers to extend its engineering capacity. Should the Commonwealth Government, or for that matter any private company or agency, be prepared to consider the economic prospects for the re-establishment of a shipyard at Maryborough, naturally they can expect to receive the full support of my Department in any investigations they may care to undertake."

#### LAND-USE STUDY, BUNDABERG— MARYBOROUGH AREA

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

(1) What progress has been made on the coastal-lowlands study being undertaken at the present time on lands between Bundaberg and Maryborough?

(2) In view of the importance of this study to the City of Maryborough and district, will he ensure that this land-use study is completed by December, as previously advised?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) "The coastal-lowlands study is proceeding satisfactorily but at this stage it is not possible to be more precise than in my previous advice to the Honourable Member."

#### AUTHORITY TO PROSPECT No. 642M

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

With reference to Authority to Prospect 642M—

(1) Where is it situated and what area does it encompass?

(2) When was it issued and to whom?

(3) Has it been transferred to any other individual or company at any time since it was first issued? If so, when, to whom and for what consideration?

(4) What were the conditions which applied to it on issue?

(5) Has it been surrendered? If so, on what date?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The area was situated south of Kingaroy. The authority is no longer in existence."

(2) "July 1, 1969, to Bjelke-Petersen Enterprises Pty. Ltd. and Raymond Edward Black."

(3) "Yes, on September 24, 1970, to J. M. Huber Corporation. There was no consideration for transfer of the actual authority to prospect. The consideration referred to existing mining lease applications as well as the authority. It was 2 per cent. of the gross sale price of minerals mined from those lease applications and any such which might flow on from holding the authority to prospect."

(4) "These conditions were many and varied and generally in accordance with conditions commonly included in such authorities to prospect. They extend to some six printed foolscap pages and cover such matters as the period, area, marking of boundary, right to prospect, guarantee"

deposit, rental, protection of existing rights, work and expenditure, lodgment of guarantee if required, lodgment of reports, protection of roads, railways, telephone, power, radio and television services, protection of navigation, harbours, fishing grounds, forests, national parks, aboriginal reserves, artifacts and historical sites and other matters. A copy of a typical such document can be made available. The only conditions peculiar to this authority were as to period (originally two years from July 1, 1969, but extended to December 31, 1973), area (reduced from a maximum of 66 square miles to 11 square miles), and expenditures, which were—first year, \$20,000; second year, \$30,000; six months from July 1, 1971, \$30,000; one year from January 1, 1972, \$50,000 and one year from January 1, 1973, \$50,000."

(5) "The authority expired on December 31, 1973."

**AUTHORITY TO PROSPECT No. 75c**

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

With reference to Authority to Prospect 75c—

(1) Where is it situated and what area does it encompass?

(2) When was it issued and to whom?

(3) What were the conditions which applied to it on issue?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Kingaroy locality. 102 square miles."

(2) "June 1, 1969, to C.R.A. Exploration Pty. Limited."

(3) "As stated today in answer to a previous Question, general conditions in respect of authorities to prospect are many and varied. In this case they cover some six printed foolscap pages. Copy of a typical such authority can be made available. The only conditions peculiar to this authority are as to period—originally three years from June 1, 1969, but extended for three years from June 1, 1972; area—originally 316 square miles, but reduced to 102 square miles; and expenditure—which was \$25,000 for the first year, \$35,000 for the second year, \$50,000 for the third year, and \$160,000 during the next three years."

**CLERICAL SECTION, MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT**

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

(1) Is he aware that some months ago 183 clerical officers of the Main Roads Department asked to be transferred to

other Government departments because of, amongst other things, the lack of opportunity for promotion in that department as compared with other Government departments?

(2) Did the officers place a ban on the working of overtime last month because of unrest and frustration within the clerical section and does the ban still remain effective?

(3) Has any action been taken to meet the officers' request for an investigation to be undertaken by the State Public Service Board on the question of additional classified positions within the Department and, if so, when will the investigation be completed?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The officers placed a ban on overtime after consultation with the State Service Union. Notwithstanding assurances of action by the Main Roads Department at a conference with State Service Union representatives and subsequent referral of the review to the Public Service Board, the overtime ban has been retained."

(3) "The Main Roads Department has carried out a large amount of preliminary work over several months and by agreement with the Public Service Board the information has been handed over to the board for review and further action."

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TO OMBUDSMAN**

**Mr. TUCKER:** With reference to the appointment of Mr. D. W. Longland as Queensland's first Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations, or ombudsman, I ask the Premier: As Mr. Longland's age will necessitate his retirement soon after he has set up this vital office, will the Premier give urgent consideration to the appointment of a deputy qualified to become ombudsman when Mr. Longland retires, thus preserving the continuity of the first administration and maximising the opportunity for the Queensland office of ombudsman to carry out the job for which it was intended?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I can assure the House that both Cabinet and the Government gave very careful consideration to the filling of this very important position. This is confirmed by the appointment of Mr. Longland for two years. All factors will be taken into account in the appointment of his staff. We are indeed very glad to have the services of Mr. Longland, who is highly respected and very well known throughout Queensland. He is the right man with the right approach.

## SALE OF SUBSTANDARD LAND, RUSSELL ISLAND

**Mr. TUCKER:** I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Has he received the report by Mr. and Mrs. Gibbons on the purchase of certain allotments of land on Russell Island, or does he have knowledge of that report? If so, in view of the allegations of fraudulent practice contained therein, is it his intention to have the Police Fraud Squad investigate all aspects of the submission? If not, what is the reason?

**Mr. HODGES:** I have received no such report.

MURDER OF MAROOCHYDORE CHILD;  
ESTABLISHMENT OF DRUG REFERRAL CENTRE

**Mr. TUCKER:** I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: In view of the public reaction to the tragic death of a child at Maroochydore on 7 August, which was allegedly associated with the local drug situation, will the Minister comment on—

(a) the result of his investigations into claims that there was lack of police co-operation or co-ordination preceding the tragedy;

(b) whether investigations show how closely this incident was linked with drugs; and

(c) whether the police or other authorities have taken any action towards establishing a drug referral centre with adequate treatment facilities in the area?

**Mr. HODGES:** The actions of the police in this matter have been completely exemplary. They have done a magnificent job in their investigations and have not been at all negligent in any of their efforts.

## SHORTAGE OF FUEL OIL, NORTH QUEENSLAND

**Mr. ARMSTRONG:** I ask the Premier: Further to representations made to him last week regarding the shortage of distillate in North Queensland and the likelihood of sugar mills closing down this week, has he been able to have the Federal Government release fuel from stocks held in Cairns to enable crushing to continue? If not, what action has he taken to prevent the closing down of industries which use this fuel?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The honourable member contacted me several times last week and this week in relation to the very serious fuel position in the North. I have had no further word from the Prime Minister in reply to my telegram recommending the release of fuels for use throughout the State, particularly in North Queensland. For the benefit of honourable members, I have been informed that the dispute at the Amoco refinery has been settled and it is hoped that later today, following discussions with the Minister for Transport, rail tankers of fuel will be sent to the various places in North Queensland. We acted promptly. We

were organised and ready to take this action when the first opportunity presented itself. I have had discussions both with Ampol and with Mr. Jack Egerton, who has been very co-operative and has played a very important role in the settlement. Mr. McAlister, executive officer of Ampol, told me that if the tanker "W. M. Leonard" is released, the company will give serious consideration to sending it to the northern parts of Queensland to relieve the pressure there. This again depends on the attitude of the unions in this dispute.

## SHORTAGE OF FUEL OIL, MACKAY AREA

**Mr. NEWBERY:** I ask the Premier: Is he aware of the serious situation that will eventuate in the Mackay sugar region if the departure of the tanker "W. M. Leonard" from Brisbane is delayed any further? Is the Government taking every possible action to avoid the closing down of the eight sugar mills in the area, which would produce disastrous results such as loss of work for thousands of men and a tremendous loss of export income for the nation?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** With the honourable member and many other members, I feel deep concern over the problems confronting very many people as a result of the industrial turmoil that has hit Australia, including our State, during the last year or so, particularly in the recent period. I think every one of us views very seriously the attitude of certain union leaders towards the well-being of our State, our nation and people as individuals. One could speak at considerable length on this issue and draw attention to many aspects of the Commonwealth Government's attitude and lack of action in this whole situation. I am sure honourable members opposite know exactly what I should like to say, and what they know to be true. However, I say to the honourable member exactly what I said in reply to an earlier question today: Every action is now being taken to dispatch rail tankers to the North as quickly as possible, and also the vessel "W. M. Leonard" if this can be done on finalisation of the dispute.

## PRESERVATION OF "BELLEVUE" BUILDING

**Mr. B. WOOD:** I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services: Is he seeking to preserve the "Bellevue" building?

**Mr. HERBERT:** I thought the honourable member had been here long enough to know that this matter is not part of my administrative responsibility.

## SALE OF SUBSTANDARD LAND, RUSSELL ISLAND

**Mr. NEWTON:** I ask the Premier: Has he received the report furnished by Mr. and Mrs. Gibbons relative to the Redland Bay island development, in which very strong allegations were made concerning a number

of ministerial portfolios and a local authority? In view of this report does he intend to set up a public inquiry into the allegations made in it?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I do not know the letter to which the honourable member makes reference.

**Mr. Newton:** It was a report.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I understand that the Minister for Lands made a statement in this House not so long ago in relation to this whole question. He dealt with the attitude of the Government and pointed out that people could not be stopped from buying land on some of these islands which did not come within the scope of certain local authorities. This is why the Government, when it became aware of the situation, took action to bring various islands in Moreton Bay and in Torres Strait under the control of various local authorities. It was pointed out also that people who bought land on the basis of information obtained over the telephone did so on their own responsibility. However, the Government has taken action to bring these areas within the ambit of certain local authorities.

#### FIRE DESTRUCTION OF HOUSING COMMISSION HOUSE, WOODRIDGE

**Mr. NEWTON:** I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Following on the fire that destroyed a Housing Commission house at Woodridge on 10 July 1974, in which three young lives were lost, is he now in a position to make a statement to the House concerning the material used as interior lining, which, it is claimed, presents a very high fire risk?

**Mr. HODGES:** I am not prepared at this stage to make a statement to the House. This matter is being investigated and as soon as a report is available I will let the honourable member know the results of that report.

#### COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC COMMITTEES

**Mr. WHARTON:** I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Is he aware of the composition of a Federal Labor caucus economic committee, which recently considered the Federal Government's Budget strategy, and can he say how many Queenslanders are on it?

As the forthcoming Commonwealth Budget will doubtless concern primary producers because of the present high inflation, does he think that this committee will spare a thought for the man on the land?

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** There are two economic committees in Canberra. One is a Cabinet committee, consisting of 14 Cabinet Ministers. I understand that two Queenslanders, Dr. Patterson and Mr. Hayden, are members of

it. The other is the caucus economic committee, which consists of the 14 Ministers and, in addition, 31 other members of Parliament. I believe that Queensland has an additional member on that committee, Senator Georges, but, knowing the attitude of Senator Georges and Mr. Hayden to the people in the rural sector, I should imagine that Dr. Patterson has a heavy responsibility cast upon him.

In the light of the savage policies that have been thrust upon the rural sector in the 18 months or so that the Federal Labor Government has been in office, it would appear that, although Dr. Patterson may be sympathetic towards the rural sector, he does not exert very much influence in the committee of which he is a member. I am concerned for people in the rural sector, who, no doubt, will suffer in the forthcoming Federal Budget.

#### SOURCE OF BRISBANE'S FOOD SUPPLY

**Mr. K. J. HOOPER:** I ask the Premier: Has his attention been drawn to the leader article in the "Telegraph" of Thursday, 15 August, wherein it was stated that three-quarters of Brisbane's food supply comes from the South by road? Further, if it is a fact that Queensland farmers can supply only one-quarter of Brisbane's food needs, would he not agree that this is a shocking indictment of the Country Party, which is allegedly the farmers' party and, because of the weakness of the Liberal Party, has dominated this coalition Government for 17 years?

**A Government Member:** What a donkey!

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The interjector called the honourable member a donkey. I do not agree with that. I do not know which paper the questioner quoted. We all know that around Brisbane and throughout the State are various areas known as food bowls which have contributed in a wonderful way to the well-being of the people by providing produce at very fair and reasonable prices. For time to time—perhaps through drought or flood—these areas are unable to produce to their fullest capacity. I have the highest regard for these producers and I know that they are held in very high regard by most people. The adverse effect referred to by the honourable member has nothing to do with the State Government as such. It stems completely and utterly from the Federal Government and its economic policy.

That Government dealt devastating blows at every section of the community and none more so than that at primary industries. Even honourable members opposite have gone out of their way—superficially by talk but not by actions—to try to correct the position because they know the contempt in which the State and Commonwealth Labor Parties are held by the primary producers of this State and nation. There is no questioning

that rural industries have been placed in a perilous position. A disastrous future faces people engaged in them because of the overall attitude and policy of the Labor Government in Canberra.

#### FIRE HAZARD IN RURAL AREAS

**Mr. HARTWIG:** I ask the Minister for Lands and Forestry: As a large area of rural Queensland contains many properties with heavy cattle numbers and extensive dry grass, virtually constituting a powder keg, has his attention been drawn to reports received in many districts of fires being started illegally and causing much concern and trouble to landowners? In view of the serious fire danger to human life and livestock, will he consider implementing legislation providing much harsher penalties than at present to act as a deterrent to people deliberately starting fires?

**Mr. RAE:** I am well aware that we are facing a severe fire hazard this year—one of the worst in history—as a result of the tremendous rains. We have already increased penalties to be imposed on anybody caught wilfully setting fire to grasslands or areas that could lead to the loss of human life. We are very concerned. My committee has held meetings as far north as Cairns and it has been to Roma and other parts of the State. All members of the Rural Fires Board are aware of the seriousness of the situation. We are all hoping—and it can only be a hope in the long term because if fires get away the result will be catastrophic—that we will be able to effect control in the most practical way.

#### FINANCING OF CIVIC FACILITIES, PALM ISLAND

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: As the Townsville City Council will not be able to levy rates and/or charges on Palm Island properties owned by the Crown, where will the council obtain the large amount of money needed annually for the provision of water, sewerage, roads, health, libraries and other civic facilities, for which it will be required to accept full responsibility?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The Townsville City Council has raised no objection to the incorporation of Palm Island within that city's boundaries. The whole of Palm Island is an Aboriginal reserve under the control of my colleague the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs. Sewerage and water are being installed on Palm Island through grants managed by the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs. The conditions applicable to an Aboriginal reserve will continue to apply on Palm Island when it is incorporated within the City of Townsville. It is assumed that most of the expenses attached to the running of Palm Island will still be borne, as they are at present, by the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

At 12 noon,

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

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

##### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 8 August (see p. 171) on Mr. Lane's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

**Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK** (Lockyer—Treasurer) (12.01 p.m.): Mr. Speaker,—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable the Treasurer.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I rise to a point of order. I point out that on the last sitting day the final speaker in the Address-in-Reply debate was the honourable member for Murrumba, a Government member, who began his speech at 4.50 p.m. It is normally accepted parliamentary practice and procedure in a debate such as the Address in Reply to have a Government speaker followed by an Opposition speaker and to distribute the time equitably. You have now called the Treasurer. We do not deny him the right to speak, but we ask for the courtesy of having the first speaker today.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! It has been the custom over the years when a Minister rises to speak to give him the call. When the Treasurer resumes his seat, I propose to call two Opposition members. I think that is fair enough.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I do not remember such a procedure ever being followed. I accept the courtesy extended in what you have said, Mr. Speaker, but I still believe it is very wrong for a Minister to usurp the position of an Opposition speaker.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! It is true that there is what we call a speakers list. So far as I am concerned, that can be torn up right now.

**Mr. Tucker:** It has been.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** It has not. I am extending to the Treasurer the privilege of speaking first, and I shall then give two Opposition members the opportunity to follow him.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There is no further point of order.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the honourable member for South Brisbane under Standing Order 123A. That might keep him quiet.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I rise to a point of order. I should like to know why it becomes necessary for a Cabinet Minister to usurp the right of an Opposition member to speak, following which it becomes necessary for you, Mr. Speaker, to rule that two Opposition members must speak. In ordinary circumstances—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. This situation has arisen before while I have been in Parliament. However, if the honourable member objects to two Opposition speakers—

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I do object, and I object to the Treasurer's taking my position.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will not interject whilst I am on my feet; otherwise I shall deal with him under Standing Order 123A. There will be no "beg pardons" about it. If the honourable member objects to the calling of two Opposition members in succession, I shall delete one from the list.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I rise to a further point of order. Do I take it that by that statement you are threatening us?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The honourable member will please resume his seat.

**Mr. TUCKER:** Are you threatening the Opposition?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I now warn the honourable member under Standing Order 123A. Standing Orders provide that any member speaking or about to speak shall immediately resume his seat when Mr. Speaker or the Chairman rises to speak, and he shall be heard without interruption. I think we have heard enough of this matter. The Opposition will not be denied a speaker.

**Mr. TUCKER:** I have asked you, Mr. Speaker, for a ruling. You said that you would deny us the right to two speakers. I want to know what you meant by that.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! If the honourable member had been listening, which obviously he was not, he would know that I said that if the honourable member for Salisbury did not want two Opposition speakers to be called, well and good.

**Mr. Sherrington:** At no time did I say that.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I now warn the honourable member under Standing Order 123A. If he says another word out of place, out he will go.

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** I have been in this Chamber for 27 years—

**Opposition Members:** Too long!

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** I sat in Opposition for 10 years. It has always been the prerogative of the Government to put up a Minister, if it so desires, as the first speaker on a particular day. I was in the Chamber at the end of the last sitting day and I moved the adjournment of the House.

**Mr. Marginson:** That's not true.

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** It is true.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** The honourable member for Wolston knows very well that the honourable member for Salisbury was on the list to speak, but he was not called that afternoon. I entered the Chamber, and, being in charge of the House, moved the adjournment. Consequently this morning I indicated to the Whip that as a Minister I desired to reply to certain issues and I asked that I be given the opportunity to speak first.

During the period I have been a Minister of the Crown I have always regarded the Address-in-Reply debate as more or less an opportunity for rank and file members to speak on matters affecting their own electorates. "Hansard" will indicate that very rarely have I taken advantage of the time available to me during the Address in Reply. On this occasion, however, I feel that there is a responsibility on me to enter the debate.

I had expected that the new Leader of the Opposition, fired with enthusiasm and desperately looking for the niche that he knows that he must carve for himself if he wants to remain as Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party, in his first Address-in-Reply speech as Opposition Leader would have addressed himself to the many crucial issues that face this country today. In ignoring them, he indicated his lack of knowledge, just as he did again this morning in raising objections that one would not expect from the Leader of the Opposition.

In his new role he should surely have devoted himself to the issues of inflation, the rapidly rising wages and prices that are throttling this country, the unprecedented industrial strife that is holding the people of this country to ransom, and the whole climate in which we live today and which is changing so rapidly—apparently without course or direction. We are being asked to accept different values and we have been presented with a whole array of overseas friends and those whom we had previously accepted as being friends for life must now be regarded as something less.

These are the things that I should have thought the Leader of the Opposition would have dealt with. All are crucial matters that affect our lives and our future as Australians and Queenslanders. Instead of covering these points, he chose the Jack Munday line and blamed the State Government for everything. He listed 11 points of dissatisfaction, and then immediately launched into a tirade of abuse,

charges and convictions against the State Government Insurance Office, all based on ill-founded conclusions, half-truths and incomplete facts. That is my reason for entering the debate.

I am not only surprised but also somewhat concerned at the type of venom the honourable gentleman has shown towards that organisation. I am concerned at the effect that such an attack can have on the S.G.I.O. as a business undertaking. I am also concerned at the effect that such an attack could have on the morale of the many dedicated members of the S.G.I.O. staff throughout Queensland. The S.G.I.O. is a strong and successful Government enterprise, holding its own in the very competitive world of insurance and providing a very worth-while service to the people of Queensland. It is not a National Party, Liberal Party or Australian Labor Party office; it is the insurance office for all Queenslanders, and it should not be unfairly and incorrectly attacked in a cheap attempt to make it a political football.

Such irrational and irresponsible attacks by the Leader of the Opposition are perhaps the only way the S.G.I.O. could have its otherwise most promising future in the service of the people of Queensland spoilt. It is only through a lack of confidence engendered by a spiteful, politically bankrupt Labor leader in the community that its foundation can be shaken and it can be prevented from achieving for the people of Queensland the rewards and benefits that should flow to them through its strength, its expertise and its achievements.

This Government has always regarded the S.G.I.O. as a non-political service department established and functioning for the benefit of the people of Queensland. We do not use it to promote any political ideology that the Opposition Leader has clearly indicated would be the case if the Labor Party gained the Treasury benches and followed the examples of his economy-wrecking Commonwealth cousins.

As Ministerial head of the S.G.I.O., I do require that it carry out its functions in a business-like way. I would not—as the Leader of the Opposition suggests—expect it to extend flood cover to properties such as those continually being flooded in Northey Street where a substantial and almost annual loss on the business would be certain. This sort of irresponsible activity by the Leader of the Opposition would only be to the detriment of all policyholders, whose premiums would have to be increased to cover the Labor Party leader's whims. The S.G.I.O. must work for the benefit and in the best interest of all its Queensland policyholders and it must invest such policyholders' funds, which it holds in trust, primarily for the advancement of Queensland and, in the long run, for the benefit of such policyholders.

The Government appointed an expert board to carry out such investment requirements and it is this board and the management and

staff of the S.G.I.O. itself that is now under attack from this fledgling, irresponsible Leader of the Opposition. The board consists of Mr. Eric Riding, its chairman, a man whose skill in investment and financial management is well known throughout not only the Queensland community but world financial circles (I know that from time to time he has had some staff problems, but even his bitterest enemy would not deny his outstanding ability in dealing with matters of finance); Mr. Col Douglas, the General Manager, who has many years of wide Public Service experience and proven skills in administration; Mr. Leo Hielscher, my Deputy Under Treasurer, whom I believe every member of this House recognises as one of the most capable public servants in Queensland; Mr. Henry Lalor, a businessman and leading solicitor in the city and an experienced company director; and Mr. Ray Hartland, a leader in the accounting field in Brisbane and director of merit on similar boards in Queensland. Rather than being unsuccessful and derelict in their duties, as the Leader of the Opposition would have us believe, they have been singularly successful in achieving the objective of making the S.G.I.O. the people's company.

The office is the largest insurer in the State. The business it writes each year would be very close to a third of the total insurance business written by all companies throughout Queensland, and such success, of course, gives the lie to the Leader of the Opposition's charge that its premiums are too high, and that the investments are wrong and unprofitable. I am sure that the people of Queensland have confidence in their office and are astute enough to realise the financial benefit the office provides to their advantage. Because of this I know they will despise and cast aside this new-born knocker—the Leader of the Opposition—in his attempts to mislead them.

What then is the S.G.I.O. picture today? I believe it must be set out.

**Mr. Tucker:** Give us facts.

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** I will certainly give the facts. The Leader of the Opposition has based his accusations on lies. If he listens he will learn the facts.

We see in the S.G.I.O. a vibrant business undertaking providing a worth-while insurance service to all Queenslanders. We have an insurance office that enjoys the confidence of its policyholders, as evidenced by the extent of the business it writes. It provides an insurance service at premiums generally speaking below those of its competitors. Its life premiums and benefits are obviously sufficiently competitive to attract a large share of business to it.

Its general insurance, fire, storm and tempest and householders' policies provide protection to the average Queenslanders at a rate cheaper than other comparable cover

available. It returns a profit bonus to the household insurer to the extent of 37½ per cent of the gross premium, and has done so for years. The underwriting account for the household insurance for the average Queenslander is supplemented by profits from skilful reinsurance business entered into around the world. To illustrate this point—the fire account showed an underwriting profit last year of \$3,400,000, but the office was able to allow a profit distribution to these policyholders in the form of 37½ per cent reduction on premium to the extent of \$3,900,000—the difference being provided largely from the profit from overseas and interstate reinsurance business.

Its comprehensive motor vehicle premiums, which the Leader of the Opposition has singled out for attack, have for years been very much below the maximum authorised by the Insurance Commissioner for the whole industry. As a matter of fact, even today the comprehensive motor vehicle premiums are 20 per cent below that which the Insurance Commissioner sees as the maximum that should be charged in the industry. In addition, a rebate or no-claim bonus for careful drivers of up to 70 per cent—the highest in the industry—applies to all comprehensive motor vehicle insurance policies.

The investment policy of the board is directed virtually to the exclusive benefit of Queensland and Queenslanders. Evidence is everywhere around us in this State of its efforts to build a better and more modern Queensland, and despite the charges laid against it by the Leader of the Opposition it has been singularly successful in this regard.

In addition to the satisfactory insurance cover it provides for the Queensland policyholders and the investment of its funds in Queensland's development, the S.G.I.O. contributes to the revenues of the State quite sizeable payments in lieu of income tax, stamp duty and pay-roll tax. The Leader of the Opposition, of course, sees something sinister and distasteful in this fact of S.G.I.O. life.

The contribution by the S.G.I.O. to the State's Consolidated Revenue Fund in 1972-73 was about \$4,400,000 and this, of course, helped to provide for all Queenslanders the funds for the State's services in the form of teachers, nurses, police and so forth. These payments also must be seen as no more or less than the taxes and charges that would be paid by any institution providing the same service to the community as does the S.G.I.O. No doubt the Leader of the Opposition would rather see the S.G.I.O. taxed by the Commonwealth Government so that such funds would flow into the coffers of his beloved Federal counterpart and his socialistic friends at Canberra. The money is being used in this State, and we will not let it go to Canberra so that

some of it might be handed back to us at the whim of the present Federal Government.

The income tax payment is levied by the State Treasury using the same terms and conditions as would be applied to a competitor taxed under the Commonwealth Tax Act. This ensures that the S.G.I.O. is as far as possible placed on the same competitive footing as the other insurance companies. When this fact is noted by all unbiased observers, the success of the office is seen to be even more noteworthy.

The S.G.I.O. is in a very competitive field. It is not given any untoward advantage over its competitors. It pays its taxes and charges as any of its competitors would. It is successful in that it holds a significant proportion of the business in Queensland. It invests its funds primarily in Queensland and provides an insurance service cheaper than most if not all of its competitors. That is the real picture of the S.G.I.O. and it is nothing like the one the Leader of the Opposition attempted to paint in a garbled lot of guff coloured by partisan party politics and misconceptions arrived at by wrong interpretations of part of the figures that make up the S.G.I.O. report.

I have already corrected mis-statements made by the honourable gentleman in that direction. I have endeavoured to be as gentle as possible, remembering that he is new to leadership, and that many honourable members sitting behind him doubt his ability to lead and could easily do to him what he so coldly did to his predecessor. As a matter of fact, in my Press statement I let him down very lightly. I made a simple Press statement to correct the figures that he was using; but he still uses them because, incorrect as they are, they apparently suit his political purpose. I ask him in all sincerity, for the sake of the future of the S.G.I.O. and the future of Queensland to desist from attempting to make the office a political football.

As long as any information he seeks is not otherwise available to him in tabled documents, I will continue to give him whatever he asks for at any time, except information which I regard as confidential between lender and client, or insurer and client, or which might be used to the disadvantage of the office in its competitive position in the industry.

I might add that most, if not all of the information that I will now be using to refute his claims and correct his mis-statements is available in tabled documents. The Auditor-General's report to Parliament outlines in detail the results of the operations of each department of the office. In so far as the investment position of the office is concerned, and to assist honourable members in the appreciation of the points I will be making, I now table a statement of the investments of the S.G.I.O. as at 30 June 1973, showing under broad headings just

where the funds of the office are invested and in what form of security the reserve funds of the Workers' Compensation and General Funds are held and where the life premiums are invested.

(Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.)

This table simply details further information which is available to the honourable gentleman if he cares to research the table in the Auditor-General's report. It shows that the total investments at June 1973 were \$265,000,000. Of this sum \$103,000,000 is invested in Commonwealth securities or in loans to Queensland semi-governmental authorities. The sum on loan to Queensland local authorities was \$88,000,000—over 33½ per cent of the total and the largest single investment category of the office. That is money invested in local government for the betterment of Queensland.

Then follows the investment in land and buildings of \$77,000,000, which category is the backbone of the investment portfolios of most insurance companies around the world. It can be seen also that most of this investment in land and buildings is held in the Life Fund. The Life Fund, where the policyholder insures his life by weekly, monthly or annual contributions, must be invested in such a way that it accrues to the final benefit that the insurer ultimately expects.

We then run down to the \$29,500,000 invested in stocks and shares, \$25,000,000 of which is held by the Life Fund. Apparently this is the investment that causes most upset to the Leader of the Opposition. To him, the words, "stocks" and "shares" are nearly as dirty as the words "multi-national", but he will see that the item represents only a prudent 11 per cent of the total investment portfolio. Loans to policyholders, housing and industry in Queensland amount to almost \$33,000,000, or about 13 per cent of the total portfolio.

Let me now look at some of the specific charges levelled at the investment policy.

The criticism was that the total investment return is only 6.8 per cent to 7 per cent. This was the investment return on the life fund only, but it is a fair enough example to take for a talking point. I don't know whether the Leader of the Opposition expects that the investment portfolio of the office would be capable of earning in full the current fantastic interest rates that have been foisted upon the community by his Labor Government in Canberra. The position is, of course, that interest rates of that order can be earned only on the uninvested liquid funds that are available from time to time. The S.G.I.O. investment programme is a long-term one. Funds have been invested at the best rates possible—the best investments possible at the time that the moneys were available to the office for investment. I mention in particular the \$88,400,000 invested in local government in Queensland semi-governmental securities at 30 June 1973,

which was all invested at rates from 3.5 per cent to 7.4 per cent. Does the honourable gentleman want me to raise the rate of interest to local governments? Approximately 78 per cent of this investment is "locked in" at rates below 6 per cent. This is a fixed-interest investment and there is no way to quit unless a substantial capital loss is taken. This is why, of course, we must spread investments so that some portion of investment income will escalate with moving interest rates and cost inflation.

The small reduction in the investment return for the year ended 30 June 1973—from 7.01 per cent to 6.82 per cent—occurred because of the lower yield obtained from new property developments which were awaiting letting. It is quite obvious that higher rates of return on property investments will benefit the life policyholders in the long term. The life funds build the buildings around the city and country; the life funds are invested in stocks and shares and primarily in loans to policyholders, housing and industry, and these funds must be invested in the best way possible to provide the best return to the policyholder at date of death or earlier maturity.

The funds of the other sections of the office—the General Insurance and the Workers' Compensation—that are invested are simply prudent provision for claims still to be lodged or settled or reserves tucked aside for catastrophic happenings that could occur. These provisions are expertly assessed and I am satisfied that they are reasonable—neither too high nor dangerously low.

Furthermore, the S.G.I.O. has no wicked shareholders taking capital profit dividends from it. Except for just dues and taxes, the Government takes no profit. All the profit of the office returns to the policyholder or is held in prudent reserves, yet it is condemned by the Leader of the Opposition as being something sinister!

Serious charges were laid against the office for letting premises to Mount Isa Mines Ltd., the Main Roads Department and Comalco at concessional rentals. It was stated that Mount Isa Mines was paying only 7 per cent for its accommodation in M.I.M. House. I will continue to maintain a policy of not breaching the confidentiality of negotiations between the S.G.I.O. and its clients. Any thought that such arrangements could be disclosed and bandied around for political gain would have an extremely detrimental effect on the S.G.I.O. However, I feel I can put these charges where they belong and still preserve the confidence of the office.

The facts of the matter are of course that Mount Isa Mines is simply the major tenant in the building and because of this the one concession it did get was the right of naming the building. It is of course paying the commercial rate of rental for that portion of the building it has let. The initial return on this building on full letting is expected to be in excess of 10 per cent, and of course the

return will continue to rise with cost inflation and increases in property values—so again the Leader of the Opposition is proved to be inaccurate.

The Main Roads Department was quoted as paying out 6 per cent to the S.G.I.O. policyholders for their investment in its building. The facts are that the rental is tied to the bond rate of interest, and the present level is 11 per cent. This again proves the inaccuracy of the statements of the Leader of the Opposition. Are we to tolerate this type of castigation of an efficient office by a man who shows he is irresponsible and lacks knowledge of the facts?

As to the housing of Comalco in the new George and Ann Street building, the position is that Comalco has indicated that it will take a substantial block-booking of the new building and has been granted naming rights. It will be paying current market rentals for the floors it takes. So again the charges made by the Leader of the Opposition are completely off beam.

The next charge he levelled was that \$29,000,000 was tied up in stocks and shares and he said that these should be disposed of and the moneys invested in local authorities and industry in Queensland. I have already referred to the fact that the proportion of the total investment represented by stocks and shares is about 11 per cent. Any prudent investor must have a spread of investments in his portfolio, with at least this percentage invested in stocks and shares. The share-investment exercise has proved profitable. The annual average performance of the share portfolio for the eight years to 30 June 1973, including capital gains and income, was also in excess of 10 per cent.

In this over-all profitable position, there would of course be some share investments that would not have been as successful. Even a five-year-old child could tell me in hindsight that perhaps this should not have been done and that we should have taken out some alternative stocks. Anyone—even the Leader of the Opposition—could tell me today what horses I should have backed last Saturday. That is hindsight, and that is exactly what we are getting in this Chamber from the Leader of the Opposition. This again demonstrates the lack of common sense applied by him to his new responsibilities. It is an indication that he is not capable of summing up a position, so heaven only knows how he is capable of leading an Opposition.

What he is really saying now, however, is that we should sell all of these shares and invest the proceeds in new semi-governmental loans in Queensland. Besides disturbing the whole portfolio of the S.G.I.O., he would recommend that we sell all of these shares at probably the lowest point in the market cycle. What sort of financial genius is this honourable gentleman who

has claimed that, when he becomes Premier, he will also take control of the Treasury? What sort of business acumen has this gentleman who aspires to these high offices?

If he had any sort of confidence in Australia, he would say that we should be buying and not selling stocks. The only reason why we would not have confidence in Australia's economic future is that his colleagues in Canberra have shockingly mis-managed the Australian economy. No wonder the finely tuned national economy has been so successfully fouled up in just 18 months, when this type of Labor thinking, as demonstrated by the Leader of the Opposition, has been directing our economy. Let me assure him that, whilst I am Treasurer and in charge of the S.G.I.O. portfolio, the finely tuned investment policy of that office will not be fouled up by any politically woolly thinking such as that recommended by the honourable gentleman himself.

I have pointed out that over 33 per cent of the total investment of the S.G.I.O. is presently in the area of local authorities, and, as to further investment in that field, I suppose he appreciates that local government borrowing capacity is limited by allocations from the Australian Loan Council, and that we simply cannot just borrow money or lend money to those authorities unless they have been authorised by the Loan Council to borrow the total sum. The Leader of the Opposition apparently does not know that the approved programme has been fully raised by our local authorities in every year since this Government came to office.

How little does this new alleged saviour of the Labor Party in Queensland know? It would make absolutely no difference to local government programmes if the holdings of stocks and shares were sold and the proceeds offered to local governments. In 1973-74, the local government programme was filled very early in the year, and various loan offers made by the S.G.I.O. could not be accepted as ample funds had already been made available from other sources. As to our local government borrowing programmes, I want to stress to the Leader of the Opposition that these have been pegged back in Loan Council this year by his own colleague, the Prime Minister, the man who sets himself up as the self-styled champion of local government. We heard all about it during the May election.

But what is the position with local government today? It was the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer who would not yield to sustained pressure from the State Premiers of all political parties to lift the local government programmes so that they would at least be able to maintain their works and services at the levels of the previous year. It was the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer who held the loan programmes for local governments in 1974-75 to a 10 per cent increase over the previous year in the face of facts and arguments

indicating that, with costs increasing by 15 per cent per annum, this would mean less work by the authorities.

The next charge on the investment policy was that insufficient was being invested in housing by the S.G.I.O. According to the report of the Registrar of Co-operative Housing Societies for 1973 tabled in this House, there were 372 Government-guaranteed terminating co-operative housing societies in operation in Queensland at that date. Of this number, 114, or 30 per cent, had been financed by S.G.I.O., which at that time had funds of \$12,500,000 invested in the co-operative housing movement. During 1973-74, the office invested approximately \$1,250,000 in housing.

The next charge or inference was that the office had a 30 per cent interest in Permanent Finance Corporation Limited. Undoubtedly and unashamedly, the office has a 30 per cent holding in this company. Permanent Finance Corporation is the only Queensland-based public finance company operating in this State, and over 90 per cent of its total loans has been advanced to Queensland residents. The fact that the S.G.I.O. has an investment in P.F.C. is public knowledge, and it is announced regularly in the company's prospectus and annual reports. Apparently the Leader of the Opposition wants to kill this only Queensland-based public finance company.

Moving on then to refute his allegations of the profitability of general insurance, and specifically of motor vehicle insurance, I had to go to Press recently with a mild rebuttal. However, I let him down lightly by saying that he was mistakenly using gross premiums and paid claims figures to arrive at his assumptions of massive profits in this area of insurance.

As to compulsory third-party insurance, the Insurance Commissioner advises that, after taking all claims to account, the industry for Queensland for 1973 had a claims-to-premiums ratio of 96 per cent. The 1974 position, with premiums unchanged for most of the year and with runaway inflation affecting claims, will be even worse.

The Leader of the Opposition continues to make the simple mistake of using only gross premiums and paid claims—or is it a mistake? This entire part of his attack was again based on the fake premise of gross premiums and gross claims. If he continues mistakenly to avoid the full facts after being shown his error, I pity him. If he avoids the full facts not mistakenly but deliberately, then I say his attempt to present a lie to the people of Queensland is completely irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, I regret, as I said earlier, that it has been necessary to take up the time of the House on what would not have been necessary except for the incompetency of the Leader of the Opposition, and the inaccuracy of statements made by him in his Address-in-Reply speech.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (12.39 p.m.): After listening to the Treasurer, I see no valid reason why he should have usurped the time allotted to me this morning to make my final contribution in an Address-in-Reply debate. It is not my final speech in this House; it is merely my final Address-in-Reply speech.

In typical Government fashion, the Treasurer has entertained the House with an exhibition of the hysterical hand-wringing that has characterised the Government over the years. In his reply to the Leader of the Opposition he completely distorted the intentions and statements of that honourable gentleman, who at no time questioned the veracity or the capabilities of the officers of the State Government Insurance Office. What he did say by way of criticism was that it must be somewhat of a disappointment to the capable officers of the State Government Insurance Office to have to implement Government policy dictated by the Treasurer. However, the Leader of the Opposition is big enough and forceful enough not to need the member for Salisbury to defend him in these matters. In the fullness of time no doubt he will make not an hysterical, hand-wringing speech, as the Treasurer did, but a reasoned statement of facts to back up what he has already started.

As I indicated, this will be my last opportunity to speak in an Address-in-Reply debate in this Parliament. Naturally, I wish to place on record my appreciation of what I regard as the greatest privilege society has extended to me, namely, making me one of its voices in the highest forum in the State.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** I have not heard your message of loyalty to the Crown.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** If the honourable member will wait for a few minutes I will give him an opportunity to make an intelligent interjection.

I should like to think that I have discharged my trust in an efficient and capable manner, and to the best of my ability. I came into this Parliament believing that a member has a deep and lasting responsibility to give of his utmost according to his talents and endeavour to bring about improvements in society, and that he is singularly honoured by enjoying the confidence of sufficient people to elect him for that purpose. I leave this Parliament more than ever convinced of this, but more than ever frustrated because I see so much still to be done for society and so very little being achieved by this Government. I am fully convinced that so little is being achieved and so few worth-while contributions are being made to the advancement of society simply because of the very manner in which this Parliament is deteriorating in its function.

In the 15 years I have been in this Parliament I have seen its functions slowly but surely being prostituted, purely for political

ends. This is due in no small measure to the attitude of the Premier and his parliamentary colleagues. The way the Parliament of this State operates today must be one of the great anachronisms of modern times. On the one hand we have the Premier and his colleagues zealously defending State sovereignty and State rights and vehemently demanding that this Parliament be maintained to act on behalf of the people of the State; on the other hand, we have the Government wasting its time, talent and energy in a futile exercise of political guerilla warfare against the Australian Government, when it should be bending its energies to solving the domestic problems within the State.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Which your crowd created.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** That typical interjection of the honourable member for Windsor makes it obvious why I find it necessary to deliver this type of speech. Now, 17 years after election to government, honourable members opposite are saying, "We can't cure the problems that your mob"—to quote the honourable member's word—"created." The honourable member wanted Labor Governments of the past to provide schools for children who were not even born in those days. I suggest that after 17 years of this Government, if one believed its political propaganda, we would have more schools than children. However, I do not intend to be distracted from the tenor of what I wish to say by such an insignificant person as the honourable member for Windsor.

I have watched the Premier of this State with some amusement—his antics, his attitudes and his gyrations calculated to divert public attention from his own inefficiencies. I believe that all the ballyhoo of a crusading spirit affected by the Premier as the great defender of sovereign rights is nothing more than a political facade.

**Mr. Marginson:** A fraud!

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Yes. I was being charitable; it has always been my nature to be charitable. I repeat: it is only a political facade. Frankly, I believe you welcomed the return of the Australian Labor Government in Canberra because it gives you something to snipe at. You must surely go down in history as the jet-setting Don Quixote—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I am only too happy to address you, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that you are possibly the only illustrious person in this Chamber from the Government side.

The Premier must surely go down as the jet-setting Don Quixote of the banana republic; that is what this State is regarded

as in every other State in the Commonwealth. I believe that the Premier endeavours to distract attention from his own inefficiencies and the lack of performance of his Government by appearing to show concern for the people of this State. I suggest that had the Premier felt real concern for the people of the State he would have been more tolerant of trade unions, for instance, and would have received their leaders and sought their co-operation. Instead he has antagonised them and not once during his entire time as Premier of the State has he received a deputation from a trade union. He will interview anybody who wants to invest money or to mulct the people of their money, but he cannot see his way clear to interview a trade union.

**Mr. Lee:** The Minister for Industrial Development has even been up to the Trades Hall!

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I am not worried about the little chihuahua barking at my heels.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** A chihuahua would eat you.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! That applies to the honourable member for Windsor as well.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I could be tempted to say that one of them obviously gnawed at the honourable member's head.

Quite frankly, with the talents I possess and if the position were not so serious, I believe I could have outdone Gilbert and Sullivan and written a brilliant comedy about the daredevil baron who, with little thought of personal risk, repeatedly flew his unarmed Navajo bomber deep into enemy territory in Canberra dropping propaganda leaflets on the population warning them to beware of the unpatriotic government that dared to adopt the name of "Australian Government".

**Mr. Campbell:** It is unconstitutional.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Now we hear from the constitutional lawyer. If the Government depends on the Minister for Industrial Development to interpret the Commonwealth Constitution, no wonder it wishes to preserve the right of appeal to the Privy Council.

To get back to the Premier—the public should be made aware of the truth. One could be pardoned for thinking that every word spoken by the Premier emanated from his own ability, whereas the thoughts that he expresses are due largely to the efforts of his personal Press secretary.

To illustrate my point, the Premier attempted to mislead the people by having them believe that it was he who thought of introducing legislation to circumvent the election of a senator, whereas in fact he did not wake up to this possibility until he had

received a telephone call from Senator Wood. The Premier was not ashamed to bask in the glory of suddenly becoming a great constitutional authority who could thwart the effort of the Australian Government. But this is not the time for comedy, nor is it the time to remain silent while the Premier blithely attempts to draw the heat off his own failings.

The Premier is not above stretching the truth a little in propaganda, either. In recent times his favourite tactic has been to claim that, because the Australian Government has withheld funds, the plans of the Queensland Government are being impeded. It is interesting to read his policy speech and contrast it with the facts.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Where did you get that rubbish?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** At least I write my own speeches, and possibly this is the only time in my political career that I have stuck religiously to a prepared speech. But at least I do not line up at the Liberal Party's headquarters every morning to receive a hand-out, nor do I rise in this Chamber during question time with a so-called question without notice typed out for me on a little piece of paper. Government members, however, make a practice of that so that Ministers can suddenly jump up, delve into their pockets, and say, "By a strange coincidence I just happen to have the answer in my pocket."

**Mr. Hinze:** The Minister gives it to him.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Of course he does! In public the Ministers pose as being able to answer questions without notice. At question time the Government perpetrates a fraud on the people and also wastes the time of the Parliament.

In what the Premier must regard as a heaven-sent opportunity to excuse his own failings, he has blamed the Australian Government for the current economic situation and claimed that it has delayed its pre-school programme.

**Mr. Hinze:** It hasn't got a programme.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Wait a moment; don't jump the gun. I will give the honourable member something to chew on in a moment.

In the Premier's 1972 policy speech he promised pre-school education for all pre-school children in this State. I do not intend to weary the House with the words that his Press secretary wrote for him then; I will content myself with reminding honourable members that the Premier promised that education facilities would be made available to all pre-school children in Queensland. Isn't it rather strange that this promise was made before the Labor Government came into office?

**Mr. Lee:** We've got one at Moorooka!

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Of course you have! I have always said that the Government has planned its education programme on the political wants of its members and not on the needs of the community. Thousands of dollars were spent in the Yeronga electorate to make sure that Clem Jones was kept out. The Government established a technical college in the Yeronga electorate despite the fact that the greatest aggregation of industry lies in the Salisbury and Inala areas. A technical college was established at Yeronga before one was provided in a Labor electorate.

As I said, the Premier promised the facilities before the Federal Labor Government was elected. We are all aware that as soon as the Queensland Country-Liberal Party took office it sank into an educational morass and did not know the way out. It is obvious that its election promises were a political gimmick designed to trap votes and that the Government after the election had neither the plans nor the funds to finance its promises. It made no representations to the McMahon Government for funds, or if it did so they were turned down. Only too eagerly the Premier and his Government colleagues seized on the announcement that the Australian Government was prepared to divert millions of dollars into pre-school education, and the Premier now has the audacity to say that, because the Australian Government's scheme has been shelved, it is responsible for his inability to carry out his election promises. I tell the people of Queensland that is downright fraud perpetrated on the electors of Queensland. The Government had no hope of keeping its promise because it has not planned, investigated or sought means of financing the promise until Labor came to office.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** The Australian Labor Government will go down in history for its efforts in education and health policies.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I agree.

It is obvious that the Premier never hesitates to bend the truth a little if it suits his political purposes to do so. I am concerned about the parents of pre-school children who come to me and ask, "When are we getting pre-school facilities in our electorate?" I want them to know of the hoax that was perpetrated on them by this Government.

From the policy speech of this Government—the first edition by the Premier and the second by his faithful deputy—it seems that it is the last of the big spenders. The Deputy Premier said, "We are going to spend \$100 million on health services . . ." but sotto voce he added, ". . . over the next 10 years." What a big deal! I am sure that if I read the policy speech I would find that "over the next 10 years" in fine print. That is typical of the Government's attitude.

I regret that the Minister for Transport is not in the Chamber. One thing is certain—Ministers make sure that they are absent when I want to tear a strip off them. In a recent statement the Minister for Transport said that Queensland would go it alone with the rail link over the Brisbane River. In a rather dramatic fashion—that is, if it is possible for him to be dramatic—he said, “We are doing this because we cannot wait any longer for the Commonwealth to provide funds.” However, a check of the Government’s policy speech reveals again a very strange circumstance. Before the Government delivered its policy speech, it was drawing up plans for the cross-river link. I say again to the people of Queensland that that action is typical of this misleading Government. It was drawing plans, but had it made any attempt to obtain finance? Did the McMahon Government promise funds to Queensland for this development?

Later I will show you, Mr. Speaker, and honourable members that not one penny of Commonwealth money has been spent on railway lines in Queensland during the term of office of successive Federal Liberal-Country Party Government. Even back in the days of the Mt. Isa railway rehabilitation the Queensland Government had to borrow money from companies investing in Queensland. Before the A.L.P. took office on Canberra, not one Commonwealth Government spent one penny on railway extensions in Queensland.

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

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Prior to the luncheon recess I was dealing with the half-truths that have been peddled by the Government on several items in its policy speech for which the Government now places the blame on the Australian Labor Government although the promises were made long before the advent of that Government. I dealt specifically with the fact that the Government now speaks of having to go it alone on the railway programme because it is sick and tired of our Australian Government not providing funds.

I shall take the Chamber back to 1959 and indicate a few of the headlines of the day when the State Government, under the leadership of Sir Francis Nicklin, tried desperately to interest the then Menzies Government in the need for a rehabilitation of the railway line to Mt. Isa to assist an Australian company.

**Mr. Lee:** You denigrate that company.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I have never denigrated the company. It was greatly assisted by a former Labor Government.

The great Sir Robert Menzies, if one might descend to the vernacular, gave this Government the big “A” when it made approaches to obtain finance for the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa line. The whole story

is contained in the headlines. We had the spectacle of the then Treasurer, Sir Thomas Hiley, running cap in hand to every country in the world in an attempt to borrow money for that work. It is all contained in the headlines I have here. Approaches were made to Germany and America—a performance paralleled only by the recent efforts of the Treasurer, who, having made the biggest blunder of all time by giving away Queensland’s assets for 5c a ton, ran cap in hand to all of those investors, saying, “Would you please up the ante, for the people of Queensland are sick and tired of selling their coal for the price of two jelly-beans? I am now prepared to offer you Americans the same coal for the price of a packet of Camels.”

That is the type of performance this Government has been notable for. The Government is now kidding itself by telling the Parliament and the people of Queensland that the reason for the Government’s failure is the withholding of funds by the Australian Labor Government. I repeat the statement I made before the luncheon recess: no Commonwealth Government has spent one penny on the extension of railways in Queensland. The improvements had to be financed with loans raised from companies that invested in our State. Is it any wonder they were able to wring the Government’s neck and take coal for 5c a ton?

It is no good the Government attempting to draw the heat off its own poor performance by blaming the Whitlam Government, when it is crystal clear that previous Liberal Governments were guilty to a greater extent than the Labor Government because they enjoyed an uninterrupted term of office of some 23 years. This Government now wants the Whitlam Government, after only 21 months in office, to correct the mistakes and lack of interest of 23 years of Federal coalition government. In addition, and partly as a result of the Premier’s sniping, about 50 per cent of the legislation that has been introduced by the Labor Government in Canberra has been rejected by a hostile Senate of the same political ilk as the present State Government. How convenient it is for the Premier and various Ministers to rant and rave against the Australian Government on these matters and use them as a cover for their own lack of performance. The Australian Government, hamstrung as it is by a hostile Senate, has shown more interest in Queensland in 21 months than previous Liberal-National Party Governments showed in 23 years of office.

What a tremendous asset it must be for the Premier to be able to go after Gough instead of explaining why his Government has failed to implement its policy of co-ordination of metropolitan transport under one regional authority. And I again notice the absence from the Chamber of the Minister for Transport. He must have sneaked in during the luncheon recess and read my speech notes.

The people were promised an efficient, co-ordinated, rationalised transport system. It would be no use the Government trying to tell people in peripheral areas what it intends to do about co-ordinating transport services when areas such as the one I represent and Coopers Plains have no bus service between Saturday lunch-time and Monday morning. The Government, having accepted the Wilbur Smith plan recommending the elimination of trams, now holds out on the Brisbane City Council in the provision of finance to enable it to obtain sufficient buses.

**Mr. Jensen:** We've got the trains.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** We have trains, but the service there has also been cut.

People in peripheral areas could well believe that they are living in a foreign country. They cannot get a "visa" to get out of their suburbs over the week-end. As I said, it is very convenient to excuse the non-fulfilment of these promises, such as the establishment of car-parking facilities at railway stations in an effort to co-ordinate transport, by blaming the Australian Government. Three years after the Queensland Government was elected on the promise that there would be electrification of the railway system, that scheme is still not properly off the ground.

There has been lack of performance in every ministerial portfolio. About four years ago I asked the Minister for Lands and Forestry, who sits there smiling blithely, to dedicate the Endeavour River region where Captain Cook landed as a historical area or national park. It has taken him longer to make up his mind than it took Captain Cook to go around the world in a sailing boat.

When I entered Parliament I imagined that this Assembly would be the drawing board on which to formulate plans for an improved society. However, it is degenerating into little better than a Chamber of hysterical, political hypochondriacs who meet at so-called appropriate intervals—whenever it suits the Government—when all of the Government members assemble with their "Dorothy Dix" questions, "Dorothy Dix" answers and "Dorothy Dix" statements by Ministers, which are all designed so that one or other of them spews out a cacophony of bucolic invective against the Australian Labor Party.

**Mr. Rae:** Would you like to repeat that?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Yes, and I can, without looking at my notes. I said that we meet for one purpose—so that Government members can air their "Dorothy Dix" questions, "Dorothy Dix" answers and "Dorothy Dix" statements which are designed so that they can spew out a cacophony of bucolic invective against the Australian Labor Party.

**Mr. Frawley:** Rubbish!

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** The people of Queensland are paying millions of dollars a year for this Parliament to operate in their interests.

**Mr. Frawley:** You'll be out of it shortly. What are you worrying about?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Perhaps I am going out, but I shall go out honourably.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! Will the honourable member please address the Chair. He may disregard interjections.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I do not see why I should ignore an illustrious person to deal with back-benchers opposite.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Nor do I.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I shall go out of this Parliament happy in the knowledge that I have never lost an election, and that at each I secured an improved majority. I certainly will not be knighted because I built flood-prone canal estates on the Gold Coast. I remember that the honourable member for Surfers Paradise went to the people with the slogan, "Think Big. Vote Small." The slogan caught on with the Government, and they now talk big and act small. If the honourable member for Gold Coast—

**Sir Bruce Small:** There is no such electorate.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Well, whatever he likes to call it. If Mr. Bruce Small—

**Sir Bruce Small:** Sir Bruce Small.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Although I do not like repeating what I have said, I say again that the granting of knighthoods in this Parliament is such a joke that it is no longer a case of going to Parliament; it is a case of going down to "Sirs".

I have never been able to see any value in knighthoods, and if anything was calculated to lower their dignity, if they ever had any, it was the creation of a knighthood for the establishment of flood-prone canal estates. If that justifies a knighthood, thank God my party does not believe in such a form of recognition.

It is a pity the honourable member for Burnett is not in the House, because I should like to see the day when the name "Sir" Claude Wharton is recorded in the annals of this Parliament. I suggest that you, Mr. Speaker, will never become "Sir" William Lonergan because of the history of your election to your office. But I do not want to be diverted because I want to expose to the people of Queensland the sheer hypocrisy and camouflage by means of which the Government has remained in office. It has been elected to office over the years

as a result of its ability to manipulate voting patterns through both preferential voting and gerrymandered electorates.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about the gerrymander that your crowd did?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** There is no second prize. I do not want to get my speech out of context. However, I am very familiar with what I have to say, and it must come as something of a shock to the people of this State to know that there are 12 members of this Parliament who enjoyed so little respect in their electorates that they actually trailed in the primary vote. But for the rotten system of preferential voting introduced by the Government in 1961, those members would have been history. Among them was the Minister for Health.

**Mr. Leese** interjected.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** You don't have to ask me; I know the figures. There are 22 members who are here under false pretences because they had to be elected on preferences.

**Mr. Frawley** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I would advise both the honourable member for Murrumbidgee and the honourable member for Pine Rivers to cease interjecting.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I appreciate your assistance, Mr. Speaker, but I assure you that I do not need the protection of the Chair.

Nineteen members of the Government were elected on preference votes. Of that 19, 12 of them enjoyed so little respect in their electorates that they trailed in the primary vote. That is the situation. If they had any decency they would resign.

**Mr. Porter** interjected.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I am not going to accept the honourable member's interjection, even though it might be made in his best Church of England Grammar School style.

All the ranting and raving of the Government and the propaganda that emanates from the pen of its Press officer—I do not want to name him; he is not a bad journalist—might make good material for a speech at the local ladies' sewing club or the Liberal ladies tea-party, but it is of scant comfort to the people who wait hopefully for the allocation of Queensland Housing Commission homes and would scarcely raise a cheer among them. It is of scant comfort to those who have been robbed of their possessions because of the lack of an adequate Police Force. The people in the peripheral areas of metropolitan Brisbane could scarcely raise a cheer for what has been done to solve their transport problems.

All the ranting and raving of the Premier would be little comfort to the sick and aged who wait at public hospitals for up to seven

hours for an interview and to receive medicine. It would be of no cheer to the people who have been robbed of their savings by land speculators. We hear about these poor speculators who can only afford \$700,000 for a stallion! Surely that sort of story would prove the great racket that has gone on in land sales in this State. The Government's propaganda is of no comfort to people who wait in dismal hospitals to have their appendix out as an encore.

Typically, the Queensland Government attempts to take the heat off itself by attacking another Government that inherited the mess that was left by a succession of inefficient Governments in Canberra. Anyone who wishes to plumb the depths of absurdity should come down to Parliament House any day of the week and hear so-called responsible Ministers of the Crown and members of the Government steadfastly refuse to refer to the democratically elected Government in Canberra as the "Australian Government". That Government was elected by the people and it made the decision to refer to itself as the "Australian Government", yet so-called mature Cabinet Ministers steadfastly refuse to refer to it by that title.

Take a look at the latest effort of the Premier. He wants to have a Queen of Queensland. Maybe he wants to elect the Minister for Lands and Forestry as the first Queen of Queensland. The point is that behind all this hysterical flag-waving and attempts to prove how patriotic it is by having a Queen of Queensland lies the fact that what the Government wants to preserve is the right of appeal to the Privy Council. It has so little confidence in our own Australian High Court that it wants to preserve appeals to a lot of old disoriented gentlemen in England.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. HANSON** (Port Curtis) (2.35 p.m.): It is quite a few years since I participated in an Address-in-Reply debate. This has been partly because of the many dedicated members on this side of the House who have been anxious to participate but principally because of the new members who came into this Parliament in 1972. Our lists of speakers have at all times been overflowing, in sharp contrast to the semi-apologists who now occupy the Government benches.

In making a speech in this debate it is traditional to begin by affirming loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and, of course, the opportunity has been taken by many members of the House to make such a reference in this debate. When a new Parliament assembles every member presents himself to the Commissioners who have been authorised to accept the oath and I might say that on the occasions on which I have taken it I have not taken it lightly. It is a very serious matter. I know that most members of Parliament do take it very seriously and members of the Opposition are unanimous in this respect.

The political garbage that has been inflicted upon the people of this State and the hoodwinking that has been indulged in by the Premier in his references to the Queen of Queensland are very abhorrent indeed. As a constitutional monarch in this wonderful democracy of ours, the Queen is entitled to all due respect and to the esteem of us all. As a citizen of the Queen I deplore the fact that her name has been used by the Premier for purposes of gross misrepresentation and in a political sense. I am not surprised at that; it is very typical of him. But after this Parliament has been in existence for well over 100 years, the fact that the name of the sovereign has been used politically in order to gain some miserable political advantage should stink in the nostrils of every one of her subjects. That is how I look upon the matter and I believe that many other people as well find the utterances of the Premier in this regard very distasteful.

I am very happy indeed that we have a man like Sir Colin Hannah, assisted by his most gracious lady, occupying the honourable position of Governor of this State. They are very fine people and excellent citizens.

**Mr. Frawley:** I am pleased to hear you say that. You are the first one on that side who has said it.

**Mr. HANSON:** I do not know whether the honourable member who interjected wants to dispense with the office. He is, on occasions, so very vocal in a Fascist fashion. Of course, Fascism does not come into the A.L.P., or, as far as I am concerned, into any constitutional democracy or monarchy.

On meeting the Governor on various occasions I have found him to be a very fine, decent man. He does the position credit and, of course, as one who occupied the important position of head of our Air Force he carried out his duties, as one would expect, in a very admirable way. His appointment as Governor of our State was, of course, a crowning glory for him. I have great respect for both him and Lady Hannah and I hope that, during their term of office, more Queenslanders will meet and appreciate them.

In a state of negative, narky over-excitement the Premier is bursting his veins on a variety of Federal issues. Of particular significance at the present time are the Federal Government's policies that seek a better deal for the nation's natural resources. The Premier's arrows are aimed, of course at the recent decision to create a petrol and minerals authority. He sees such a body as a brand of socialism and as a form of insufferable anathema. Ironically for the Premier, however, the Australian mining industry sees such an authority as the saviour of the declining oil exploration programme.

To back up my claim I quote from "The Australian Financial Review" of 6 August 1974, and, as all honourable members know,

that newspaper certainly could not be described as a Labor or socialist publication. In the leader article this appears—

"But now the Australian Petroleum Explorers' Association wants the Petrol and Minerals Authority legislation passed through Parliament with the minimum delay. It realises that until Mr. R. F. X. Connor starts to hand out new farm-ins through the P.M.A. there will be precious little activity on the exploration front. In other words, A.P.E.A., which could only be described as dedicated to free enterprise, sees a lot of merit in the Petrol and Minerals Authority."

The article continues—and I draw particular attention to this—

"There is nothing new or radical in the establishment of a Government minerals authority. Australia is only following other nations in recognising that in these energy-conscious times no country, particularly one with the resources which Australia has, can afford to leave their development unregulated."

So much for the Premier's thoughts!

Isn't the Premier aware of the assistance that has been promised by Senator Wriedt, endorsed by the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy, Mr. Connor to the development of the phosphate deposits in North-western Queensland? Isn't he also aware of the decision arrived at last week by the Australian Government to underwrite to the tune of more than \$15,000,000 the mining of low-grade uranium deposits at Mary Kathleen? The Australian Government is prepared to spend more than \$15,000,000 to get the mine back into full production—a mine that, incidentally, has been closed for approximately 11 or 12 years. Is the Premier opposed to such action? It would be interesting to have from him an indication of his thoughts. Is he merely continuing his political opposition to the party that was elected by the Australian people to govern this nation?

A sum of nearly \$20,000,000 will be required to get the Mary Kathleen mine back into operation. This represents a value of \$3.50 a share at a time when the market value of Mary Kathleen shares is as little as 53 cents. This fact alone shows the type of assistance that Queensland will be receiving from the Australian Government. But the Premier, the head of established authority in the State, in typical narky fashion opposes this move. It is doubtful whether Mary Kathleen will become even moderately profitable for a long time. People in the industry maintain that six years will elapse before a dividend is paid. The Premier is surely aware that the enterprise has been selected for the new basic scale of royalty of 10 per cent ex-mine-value of export minerals.

While the Federal Government on the one hand is underwriting an issue of over \$15,000,000 for a mine which will, according to the experts, not pay a dividend for

six years, the Premier, on the other hand, wants to bring it into the scheme of royalties anticipated to be applied to other mineral undertakings in Queensland.

For years Opposition members have screamed for increased royalties. Look at the scale of royalties paid in other States. Victoria receives \$22,000,000 or \$27,000,000 and New South Wales \$22,000,000 a year. The Queensland situation is so muddled that one would have to be an Einstein to work out the exact figure paid in royalty, but it is well below \$7,000,000.

We make no apology for our policy on royalties. We believe that it is of paramount importance that a firm principle or guide-line should be laid down so that people will not get wrong ideas. New enterprises which will employ many Queenslanders could be severely disadvantaged by erroneous or inconsistent Government decisions.

Take the case of the aluminium industry on an international plane. A considerable amount of aluminium investment money was provided in Jamaica by world-wide consortiums. Admittedly Jamaica had a low royalty standard for many years and, even in the light of the vast undertaking there, only about \$30,000,000 came to the Government under the old system. In recent times, in a very avaricious stance, the Government decided to get onto the bandwagon and really got stuck into the companies operating in this industry. It set the level of royalty at 7.5 per cent of the ingot price per tonne of bauxite mined, with an increase to 8.5 per cent in two years. In other words, royalty payments in Jamaica will increase from \$30,000,000 to over \$200,000,000. Evidence has been given to a Senate subcommittee of the United States of America to the effect that Reynolds, one of the great aluminium producers of the world, is looking to the clay deposits of the United States, in the hope of devising a new form of treatment to process them into aluminium. Obviously this could be to the detriment of the alumina and aluminium industry in Jamaica.

While the Opposition has been justifiably critical of the Government's inadequacies on royalty payments, we must ensure that a definite line is drawn between resources diplomacy and resources blackmail.

The Treasurer returned from the United States of America after conferring with the coal companies. I understand that a considerable degree of agreement has been reached—and justifiably so. Was it not because of the policies of the great Rex Connor that after negotiations the importers of our coal, principally the Japanese, suddenly escalated the price? The price through our ports has been increased to \$10.35 a tonne—a considerable amount indeed. As Mr. Connor has said, he has tried to obtain the best deal for the country without really going overboard and crucifying the country's future mineral expansion.

These are the policies that must be followed. It ill becomes the Treasurer to return and announce willy-nilly to the country's Press that there will be an across-the-board 5 per cent or 10 per cent increase. Naturally, every issue requires a thorough examination. I believe that the people of this State, who are really the owners and inheritors of our natural resources, are entitled to the best deal. However, we want to keep the producers in business. We want to see that they benefit from the arrangement and are not forced to accept a poor deal because of weaknesses in the Government's diplomacy and negotiation.

Considerable criticism has been levelled at the Australian Government by the Premier, the Treasurer and many other Ministers because of the minerals authority envisaged by Mr. Connor. Again I refer to "The Australian Financial Review", the Bible of conservatism in this country, which remarked that Mr. Connor is acting in the same role as the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry or M.I.T.I., as it is known. There is no doubt that his fair-minded approach has so far been successful. Of course, the Japanese recognise that Australians have a right to a fair policy on mineral resources and have been willing to pay increased prices. Mr. Connor has repeatedly assured our large trading partner, Japan, that the market will always be supplied—a fact appreciated by the Japanese steel mills, to the benefits of our two-way trade.

While I am not the subject of royalties, let me repeat that members of the Opposition maintain that there has never been a performance as weak as that of this Government over a long period in its relationship and negotiation with multi-national companies. The Government has snivelled, bowed and genuflected. Not a single Minister has had the expertise in negotiation to obtain a better deal for Queenslanders. However, suddenly, because of the policies of the Australian Government and the increased charges that have resulted from those policies, the Queensland Government is now jumping on the band wagon and appears to be demanding far in excess of what may be regarded as reasonable. I sincerely urge the Treasurer to be very careful indeed. Although members of the Opposition believe—and have believed for a long time—that the Government has been remiss in not seeking a better deal for the people of this State, if the attitudes as quoted in the Press is persisted in, whereby it is arrogantly stated that a certain percentage will be sought, the Government will kill the goose that lays the golden egg. I have already mentioned one mine that will not be profitable for a very long time.

Reference has often been made in this Chamber to the royalty payments of Mount Isa Mines Limited and the fact that, under a Labor administration years ago, no royalty was paid. But it was 25 or 30 years before that company showed a profit, so why should

we have kicked it to death? Didn't we guarantee its bank account to the tune of £500,000 when it was struggling, and didn't we build a railway line and give it a number of other concessions? Of course it received all of those amenities with the assistance of past Labor Governments. We do not want to see it or the employment opportunities it provides crucified because this administration has suddenly realised its sins and has decided to go overboard; I hope that it will not lose its sense of proportion.

Of great interest, and certainly very little comfort, to the Premier, must be the back-handers and slaps in the face he receives from friends and old-time colleagues. We hear from him a continual splenetic barrage of falsely based information supplied by Mr. Callaghan, a consistent decrying of the performance of the Australian Government and a eulogy of his own acts on behalf of Queenslanders and their future. Comparisons are often drawn in this Chamber, and many times South Australia has been singled out as the target for his spate of vicious vilification.

How astonished he must have been to read in the Press recently the laudatory comments of none other than the present chairman of Oilmin, Mr. C. W. Siller, of Exoil and Transoil fame! He is the same Mr. Siller who stood as a National Party candidate in the Senate elections. He was the Premier's choice for that position. There was no democracy in the choice. Standover, Tammany Hall tactics were adopted by the Premier, who said, "You take Siller as a candidate or else." Of course, Government members, in typical Beatles fashion said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." It is a pity that the honourable member for South Coast is not present in the Chamber because he is in a very expansive mood, I am told, following a recent success. He bows from the waist every time the Premier barks, in sharp contrast to the night when, in the shadows of this very building, he drew deathly steel about the Premier's political future. That no doubt recalls MacBeth's words—

"Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
the handle toward my hand?"

Has Mr. Siller fallen out of favour recently? One would hardly know.

However, I mentioned South Australia and I shall read a statement that gentleman made on 15 July 1974. He said—

"South Australia is to be 'highly commended' for the guidelines it has drawn up on mineral and petroleum exploration and exploitation within its borders.

"Under the guidelines, exploration by any reputable company, whether Australian or foreign owned, is welcome in South Australia.

"However, future exploitation of any discoveries made in the course of this exploration must be carried out in such a way that a minimum of 51 per cent of any operation is Australian owned.

"South Australia intends that these guidelines should remove some of the uncertainties presently connected with exploration and thus encourage further activity in the search for new resources.

"The guidelines do not affect any agreements which have been consented to previously.

"I would like to commend them for these guidelines."

Isn't that a slap in the face for the Premier? Doesn't it imply "The policies of the South Australian Government are certainly to be praised and the policies of this Government, with which I have done business for years, are completely unsatisfactory."

Is not Mr. Siller saying, "I am unable to obtain satisfactory guide-lines here. I am quite willing to give my commendation to South Australia despite what my friend the Premier says when constantly castigating that Labor State simply because of its politics." I hope the Premier takes some cognisance of that situation.

Approximately seven or eight weeks ago I sent a telegram to the Premier concerning a serious situation likely to occur in my electorate. I refer to the position at the Mt. Morgan mine. At present, because of certain inadequacies, the mine is unable to get copper shipments away. I firmly believe in corrective therapy long before confrontation takes place, and I believe that it is the responsibility of any Government Leader to investigate such matters of which he is advised and take action for the benefit of the public. Sadly enough, such a course has never been a highlight of this Government's actions. For reasons best known to itself, it is bitterly lethargic and engages in devious practices in the hope that such action will gain for it some political advantage.

On 6 July, I sent a telegram to the Premier advising him of the situation, and I made the simple request that he make approaches to the Commonwealth Government, particularly the Minister for Transport (Hon. C. K. Jones), to have certain ships made available at Port Alma to carry away the copper products of the Mount Morgan mine. That urgent telegram was sent seven or eight weeks ago, and I have not yet received a reply to the honest, frank and open submission that I made in it. Each morning in answers to questions the Premier tells the house how he got in touch with certain people in Canberra but received no replies from them. Surely this is a case of those in glass houses throwing stones.

Whilst the Premier is well known for his promotion of situations that could lead to certain forms of anarchy, he refuses point blank at all times to co-operate with the Australian Government. He turns a deaf ear to their approaches. A recent offer by the Prime Minister to make ships of the Australian National Line available for intrastate trade has been soundly rejected by the Premier. Although no-one wants to take

work from railwaymen, there are ways in which A.N.L. ships could possibly engage very profitably in work that the railways could not undertake. A.N.L. ships could in fact call at the Central Queensland port and take the products of Mt. Morgan to Japan. Unfortunately the Premier is not a promoter of that idea, because I doubt whether he wants to assist members of the Waterside Workers' Federation who reside in Rockhampton, and the residents of Mt. Morgan.

The present situation is extremely serious, and if it continues there could be grave consequences in Mt. Morgan itself. I, as the member representing the town and district, do not want to see that happen. I want to see some leadership shown by the Premier. He is leader of the State, and I want to see him get this matter under way and, through a spirit of co-operation, functioning smoothly.

The insincerity of the Government is well known, and this is shown by the fact that, despite a statement by the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs that the report on Mt. Morgan's future would be available in August 1973, by August 1974 it has not seen the light of day. One could most graciously omit the name "Cameron" and say, "The Campbells are coming, hoorah, hoorah", but there is not much "hoorah" in it.

Many members of the Waterside Workers' Federation live in Rockhampton. They want to get some form of work. Obviously they have a right to a livelihood. The people of Mt. Morgan are very fine people. They are entitled to justice and action in their behalf by the Premier and his Government. If it were the nut industry at Kingaroy, he would soon be doing something about it. He would very quickly try to do something if one of his wealthy company friends who contribute to the slush fund at election-time were involved. He would be as busy as a bee.

A very serious situation has arisen. Reasonable co-operation should be sought. No Government Leader should be too proud to indulge in reasonable co-operation. It is absolutely ridiculous to see the situation developing as it is. It will be very serious indeed if some action is not taken.

I hate being parochial, but I must say that at the present time there are matters of very grave concern right throughout my electorate. In the Mt. Larcum-Bracewell area a company holds mineral leases for the mining of limestone. Many of the farms in that area are held under miner's homestead perpetual leases. People engaged in the survey, agents of the mineral company, are indulging in all sorts of unsavoury practices. They are displaying unparalleled arrogance, destroying property and breaking down fences. In real Prussian fashion they are maintaining that they have a perfect right to do so. One member of the company remarked to a very fine man who has been on the land there

for years that, as far as the company was concerned, it would do what it liked, and that the farmers were a heap of rats' dung. That is the type of thing that is going on.

I have a lot of respect for officers in the Mines Department. Mr. Healy and many others are very competent and friendly officers who give of their best in the State Public Service. But if under the policy of this Government people can arrogantly and ruthlessly destroy the property of families who have farmed that land for generations, then I say the policy is the greatest display of total disregard for the rights of the public, and it is something that must be condemned. Surely the Government should not have such a policy.

Before persons are allowed onto the various properties, the whys and the wherefores should be spelt out in very clear and concise terms. Just because a company contributes to the Government of the day in an effort to ensure its political survival, it should not be given any right whatsoever to walk over those downtrodden people. Many of them have suffered greatly during the numerous droughts in the area. They are very fine people and have reared families in that part of the State.

That they should have to suffer such conditions at the end of their working lives is abhorrent.

What is happening is something that they did not seek. I am sure that the various Acts and regulations would not give the company the right to engage in these unsavoury practices. Certainly I will be making recommendations to the Mines Department to see what is happening is thoroughly investigated and that the relevant Acts and regulations are properly policed.

In recent years we have suffered considerably in many industrial enterprises throughout the length and breadth of the State by the non-provision of desirable infrastructures. In recent times in Gladstone there has been great criticism about the inadequacy of local authorities amenities to cope with the great influx of people. It is very difficult for a local authority to make provision in one year for, say, 7,000 people, only to find that by the end of the year it has to make provision for twice that number. In a few years we will see the advent of a great smelter project on Boyne Island just south of Gladstone, which will herald the third stage of production from alumina to aluminium and will be of great benefit to the State.

During the construction of the alumina refinery we experienced a considerable amount of industrial trouble and confrontation between employer and employee. On examination, much of it was found to result from the lack of provision of a desirable infrastructure and other amenities that would make a working man's life more desirable in a centre isolated from his normal place of residence.

Since the election of the Federal Labor Government, considerable improvements have been made in this regard. Through the National Welfare Commission we have seen the creation of a social development board in the community. It has made considerable sums of money available for the creation of a citizen's advisory service. Substantial amounts have been given to various competent officers to advise the people of Gladstone of the many amenities and organisations available to them.

This body has also spent large sums of money in the provision of a youth club to keep the young people of the town off the streets and, consequently, away from conflict with the law. This is indeed a very desirable and healthy exercise. Together with money advanced by the company, considerable sums have been expended on parks and sporting complexes. And I am not denying that in recent times we have been the recipients of considerable sums of money from State sources as well.

With the construction of the smelter, from 1,000 to 2,000 new residents will suddenly arrive in the community. They will be entitled to expect the provision of adequate lodgings to meet their requirements and also various recreational and sporting facilities. I hope that the Government, in its negotiations with the company and the unions and for the sake of peace in Gladstone, will see that these requirements are spelt out in clear and concise terms before a start is made to drive the first nail, and that we do not have to suffer as we did two or three years ago from lack of planning.

The situation at that time went from bad to worse. We do not want to see the substandard type of dwelling in which many people were then domiciled. This was quite unnecessary and would have been avoided had a better standard been set before construction started. I have made repeated representations to the relevant authorities to upgrade many of the amenities. I would have a file thicker than the head of the honourable member for Townsville South but holding just as much ivory. Personal representations were also made by certain bodies and individuals for this and that. It was a chaotic mess. We do not want that again. The Government must ensure that there will not be a continuation of industrial confrontation on construction sites throughout the State.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. PORTER (Toowong)** (3.15 p.m.): It is customary for honourable members to use the Address-in-Reply debate to formally pledge their loyalty to the Queen through her representative in Queensland, His Excellency the Governor. Usually this is a kind of symbolic ritual, which we all follow as a matter of form, and I do so now. But it is not now mere custom; it is certainly not now just some sort of empty ritual.

Loyalty to the Sovereign, as expressed by the elected representatives in the Sovereign's Parliament of Queensland—which this Parliament is—is something that today is fraught with very deep significance. It carries with it very ominous overtones extending far beyond this Chamber. This menacing significance is something that I want to touch on shortly.

It is quite staggering that anyone should question, as the Opposition has done, the confidence of the people in this Government. The present interim Leader of the Opposition questioned this Government's support and popularity in his extraordinary, ill-fated and quite naive amendment, which was dealt with summarily by the House. Perhaps one might have expected the Opposition to say that we have more popularity than we deserve, but only very bigoted, partisan politicians could deny that the popularity of this Government exists.

Its popularity has been demonstrated at by-elections, referendums and both State and Federal polls. Not merely have we been supported and the A.L.P. rejected at these polls, but on every occasion—at every test—the A.L.P. has been not just beaten but overwhelmed. It has had its face rubbed in the dirt by the electorate.

I am expressing not merely opinions but facts—hard, incontrovertible facts based on the votes cast, and no amount of wild accusation and no amount of statistical juggling will dismiss these facts. All of us might be suspicious of public-opinion polls and surveys—I think the A.L.P. would like to be very suspicious of the recent public-opinion survey that showed the A.L.P. to be down by about 10 per cent on where it was a few weeks ago—but the tally of actual votes cast is fact.

It will be interesting to take a couple of minutes to look at the recent Federal poll, because there has been a great deal of talk about Queensland's wrongness in challenging what the Federal Government wants to do. The Federal supporters of the A.L.P., and their henchmen opposite, claim that Labor was given a renewal of its mandate. I say as I have said before so often in this Chamber that I reject totally the concept that a Government when elected gets a mandate to carry out a programme. All it is given is a mandate to govern. To suggest that Labor was given a particular mandate at the Federal election on 18 May is so absurd as to be quite laughable.

Let us analyse this particular claim of a mandate and get the analysis down on the record so that, if there are any holes in it, Opposition members can pick them out and demonstrate them to me in the many speeches that will come from the other side of the House.

**Mr. Davis:** I don't think we'll waste time.

**Mr. PORTER:** I'll bet they won't waste time, for the simple reason that it cannot be done.

What is the fact? Labor won the Lower House, the House of Representatives, by five seats. In fact two of those seats were new seats, created by Labor for Labor. Everyone knew in advance that they would be gifts. In a real comparison with the seats held in 1972, Labor won the 1974 election by only three seats—all of them in one State only and, furthermore, all of them in one part of one State only.

On the same day that Labor secured this paper-thin victory—in fact, Mr. Whitlam did not dare claim it until some 10 days after the event—the same electors at the same poll voted against the A.L.P. in the Senate.

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**Mr. PORTER:** Mr. Snedden was quite right not to claim it for 10 days but to indicate that he had not lost.

On the same day the same voters flatly rejected Labor's referendum proposals.

When the A.L.P. screams about the Senate Opposition frustrating the people's will, what does it want us to believe? Is it seriously suggesting that the same voters, voting at the same time on the same issues, expressed the people's will when it gave Labor a five-seat margin on 49 per cent of the votes in the House of Representatives, but did not express any will at all when they knocked back attempts to fiddle with the Constitution and carefully gave Labor only a minority in the Senate?

I find Labor's viewpoint quite a queer concept of the sovereign will expressed by the electorate. Labor regards the electorate as clever in one way but stupid in another. Obviously that attitude does not bear close analysis. In my view, if any party has shown contempt for the people's will, it is the Labor Party, with its frantic attempt to pretend that the people's will was not the whole vote cast on 18 May, but only that part which it suits it to talk about. We should all remember that control of the Senate was what the double dissolution was all about. Mr. Whitlam proclaimed that over and over again. The real purpose of the exercise was to get rid of the opposition in the Senate and its resistance to the onrush of Labor's socialist and centralist legislation.

It is important that we should all recognise very clearly the result of the Federal poll. It is true that Labor won the House of Representatives, and hence the Government, but it just won it and no more. That is all it won. Any talk about the renewal of a mandate should be measured against the voting facts. On the Australian vote Labor was down 1 per cent, but we on our side of politics were up 3½ per cent. We were a substantial 4½ per cent in advance of the 1972 position. No wonder it took almost a fortnight to decide who had won and who had lost. In the

Senate, in the voting on the same day, Labor was done like a dinner. Counting the referendum issues, still using the vernacular, Labor was done like a dinner on two plates.

All of us who followed the election and its aftermath will never forget the fawning, sickening adulation which so much of the media gave to Labor and its personalities. "The Australian" was a classic example. On the morning of polling day we were told that Labor would get 52.5 per cent of the vote, that an extra 1 per cent swing had generated towards Labor during the campaign. We, on the other hand, were said to be down to 46 per cent. When the day's vote was counted, it was found that "The Australian" had overvalued Labor by 3 per cent and undervalued us by 2 per cent. That was a massive error of 5 per cent, which was equivalent to misreading 300,000 voters.

On the Monday after the poll the paper said, "Whitlam returned with a 7 to 9 majority and 31 in the Senate. Labor likely to win five Senate seats in Queensland." On Tuesday, although the count was a lot clearer, the paper said, "Clear Labor majority, latest count 5 to 7 seats, likely 30 in the Senate." On Wednesday the following was printed, "Four electorates decide Labor's majority, likely five." On Thursday the following appeared, "Labor confident as coalition hopes fade, Government majority likely either 3 or 5."

It should be noted that the majority was gradually coming back to the field and for the first time—almost a week after the start of the count—this was admitted: "Labor may have to be content with 30 seats in the Senate." It should be noted that the figure still stood at 30, not 29. At that stage of the count, anybody who knew anything of the history of late counts and was able to do a little simple arithmetic could tell where the Senate probabilities lay. Certainly they did not lie in the direction of an A.L.P. majority in the Senate.

Of course, the pundits, the writers and the commentators were all so anxious to wish a Labor victory on us that they were literally drooling as they licked their chops at the early stages of the count. They could not accept the actual facts of the voting figures, always clearly provided to those who have the wit and the will to read them. I do not think many of us will ever forget the A.B.C. on polling night. In the early stages the commentators were very happily giving our side of politics away, delightedly awarding Labor a bigger and better victory than in 1972. Do you recall it? They were so pleased with the way things were going—Labor was going to sweep the country.

Then at about 11 p.m. one of them, a Mr. Malcolm Mackerras, began to see what for these very patent Labor backers were ominous signs of the Labor count trend. He tried to suggest that Labor would be in trouble, but the other commentators

tried to shush him up as though he were uttering some sort of blasphemy in a temple. How dare he suggest that Labor might not get the huge majority that they were predicting for it? It was certainly a night for all of us to remember. Midnight was very interesting indeed.

The Federal poll, which on a 1972 seat comparison was won by only three seats, with less voting support, could by no means—not by the greatest stretch of even the most fanatical imagination—be seen as a renewal of a mandate of socialism, centralism and economic idiocy. I believe it was no more than a manifestation of the Australian fair-go characteristic; a reluctance to throw out a Government, no matter how bad, that had been in office only 16 months. It would be interesting to speculate, particularly in view of what has happened since 18 May, what would have been the result of an election not called on for another six months, after the Budget that shortly must come, no matter how much the divided Labor Caucus may wish that it had not to present a Budget. The only rational interpretation of the 18 May Federal poll was that the Australian people said, "We will let you serve out your term, but cut out the radical nonsense."

Members of the A.L.P. are not cutting out the doctrinaire, arrogant, antiquated, collectivist capers that they so much enjoy, so I believe that they are guaranteeing to themselves the wrath to come. A very true saying is that those whom the Gods would destroy they first make mad.

It is very foolish for Federal Labor to prattle about its mandate, in view of the circumstances; but it becomes inutterably stupid for State Labor men to proclaim it here and to suggest that we in Queensland, on our side of politics, have not the support of the electorate. One would imagine that the merest vestige of common sense would suggest that Opposition members would play down this angle, because the electoral fact is that what happened in Queensland was vastly different from what happened anywhere else in Australia. Where the Australian improvement on our side of politics from 1972 to 1974 against Labor was 4.6 per cent, in Queensland it was what? Five per cent? Six per cent? No! We improved by a massive, overwhelming 11.3 per cent! That is the story the voting figures tell—the hard facts taken out of the State's ballot boxes: Labor down from 47.2 per cent to 44 per cent, a drop of 3.2 per cent, and we from 45.1 per cent up to what? Forty-six per cent? Forty-seven per cent? No, indeed—up to a tidal-wave support of 53.9, a rise of 8.1 per cent!

**Mr. Tucker:** What was the D.L.P.'s vote in that?

**Mr. PORTER:** The honourable member is interested. The D.L.P., of course, did not stand candidates in that election. The

fact of life that the Leader of the Opposition would do well to remember is that, where the Labor Party formerly trumpeted that the D.L.P. was composed largely of dissident Labor voters, the fact at the ballot box shows that that did not stand. We got their vote in total and the Opposition did not get it. They are now our voters, and I think they always were. Whereas the Labor Party used to say that we won only with D.L.P. support, the simple fact is that without the D.L.P., the Australia Party or anything else we can and will win in our own right and do it better. The Leader of the Opposition is very unwise to raise that particular one.

The big point to remember is that not only did we in Queensland win two seats from Labor in that Federal poll—and several others were sharply threatened—but since 18 May, Labor has been left without a single safe Federal seat in the whole of Queensland. Not one is a safe seat for the next poll, and it is well within the limits of possibility that at the next poll, with the tide flowing the way it is, we will win 18 out of 18 Federal seats, as well as six in the Senate.

**Mr. Bousen:** What—with a gerrymander?

**Mr. PORTER:** We do not need any gerrymanders. I am giving the voting figures.

It is suggested that there must clearly be something different about the way politics has been operating in Queensland and the way it has been operating in the rest of Australia for our side of politics to have achieved such a devastating victory in Queensland as compared with the Australian average. What is different? Why did we do three times as well as most other States? Why was Labor here so pulverised that it lost not only House of Representative votes and seats but also the vital Senate seat because, out of 10 Senate vacancies, we won the maximum of six and Labor won four. Believe me, in a double dissolution, that is some achievement. The A.L.P. has not managed it once anywhere yet.

So we must look at the difference between Queensland and the rest of Australia. I think all of us know what the difference is. Many of us are reluctant to admit it and perhaps it is useful to spell it out. The difference is that we on this side of the House saw from the outset the full malevolence of the A.L.P.'s socialist master plan. We recognised it for what it was. We fought it every inch of the way. We saw that it was out to smash the federal system, destroy the States, annihilate local authorities, centralise power in Canberra and set up a huge academic-oriented bureaucracy. We saw that and we told the people of Queensland about it. We saw the moves to weaken our ties with old and tried friends and blood relatives and, instead, to join us with Communist-star countries.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. PORTER:** Opposition members are groaning. They will be groaning with a greater degree of realism before very many months have past, I can assure them.

We saw excessive power being placed in the hands of radical industrial groups in order to savagely maul the very fabric of business and commerce and investment. Are they going to groan now, or are they afraid that Jack Egerton, who agrees with what I say, might reprimand them for groaning at the wrong place?

We have seen moves to turn Australia into a multi-racial society. We have seen the cruelly deliberate use of inflation in order to create that economic chaos in which it will be easier for Labor to achieve the massive political and social changes that it is fanatically resolved upon.

What is more to the point is that we have seen the steady erosion of accepted moral and social standards in Senator Murphy's determination to abolish all censorship, to make vulgarity and aberrance the norm and to put the family unit and the institution of marriage under as much pressure and stress as possible.

Of course, we have seen quite ruthless moves to try to manipulate the electoral system. We should never forget the infamous referendum proposals which were so heavily defeated on 18 May. The idea would have been to finish up with a token, plastic Opposition. Then Australia could have been made a republic, the Governor-General a viceroy and Mr. Whitlam—if he had still been around, which most of us now doubt—or Dr. Cairns could have become president.

**Mr. Davis:** What do you want—the "Stars and Stripes"?

**Mr. PORTER:** I was waiting for honourable members opposite to interject and tell me that I was wrong. I was going to remind them that they should read their own A.L.P. platform, because that is precisely what it proposes and what the A.L.P. is leading to step by step.

That is the chilling master plan, and we in Queensland saw it, from its inception, for what it was. We have constantly denounced it, in every one of its myriad manifestations. That simply is why my side of politics did so much better at the Federal poll in Queensland than anywhere else in Australia, and why the Labor Party did so much worse in Queensland. We pointed out loudly, clearly and trenchantly what Labor was after, and why it had to be resisted at all costs. We demonstrated over and over again the huge gulf between our aims and Labor's socialist aims. We enabled people to see that their basic freedoms were at stake. Once the people realised this, they rallied massively behind us, as they always will. I am confident that at the next Federal poll, whenever it comes (it looks as though it will be sooner rather

than later) Labor will be scattered like chaff before an avenging wind. It will suffer an electoral reverse of such proportions that it is likely to be politically impotent for another two decades at least.

I think people are now realising, particularly following events of the last few weeks, that the question of maintaining a Federal system is not just an argument on abstract political theory. The lifestyle and basic personal freedoms of the people are very much at stake. For many years now I have been drawing attention to the dangers posed by the decline of the Federal system. Labor has hastened this decline because it has used its money superiority just as a poisoner uses loaded baits—scattering them around, seducing people and organisations, dividing communities, and exploiting cupidity to deceive and destroy.

Twelve months ago, almost exactly to the day, I said in the Address-in-Reply debate—

"We now have the overwhelming evidence presented in the Federal Budget delivered on Tuesday night, which is centralist and accepts inflation as a way of life. If we accept that inflation running at about 10 to 14 per cent per annum is feasible, heaven alone knows what it will be by this time next year. I suggest it will be somewhere around 18 to 20 per cent. If we do not know, I should think that the Whitlam covey of academic 'think tanks' does not know either . . .

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

**Mr. Tucker:** Tedious repetition.

**Mr. PORTER:** I think I heard the Leader of the Opposition murmur something about tedious repetition. If so, it is a pretty fair indication of his lack of real concern for the people of Australia, because the words that I used 12 months ago have all been proven 100 per cent correct. Indeed, if anything, I underestimated what would be the situation. Everything that I said has been shown to be correct.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. PORTER:** No. I am trying to suggest to the honourable gentleman that he at least should recognise the threat that the Labor Party poses to the State that he is supposed to represent. He seems totally unable to do so.

Clearly we must recognise that inflation is getting worse. It is, to the largest degree, home-made, and any attempt to excuse it by suggesting that it is imported—that because other countries have inflation we necessarily must have it, also—is rubbish. Most other countries are running into inflation because of their oil problems. We are self-sufficient in oil.

**Mr. Tucker:** It was imported by Billy McMahon, and you know it.

**Mr. PORTER:** What was the degree of inflation when he “imported” it—3.4 per cent, wasn't it?

**Mr. Tucker:** What about overseas companies?

**Mr. PORTER:** The honourable gentleman is making a mishmash of economic fact which he simply could not support. The plain fact is that the import charges are less than 5 per cent of our inflationary rise. I challenge him to demonstrate otherwise. The plain fact is that our inflation is home-made. It is a local product almost in its entirety.

**Mr. Tucker:** You are trying to brainwash everybody.

**Mr. PORTER:** It is very interesting to hear the honourable gentleman. Perhaps he would like to get together with the academic experts. I recall that on the eve of the last election Mr. Whitlam was happily quoting some 130 economists from the universities of Australia—professors, senior tutors, lecturers, and all the rest of them—who were saying, “We believe the thrust of the Government's policy responses are in the best interests of the nation as a whole.” But they are very quiet today. Where are those 130 economists who were telling us on the eve of the poll that the Labor Government was right? What about Mr. Whitlam, who said after quoting his economists on 17 May—the day before the poll—“We will use fiscal and monetary measures to substantially bring the inflation rate down.”? What wonderful words! How idiotic and empty they were!

The fact is, of course, that inflation is rampant. We now have Professor Downing, the head of the A.B.C. and one of the eminent professors who signed the advertisement in 1972, suggesting that there should be a change of government, saying that inflation next year may well be running at 40 per cent—40 per cent, not 20 per cent! Many other prominent people now admit that the situation is vastly different from what it was at the time they came out trying to support the Labor Government. Barry Hughes in “The Australian” of 24 July said—

“The Government's approach to anti-inflationary policy can only be described as economic madness.

“At a time when such different figures as Dr. Cairns and Mr. Snedden agree that our present problems are the result of cost-push elements, the Government's approach is to treat demand inflation.

“The foundation of any anti-inflationary policy must lie in the control of demand.”

Alan Wood in “The Sydney Morning Herald” of 6 August quotes the Melbourne University's Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research as saying—

“Continuation of the Government's economic policy stance would result in a severe recession in 1975 and have only a marginal impact on the rate of inflation.”

They forecast unemployment running up to as high as 250,000 people. When I say that things are vastly different today from the way they were when so many academics—and business people, too—supported the Labor Government, I am giving merely a very small part of the picture. I said that Professor Downing regards a 40 per cent inflationary rate next year as possible. We have the very well regarded “I.P.A. Review”—whatever anyone might think about it, it is most certainly not given to exaggeration—now predicting not merely bad inflation but hyper-inflation, that is, the whole spiral gone out of control and massive “stagflation” bringing abject misery and despair to hundreds of thousands of Australian people.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. PORTER:** The honourable gentleman would do well to try to dismiss the suggestion that the Commonwealth Government has deliberately engineered inflation. He would do well to remember that inflation has been associated with revolutionary change since ancient times. It accompanied the downfall of the Roman civilisation; it ushered in modern Communism; neither Nazism nor Fascism could have succeeded without it. I charge those pro-Marxist members of the A.L.P.—there are quite a number of them; the Cairnses, Haydens, Connors, Murphies, Camerons and the rest of them—with quite deliberately fostering inflation and unemployment, and with plunging Australia into such turbulence and despair that the people will become so confused and frightened that they then become more likely to yield up vital freedoms in the hope of some temporary security. Labor makes no bones about what it wants to do. It wants to pulverise, centralise and socialise; it wants to eliminate all the other areas of political power and leave only Canberra in control. So I am firmly convinced that inflation was deliberately started. There is an old Asian proverb which says, “He who rides on a tiger can't afford to dismount.” That is just what has happened to the Labor Party. It has started something that it has no hope of controlling.

I think one thing becomes increasingly clear in these increasingly uncertain times. It is that the Federal Government will not go its full term. Clearly it does not expect to. It is going to shake itself to pieces but it is going to shake the Australian economy to pieces in the process. Informed sources suggest, on the latest advice, that the Federal A.L.P. is now contemplating an election in May next year. The reason is that they

know they will go out of power and they want to go out before they become fully responsible in the electorate's mind for the massive unemployment and inflation we will experience next year. They know that if they go their full term and are fitted with responsibility for what they have truly created, they will be out for 30 years. So they may go next May.

**Dr. Crawford:** Would you agree that the tariff cuts altered inflation by 0.1 per cent?

**Mr. PORTER:** I doubt whether they altered it even as much as that and I do not think it was intended that they should.

In view of the possibility of a Federal election next May—engineered by the A.L.P., not by an obstructionist Senate—this State Government might well consider that there are good grounds to look at the necessity for an election at the end of this year, possibly in November. To me it seems very necessary that we look at this so that in this part of Australia we can do the maximum to protect at a time when protection will be needed. It certainly will be needed in Queensland, as in the rest of Australia, when we get into the heavy unemployment that will face us in the first and second quarters of next year.

At the present time we stand on the brink of great and irrevocable decisions. We in this country have to make up our minds—and I believe we have made them up—as to whether we want a form of society in which people count for something (certainly for more than Governments) or a form of society in which people will do as they are told by the planners at the top. Of course, Labor's dream is to make everybody part of the controlled society.

To my mind, the poll of 18 May—the whole poll, that is, not just a part of it—was an emphatic statement that people reject the Labor dream for Australia. The A.L.P. dream, of course, is for a society in which all men are ciphers and bondservants to a huge bureaucracy where ambition, energy, inspiration and the unique sanctity of family life are all replaced by this magical central planning.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You are a relic of the last century.

**Mr. PORTER:** Does the honourable member think so? Then we will be happy to see what the next State election and the next Federal election provide in Queensland, namely, whether people massively come down on the side of what I represent as a relic of the last century or on the side of what the honourable member represents as the forerunner of the Communist version of a planned society! He and his ilk are our greatest asset. Thank heavens for him!

I believe that, when we have reached the stage that Labor wants us to reach, we will then have the society that Winston Churchill

warned us about in these words: "We must beware of building a society in which nobody counts for anything but the politician and the official." The Labor Party would like to bring George Orwell's "1984" a decade early to Australia, a form of society in which all men are equal but some—that is, the planners—are much more equal than others.

Unfortunately for us, the A.L.P. dream for tomorrow is already reality's nightmare for today because nobody in his real senses wants these crude attempts to transform us into a nation of leaners with more and more people dependent on Government hand-outs and all leaning on a decreasing few who in fact produce. What happens when the last prop goes, when the last bloke decides, "I'll join the leaners, too"? I presume we will all fall over on our faces.

A comment made by the famous historian Edward Gibbon on factors causing the fall of the first great democracy, that of ancient Greece, should be indelibly inscribed in the hearts of all who believe that freedom from the weight of oppressive Government is worth preserving. Gibbon had this to say about the ancient Greeks—

"In the end, more than they wanted freedom, they wanted security. They wanted a comfortable life and they lost it all—security, comfort, and freedom. When the Athenians finally wanted not to give to society, but for society to give to them, when the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free."

Exactly the same thing would apply in our society, but I hope that we never see it.

There is no question that more and more people are beginning to see the A.L.P. for what it is; more and more people are becoming increasingly appalled at the evils of its plans and the sheer animal ferocity with which they are being pursued. But none of us should really be surprised by any of this when we consider the type of people who are in the vanguard of the Labor Party and involved in this monstrous endeavour.

First, we have Dr. Cairns, the grey eminence of Labor's radical Left, perennially dissembling but always implacable and sinister. And of course this man now has the numbers in the Labor caucus. Next we have Mr. Cameron, cold and ruthless.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You're still on the back bench.

**Mr. PORTER:** Quite true, but this is a very happy place to be, and I hope to be useful here for some time yet.

Next we have Mr. Hayden, humourless, didactic and bigoted. He is the man I see as the Robespierre of this particular revolution.

Then there is Mr. Crean, always twinkling with jolly assurance. I think he will go down in history as the Treasurer who played his ukelele as the ship went down.

Finally, we have Prime Minister Whitlam. What can anyone say about this extravagant person? We could say that he has great intellect but precious little wisdom. We could say that he exhibits brilliant flashing shallows but shows no depth at all. Perhaps the kindest thing we can do is to let Mr. Whitlam be the judge of Mr. Whitlam, because I believe that what Mr. Whitlam thinks of Mr. Whitlam is starkly revealed by his continual and pathetic eagerness to drape over himself the statesman's mantle of Robert Gordon Menzies. He is doing it constantly—the poor chap!

If he is so desperate to persuade us that he is a latter-day R. G. Menzies he might well consider studying excerpts from the second-reading speech of the then Mr. R. G. Menzies on the Bank Nationalisation Bill in 1949. In his speech Mr. Menzies said—

“Democracy rests upon the view that the people are the rulers as well as the ruled; that the Government has no authority and no privilege beyond that granted by the people themselves; that while sovereignty attaches to the Acts of the Parliament, that sovereignty is derived from the people and has no other source.

The whole history of democracy is one of struggle for the control of Government by the people, not for control of people by the Government—for that freedom which can exist only when the powers of the Government are limited, when legislators and administrators are responsible to the people, and when no great changes in the material structure of life can be made without popular mandate and approval.”

Very clearly what Robert Gordon Menzies stood for and what Mr. Whitlam now stands for are light years apart in philosophical terms, and it is ridiculous, and even pathetic, for Mr. Whitlam to pretend that he is cast in the Menzies mould or that he is serving even the slightest semblance of such a democratic purpose.

I want to make a quick passing reference to rumours that are now rife of a possible big Federal A.L.P. split—a repetition of the Hughes and Lyons upheavals that occurred years ago. In Melbourne it has been said that the first sensitive overtures have been made to the Liberal Party on behalf of Mr. Whitlam. This is the sort of thing that normally one would laugh at, but such is the uncertainty of these times that nothing is humorous—except to some gentlemen of the Opposition. My own view is that in no circumstances do the Liberals need the split-offs from the A.L.P. I, for one, would be totally opposed to any moves inside my own party, in any circumstances, to accept or absorb, at any price, anyone who has been in the forefront in Labor moves in recent times. We must, and we will, prevail on our own account, carrying our own banner and espousing our own philosophy because we represent what the

great majority of Australians fervently want—and the polls show it. We do not need any turncoats no matter under what guise or with what fair promises they may seek to come to us. In any case the men we are talking about—those who lead the A.L.P.—are all doomed men in the political sense. They are doomed to an electoral debacle of mammoth proportions.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BLAKE** (Isis) (3.56 p.m.): We have listened for quite some time to the honourable member for Toowong talking about the horrendous danger presented by the socialist party. It is strange that, in the past 18 months, the people of Australia have not only shown a preference for the A.L.P. but have also re-endorsed it in the face of claims by an obstructive Opposition that if the Labor Government went to the people it would be beaten resoundingly. The honourable member for Toowong indulged in rosy-hued wishful thoughts similar to those that he expressed in this Chamber between the two Federal elections.

I do not wish to deal further with that at the moment. In taking part in the Address-in-Reply debate, I firstly offer my expressions of loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and those of my constituents. In 99.99 per cent of cases there is no question about an Australian's loyalty to the reigning Monarch. That has been proved time and again, not only in peace but also in war. This subject should not be defiled by people trying to score cheap political capital, but that has been done, and is being done at the present time, by anti-Labor forces.

I cannot understand why those who wish to be pro-Australian cannot be pro-British and loyal to both concepts. Is not Australia an old-enough country, a proud-enough country and a deserving-enough country and nation to have its own national song or national anthem? How many other countries of similar standing and esteem have not their own national anthem or song? I should say there are very few, if any, in the world today. Although Government members would like the public to think otherwise, there is no question whatever about anybody in the Labor Party wishing to deny respect for the Sovereign by the playing of the national anthem, that is, “God Save the Queen” in the presence of Her Majesty, or on occasions when the Queen or her representative should be acknowledged or honoured.

The Queensland Government and the Premier in particular have worked assiduously to promote the impression that people who are pro-Australian or are loyal Australians must be anti-British. Perhaps Government members have become victims of their own propaganda. Perhaps they believe that people who are pro-Australian are anti-British. Inversely, perhaps they believe that people who are pro-British are anti-Australian. Anyone could be forgiven for believing that that was so in view of the incessant

attacks and obstruction advanced by the Liberal-Country or National Parties, or whatever name they operate under temporarily at the present time. The way they have continuously attacked the Australian Labor Party Government, which has been elected twice in 18 months, we could be forgiven for thinking that they were anti-Australian in outlook.

Never before in Australian political history has the mandate of a twice-elected Government been so disregarded and assailed as it has been by the Liberal-Country Party coalition and the Country-Liberal Government in Queensland—or, to bring the name up-to-date, the National-Liberal Government. It changes so often that one has difficulty in keeping abreast of the current one.

A certain amount of party politics is acceptable from those opposing a Government. However, the present Federal Opposition has sunk so low that its practices go beyond the depths of any standard ever before set in political ethics. When listening to the honourable member for Toowong, who went to great pains to prove that the Australian Labor Party really did not have a mandate to govern in Canberra, I could not help thinking that he believed that. So much distortion has been seen in the thinking of anti-Labor forces that such an attitude does not surprise us; but it would surprise anyone who had not been subjected to the barrage of distorted political thought that we on this side of the House have had to withstand.

None of us will forget the import of the statement of the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Snedden, that if Labor won the Federal election with a reduced majority it would have no mandate to govern but that, if the Liberal-Country Party forces won the Government by the barest margin, they would have the right to govern. This to me illustrates a resurrection of the medieval belief in the divine right of kings. This is merely a variation of that old theme. It indicates the belief of the Liberal-Country Party (National Party) coalition in its divine right to govern.

The electorate is fast becoming aware of this distorted and pernicious line of thought by anti-Labor forces. It is beginning to wake up to the disruptive and, I suppose it would be fitting to say, obstructive tactics continually used by Opposition members to subvert the functions of a properly elected Government. Mr. Snedden was in Brisbane yesterday at a \$10-a-head dinner for 200 people. This report appeared in today's "Courier-Mail"—

"The truth is, we're in a mess,' the Federal Opposition Leader (Mr. Snedden) said yesterday.

"But at a Press conference before the luncheon he shied away from talk of a double dissolution."

I will tell honourable members why he shied away from such talk. It is getting through even to him that the obstruction being placed in the way of a properly elected Government by the Liberal-Country Parties is beginning to sour the electorate against the coalition parties and that the electorate is beginning to realise that, if we are in a mess, it is because of the negation by Federal Liberal-Country Party members, to the best of their ability and wherever possible, of sound legislation put forward by the Labor Party, irrespective of the merits of that legislation.

I recall that when the Liberal-Country Party was in Government much was said about amending the Restrictive Trade Practices Act. Nothing was done. Parliament now has to be recalled—and some members must return from overseas—to attend to minor changes to legislation which have belatedly been forced by the coalition in Opposition, although the opportunity to do something about the legislation was not taken when it was in Government.

I think it is fair to say that the Premier has been outstanding in attempts to obstruct the official functioning of the Australian Government. He has not been very successful. He has shown himself to be the most inconsistent of the critics of that Government. For instance, he has been outspoken on the need for reduced Australian Government spending to combat inflation, yet he has been adamant that his own Government must be exempted from any such economies and inconveniences. Whilst suggesting economies in the Federal sphere, he announced on 20 July the Queensland Government's intention to purchase a Beechcraft King Air aeroplane for which the non-Government price would be \$600,000. I have a photograph of it here and I certainly would not refer to it as an example of the austerity programme of the Queensland Government.

Whilst campaigning, at the Queensland taxpayers' expense, against the granting of price control powers to the Australian Government, even temporarily, he threatened to use price control to keep prices down in Queensland. He refused to invoke price control—a power his own State had—and maintained (and I think still maintains) that price control is ineffective. He contradicted his own argument by threatening to invoke price control powers against bread manufacturers and petrol retailers. He said in the Press that he was not bluffing.

In other words, price control is effective only for Queensland—at least at times—and then only when it suits the Premier in his campaign against granting price control power to the Federal Government. He has refused to grant that power to the Australian Government, even temporarily, but we all recall that, during the election campaign, he joined with other Premiers in saying that he would co-operate in this

regard if a Liberal-National Party Government was in power. It is history that, despite buckets of multi-national money, the Liberal-National Party did not win.

The Premier has been so astray in his accusations against the Australian Government that even the Treasurer and Liberal Party leader in this House (Sir Gordon Chalk) has dissociated himself from the Premier's statements. A case in point was the Premier's statement that it was Federal Government policy that had lost to Queensland the Weipa aluminium smelter.

**Mr. Aikens:** Tell us what Whitlam has done to the sugar farmers.

**Mr. BLAKE:** It is quite obvious that the honourable member has not been out of his beloved city because, if some primary industries are suffering, the one that is coping quite well with inflated costs at present is the sugar industry. I should know, because I am engaged in it.

The sooner the Premier applies himself to governing Queensland the better. He has a distorted mental attitude towards an elected Australian Government. "The Courier-Mail" of 14 August reported the Premier as saying there was no over-all plan, and that the Premiers' Conference was a complete waste of time. It was also reported that it was the Queensland Premier who made co-operation on an existing plan conditional. Mr. Hamer and Mr. Dunstan agreed that they had made good progress, that there was a plan, and that they believed when they applied themselves to it, as a combination of States, that it would work in halting or at least limiting inflation. The Premier believes that the whole thing was a waste of time, and he was, it is stated in this article, the only Premier who made co-operation of his State conditional on receipt of more money from the Federal Government. And this is the person who is calling for austerity in every Government other than his own!

This attitude, incidentally, is not restricted to the Premier. It seems to exist throughout Cabinet, and perhaps right through the backbenches. The Minister for Primary Industries, for instance, has been quoted in the Press as criticising centralism in the rural Green Paper. Why on earth should he find the ogre of centralism in a Green Paper drawn up as advisory guide-lines to a Government—to any Government, for that matter—on problems encountered in primary industry and possible solutions to them? These are the first guidelines drawn up for many years and they were drawn up after consultation with farmer organisations and all others who had something worthwhile to offer.

Has not the Commonwealth Government, irrespective of its political colour, always had a say in the use of public moneys for the support of rural policies? Is it considered that it should not have such a say? The

Press gave wide coverage, incidentally, to the Minister's comments on this so-called anti-State, pro-centralist rural Green Paper. I was startled to read these views, because I had heard many informed people make quite eulogistic and constructive remarks about the efforts of those who drew up the Green Paper. The Minister was the first one, no doubt as a result of his Country Party training, to read a sinister meaning of centralism into the rural Green Paper.

The Green Paper resulted from the appointment of an eminent panel to examine the industry and suggest guide-lines for rural policy. It called submissions from farmer organisations, universities and other academic and technological institutions, societies and individuals. In fact, it invited submissions from all who believed that they had something to contribute on rural problems and policies. What could be more democratic in principle than that?

I believe the editorial comment in the "Bundaberg News Mail" of 18 August 1974 is well worth recording. This is not my statement, but an independent view. It reads—

"Queensland's Minister for Primary Industries, Mr. Sullivan, has expressed his opinion of the Commonwealth's Green Paper on rural industry recently issued by the Australian Government. His comments represented, in the words of the question submitted to him in Parliament, his immediate reactions. If his statement was, in fact, his considered view of the report, he should be advised to read it again, because it has nothing to do with 'centralist' control of rural production and land use in the political context which Mr. Sullivan emphasised."

**Mr. Jensen:** He never read it.

**Mr. BLAKE:** Perhaps he has not read it. No doubt it was read by one of his departmental officers. Perhaps the Minister did not even read the submission before he came into the House. The editorial continues—

"Queensland Cabinet Ministers seem to be obsessed with the issue of 'centralist control' almost as if they believed that a National Government should have no role in matters that are, or should be, of national concern. Mr. Sullivan, for example, claimed that there was no real assessment and recognition in the paper of the existing activities of the States. There did not have to be, for this was not one of the factors required to be assessed by the group that considered the issue. Again, 'The document by no means presents a full cost-benefit analysis in relation to the factors dealt with,' Mr. Sullivan asserted. This was not its purpose, but if he had read the paper closely, Mr. Sullivan might have appreciated that one of the recommendations made by the group was that all rural

industry assistance projects should be subject to full economic and environmental analyses before decisions were made to commit public funds in their support.

"The Green Paper was not, as some people have been lead to believe, a blueprint for the Australian Government's rural policy. It was prepared by a party of eminent Australian agricultural and pastoral economists and consultants, given terms of reference to recommend general principles that should apply in a Commonwealth Government's—any Government's—rural policy. It is true that the existing Labor Government is likely to adopt in principle some of its conclusions, but the Federal Minister for Primary Industry, Senator Wriedt, has told rural leaders that these, and the guidelines advocated by the group that examined the situation, still have to be considered by the Government."

I apologise for the length at which I am quoting, Mr. Speaker, but there is another paragraph that I think should be recorded—

"If the implications of Mr. Sullivan's views are that the Queensland Government does not agree with the principles enunciated by the Green Paper, then his Government is at odds with a number of national leaders within the rural industry. These are men who have the task of assessing the needs of rural industry from a national viewpoint and not under the restrictions of politically motivated State ideas."

It is quite obvious that Mr. Sullivan is over-motivated by politically orientated ideas.

I say the Green Paper highlighted very graphically, very forcefully and very honestly the large percentage of primary producers with incomes below community average. This is significant. The person who thinks that the average primary producer is an affluent member of the community is just as much at sea as if he thought that each and every corner shopkeeper was as affluent as the David Jones or Myer emporiums.

The Green Paper highlighted the widely and wildly fluctuating and uncertain nature of primary producers' incomes. Senator Wriedt said—

"Less than 16 per cent of primary producers have stable incomes compared with 31 per cent of salary earners. Over 40 per cent of primary producers have fluctuations in their year-to-year incomes of over 50 per cent."

Those figures coming from the Green Paper should destroy for all time any false impressions held that the primary or rural sector is a mollycoddled or particularly affluent sector of the community. Those comments were not mine. They were independent comments quoted in the Green Paper, not pro-Labor or clouded by the National-Liberal Party centralist paranoia.

I believe that the Premier and his Ministers are adopting President Sukarno tactics here. If honourable members recall the history of

Indonesia they will remember that President Sukarno made such a poor job of governing Indonesia from within that he had to distract people's attention by telling them about the threat from the South, Australia, and from the North. I should say that the smoke-screen being put up continually of an attack by centralist threat to the State is a similar tactic by the Government of Queensland, and the purpose is simply to cloud its own shortcomings in governing the State of Queensland.

**Mr. Porter:** Are all the electors stupid?

**Mr. BLAKE:** No they are not; they are very intelligent and if the electoral boundaries were drawn in the right places the honourable member would see their intelligence exemplified by our sitting on that side of the House and the present Government members on this side. Party politics is the dominant theme of Government members, not the welfare of the community.

Another point that is still being flogged for its political mileage is that of the superphosphate bounty. I want to make it known right now that in spite of all the political mileage that has been obtained from it, the superphosphate bounty has not been abolished. A decent principle of the Australian Labor Government, to give people sufficient warning so that they could present a case to justify the continuation of the bounty, has been capitalised on by Government members in this Chamber. The bounty still remains in effect. It is also very noticeable that neither the Premier nor the Minister for Primary Industries has come out publicly and advised farmer organisations or sectors of farmer organisations that the more people who can put forward a constructive case to the Department of Agriculture and thence to the Industries Assistance Commission in Canberra, the better the argument would be for the bounty's retention. I suggest that they do not want a solution; they want a political gripe in this affair.

The Prime Minister said quite recently that only three appeals have been made against the removal of the superphosphate bounty and that one of them had been referred to the Industries Assistance Commission on behalf of the new-land farmers in Western Australia. I have said quite openly in the Press that I believe the producers in the wallum areas—the coastal lowland areas—could present an excellent case on the economics of their production for the retention of the superphosphate bounty, and I have urged them to do just that. To date the United Graziers' Association has not seen fit to prepare such a case. Apparently it does not see fit to prepare a case on behalf of a section of its members because it fears that this might be regarded as parochialism.

While our Premier and many other so-called well-motivated people are crying out for better selection of where we spend our money in order to reduce inflation, one would think they would support the idea

of organisations putting a case for certain sections of such organisations, if they think a case cannot be substantiated on economics over the whole spectrum. I have here an extract from "The Queensland Grain-grower" of 31 July which contains a report by the vice-president of the Queensland Grain Growers' Association, Mr. D. R. Eather. He said that as a result of a statement along the lines that only three farmer organisations had made application for the retention of the bounty—it was a statement by Senator Wriedt—many farmers wondered whether their organisations and particularly the Queensland Grain Growers' Association had taken any action on this important issue. Of course they would be wondering about it because the Prime Minister has said that if they can produce a case to justify the retention of the bounty, it would not be put back, because it has not been removed. It would be retained if justified.

If organisations think they cannot justify its retention over the whole spectrum of their membership, they should, if they are interested in their organisation and their membership, prepare a case and bring it forward in the time that was given them—I say nobly, in a political sense—by the Australian Government.

Further, we know that fertiliser costs are rising all over the world. We cannot tack any more than \$12 a ton, the value of the superphosphate subsidy, onto the Australian Government for the abolition of the subsidy when and if it takes place. This rising cost of fertiliser both in Australia and throughout the world gives to primary producers an excellent opportunity to build up a case for the retention of the subsidy. There is the possibility, of course, that a case could be presented and not approved, thereby resulting in disappointment; but that would not be any new experience, because in 1950 the Liberal-Country Party Government removed the superphosphate bounty and provided no means of appeal against its removal.

In conclusion on this subject, I reiterate that the subsidy has not been removed; it is there to be retained if any sector of industry can indicate the necessity for its retention.

Misrepresentation of the type I have illustrated has resulted in the loss of overseas markets. For example, whereas previously Australia sold large quantities of wheat to China, in recent years our Chinese market had been lost to Canada simply because the Liberal-Country Party Government abused the Chinese politically while it was carrying on trade with them. Now, however, thanks to the initiative taken by the A.L.P., even before it took over the reins of Government, Australia has a good export market in China. There is no need for me to remind the House of the way in which members of the A.L.P. were slated for visiting China. They were branded as Communists. However, when members of the

Liberal and Country Parties learned that President Nixon's envoy happened to be in China at the same time, they fell strangely silent.

In June of this year it was reported in the Press that Australia's exports to the People's Republic of China more than doubled during the nine months ended March this year compared with the previous corresponding period.

A newspaper report reads as follows—

"Figures issued yesterday by the Australian Statistics Bureau show exports to China during the last nine months were valued at \$99.8 million, compared with \$43.7 million in the nine months ended March last year.

"Exports to the United Kingdom over the same period dropped from \$476.1 million to \$335 million."

That article clearly demonstrates the benefit that can be derived from a realistic approach to Australia's export markets.

Under the headline "China buys 1m tonnes", the following article appeared in a recent issue of "The Queensland Grain-grower"—

"Depending on the classes of wheat shipped, the value of the sale could be in excess of \$115 million.

"This is half a million tonnes more than the agreement provided for in the first year.

"Although the delivery period under this contract will extend into the 1975 calendar year it will not affect the quantity of 1.5 million tonnes to 1.8 million tonnes which is to be supplied under the second year of the long-term agreement."

In addition to exporting large quantities of wheat to China, Australia has obtained a substantial market in that country for sugar. And didn't this cause a sour taste in the mouth of the Liberal-Country Party Government? In Federal Parliament Mr. Anthony accused Dr. Patterson of usurping the function of the Sugar Board, and his accusations received wide publicity until Dr. Patterson produced evidence to show quite clearly that the Sugar Board had asked him to establish dialogue with the Chinese so that it could trade with them.

Although Mr. Snedden said that his Government would have recognised China if it had been allowed to remain in office long enough—that would have been more than 23 years—Mr. Anthony said that he would not sell his principles for the sake of trade. As he was the Minister for Trade, I take it that if the Liberal-Country Party was still in office Australia would not have these trade outlets to China, in spite of the fact that, as I have said, our European markets are declining.

If, like the Premier, I were to harp on Federal matters, I suppose I could be accused of being of the Government's ilk. I am merely trying to illustrate the gross

failure of the State Government to match the market-promotion record of the A.L.P. in the interests of the rural sector and primary producers of this State and nation. The Queensland Government has been a palpable failure in terms of looking for outlets for rural industries. In 17 years of office it has not established one trade office in the Asian area, which offers the greatest potential for increased outlets for primary products and other goods.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** They are our nearest neighbours.

**Mr. BLAKE:** That is so and, of course, goodwill and trade go hand in hand. The Queensland Government has not tried to cultivate either.

It is very desirable that we should cultivate extra outlets, because when we are dependent on a few markets we are very vulnerable to manipulation of those markets. If manipulation of the markets is not the trouble, we are very vulnerable to honest influencing factors in the few outlets with which we trade. Some people believe that the market for our beef is being manipulated, while others put the trouble down to purely economic reasons. In its issue of 8 June, "The Australian" carried this headline—"Beef men hit by Japanese 'playing politics'". In the ensuing article, Mr. Roberts, the President of the United Graziers' Association, commented on moves by Japan to cut off Australian beef imports worth \$200,000,000 a year.

In part, the article reads—

"The Government (that is, the Japanese Government) in power is playing politics by protecting Japan's own producers.

"As a result Australia's producers are losing money. They are in terrible difficulties, especially the lot feeders who supplied the Japanese market."

It is understood that all nations play politics to protect their own producers (and I accept that), but there is no need to do it vitriolically and blindly as the Queensland Government has done in the last 17 years, or to fail to promote outlets in that time. In another newspaper dated 8 June, under the heading, "Japan cannot buy our beef" the following appeared—

"The Japanese Agriculture-Forestry Ministry said it was almost impossible for Japan to increase imports of beef this year as Japan herself had an abundant surplus of beef."

Whichever way we take it and whether we accept that it is a manipulated market—politically or otherwise—or one affected by internal troubles, the fact remains that when we rely on a few outlets we are likely to head for over-night plunges, according to the availability of the product or the purchasing power within the outlet area.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** What was the date of those articles?

**Mr. BLAKE:** Strangely enough, the two expressions of opinion were given on the same day, that is, 8 June 1974.

Mr. Speaker, you probably read that the Premier admitted, after his last expensive world jaunt with his large entourage of Pressmen and cameramen, that he thought the establishment of trade offices had merit. However, it appeared to me that, like Mahatma Ghandi, he hoped to win competitive trade by passive aggression or dynamic inactivity. I really do not know how to describe it. For Queensland's sake I believe it is right and proper to divert the Queensland Government from its pre-occupation with fighting the twice-elected Australian Government so that it may redirect its attention to the mess it has made, and is making, of its responsibility to govern Queensland. I hope that the State Government will make something of the great potential of Queensland. If it listened to the State Opposition, no doubt it would.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (4.35 p.m.): I wish to commence this afternoon by making a few remarks about the Select Committee on Punishment of Crimes of Violence. To me, every member of the committee justified his appointment by this Parliament. Every member pulled his weight. Every member did as much as he possibly could to make a success of the job that was entrusted to him. I believe the media should make some mention of the fact that no member of the committee asked for or received one cent in allowances or emoluments for the work he did, despite the fact that it was considerably inconvenient to all members and, in addition, it was expensive to some.

I believe that every member of the committee on punishment of crimes of violence, with the exception of one, would agree with me that every member pulled his weight. Unfortunately, the other day we heard from the honourable member for Chatsworth a vicious and venomous attack, in which among other things he said that I did not pull my weight on the crime and punishment committee because of my age and because I do not belong to any political party. I would expect that sort of thing from the honourable member for Chatsworth, who has a very unenviable reputation for superiority and superciliousness, for sarcastic sneers and smears, which have made him the most detested man in this Chamber.

I am not concerned with what the honourable member for Chatsworth said about me. When it is all said and done, I am very proud of the fact that I have lived long enough to have gone grey in the service of the people. My electors appreciate it, and they demonstrate their appreciation every polling day in ever-increasing numbers. However, I believe that in all fairness to the other members of the committee, the honourable

member for Chatsworth should put a curb on his tongue outside this Chamber—in the corridors and rooms of the House and, particularly, in his electorate and outside the House.

Quite recently I was informed that he said—and I believe it to be true—that the report of the crime and punishment committee could have been much better than it is “but for those four senile old bastards, Hinze, Porter, Tomkins and Aikens”. I feel sure that, if he said that, his remarks were prompted by the fact that we had the temerity—the gall, in his opinion—to disagree with him on the subjects of capital punishment and of stiffening the present parole sections of the administration of the law.

It is true—I say this for myself and I believe I say it for the other three senile old so-and-so's, according to the honourable member for Chatsworth—that we have lived long enough to develop eyes that see behind the smiling mask of craft; we have lived long enough to distinguish between the gold and the dross of human nature; and we have lived long enough also to come face to face with the fact that, just as we destroy without compunction a four-legged animal who wantonly kills, mutilates and massacres innocent people, so also should we destroy a two-legged animal who wantonly destroys and mutilates people. I see no difference between the biped and the quadruped when it comes to senseless, ruthless killing. Unfortunately, the honourable member for Chatsworth appears to differ from me. He has a right to differ, but unfortunately in a scurrilous manner he takes his difference outside the Chamber.

Many people believe—and it has been openly expressed by men like Gardiner, a very prominent member of the A.L.P. and that party's candidate for Kurilpa at the coming elections—that even the most monstrous criminals, including this criminal whom we read about in today's “Telegraph”, this monster who dismembered a little boy with a spade, are not criminals but men of dignity and have civil rights and civil privileges. Such people claim that this Parliament has no right by law, and that our administrators have no right, by the administration of that law, to take from those monsters their civil rights.

I do not believe that the law takes those civil rights from them. I believe that by the perpetration of their monstrous crimes they forfeit their civil rights and it is not for us to give their civil rights back to them. If the honourable member for Chatsworth thinks that Mr. Gardiner is quoting what should be quoted then, in all honesty and sincerity—if he is the honest man that he parades himself to be—he should go into the Kurilpa electorate at the next election and stand on the platform with Mr. Gardiner and support his candidature.

If I were opposing Mr. Gardiner at the next State election I would fight the election purely and simply on his attitude and the A.L.P. attitude to capital punishment. In addition, I would cite some of the crimes that they claim have been perpetrated not by criminals but by men of dignity with civil rights. I am absolutely convinced that if this matter were put to the people in a referendum, they would overwhelmingly endorse the actions and decisions reached by the four senile old so-and-so's on that committee. I have no more time to spend on that particular aspect of the venomous, vicious, scurrilous remarks passed about me by the honourable member for Chatsworth.

I shall now deal with another remark he made about me—that I did not pull my weight on that committee. Anyone who cares to read the record, depositions and report will know that we all pulled our weight. I was very proud and happy to be associated with the other members of that committee with the exception of the honourable member for Chatsworth, even though they disagreed with me on certain points, and on one occasion I almost had a stand-up vocal fight with our particularly fine chairman. I give every man the right to express his opinion and to disagree with me. But it would appear that anyone who disagrees with the honourable member for Chatsworth is less than the dust beneath the chariot wheels.

It is true, as he said, that I am not a member of a party, which means, I suppose, in his nomenclature that I am not a member of a major political party. And I am not. If I were, I would give to the other members of that party and to my leader my undivided and unstinted loyalty. That is something that the honourable member for Chatsworth can never claim to have done or ever will be able to.

Let us look at this paragon of all virtue, loyalty and fealty to his leader and party—the honourable member for Chatsworth. He was no sooner in this House than he came in with a big book which was later known as the Domesday Book of pimpery. He sat there and marked down very sedulously the time of entry and exit of every member of the National Party and of the Liberal Party. He came in here with the fixed opinion—and was prepared to prove it by this document—that members of those parties in this House were loafers, spongers and time-servers. He even went into the bar and checked the time they lined up to have a couple of sniffs and checked the time they came out.

It might be wondered why, in his address to this House on what is known as the Parker case, he made a particularly venomous attack coupling me with the “Sunday Sun”. I have no brief for the “Sunday Sun.” It, like me, is big enough and ugly enough to defend itself. Honourable members might want to know why he made that scurrilous attack on both of us. The reason

was, to use an old saying, that I know where the body is buried. The honourable member for Chatsworth, not knowing me as well as he should, did not know that I have never attacked any member of this House of my own volition. The only time I have spoken in a derogatory or derisive way of a member of this House is, as I am doing now, very reluctantly in my own defence.

When the honourable member for Chatsworth had compiled this monumental, putrid book of pimpery, he went along to a reporter from the "Sunday Sun", told him it would make the best political story of the year and offered to sell it to him. The reporter refused to offer him a cent for it and gave him a pretty good oral dressing down and told him the type of person he was in trying to sell it.

That was not the end of it. I know that the honourable member for Chatsworth will not deny that, having failed to sell that putrid thing to a "Sunday Sun" reporter, he then took it to a meeting of the National Party and Liberal Party and read excerpts from it, expecting to receive their adulation and encomiums, to be patted on the back and, according to some of his friends, to be mentioned in either the Queen's Birthday or New Year's honours list. All he got from members of the Country Party and the Liberal Party at that meeting was such a classical dressing down that when they had finished with him there was not, if I may use a western expression with which you, Mr. Speaker, are very conversant, enough left for a hungry crow to pick up. This is the man who says that I do not pull my weight in the Chamber because I am not a member of a major party. If I were a member of a major party, would I do that? Is there anyone here, even some of my political enemies, who would put me in the category of a man who would do that?

Of course, we all remember when the honourable member for Chatsworth—this paragon of all party virtues and loyalty—crossed the Chamber to vote with the A.L.P. in an endeavour to bring down his leader, his party, and his Premier, and put the A.L.P. back in power at the election that he hoped that he would cause. Does anyone think that I would do that?

There is another matter on which I am going to challenge the honourable member for Chatsworth so that this House and those who read "Hansard" can judge between him and me. At the 1972 Federal election, Mr. Killen, who I understand is the Federal member for Moreton or some other electorate in this part of the State, came in, during and after the election campaign, for much adverse criticism from members of the Liberal Party and others for the manner in which he conducted the campaign, and for his actions and attitudes before and during the campaign. He was charged with treachery, he was charged with all sorts

of things, and, so far as I could see from the distance from my reading of events in Townsville, I thought that there was a lot of justification for the charge that Killen had been treacherous to the Liberal Party and his leader, Billy McMahon.

Here is my first challenge to the honourable member for Chatsworth to prove his sincerity. The honourable member rushed into the Press and made an astonishing statement in which he said in effect that the first duty of a party member is to ensure his own election in his own electorate. If in the process of doing that he betrays his party, brings down his party, and deposes his leader, that is quite all right because the end justifies the means. When he wrote that, a Brisbane newspaper—not "Sunday Sun"—and a Brisbane television station got in touch with me and asked if I would come to Brisbane to make a telecast and write an article for the newspaper.

My first challenge to the honourable member for Chatsworth is to produce the article that he wrote that was published in the newspaper in which he defended Jim Killen so that the House can judge what type of party man he is, and how deep and sincere is his loyalty. I wrote to the honourable member for Chatsworth. I told him of the invitation that had been extended to me, and I told him that I proposed to write the article requested and make the telecast. I challenge him to read in this House that letter from me to him so that honourable members can judge between him and me on the basis of party loyalty, and judge whether I would be a better man for my constituents in this House, and a better member of the committee that dealt with crime and punishment, if I had been a member of a major party.

It is true that I did not come to Brisbane for the purpose that I have already stated. I had too much to do in the North, and, in addition, after thinking it over I concluded that this was an internal squabble between members of the Liberal Party. There is a wise old saying that if you see a heap of filth on the road and you walk into it instead of round it, you cannot blame anyone else if your boots get dirty. I therefore told the newspaper and the television station that I would not come down and, as they wanted, "do over" the honourable member for Chatsworth.

I challenge the honourable member now to read the article that he wrote for the Press in defence of Jim Killen, and read the letter that I wrote to him. Members of this House will then be able to make a judgment. Let them be enshrined in "Hansard" so that those who read them can judge what type of man has the temerity to criticise, condemn and scurrilously attack me as he did.

As we know, the honourable member for Chatsworth aspires to become the Treasurer of this State. We all know that he has

neither the ability nor the honesty to be the Treasurer of a kid's piggybank. If he ever becomes Treasurer of this State, he will very soon learn that the Treasurer's chair is not built to accommodate an incompetent peter-tickler.

Let me tell the House something else about this paragon of all the political virtues. During the luncheon recess of the debate on what is now known as the Parker case, the honourable member for Chatsworth went to the Premier. He poked two fingers very hard into the Premier's chest and said, "If you move the gag before I have a chance to speak on this, I'll rip you to pieces, Joh, in the Press and anywhere else I can." What a marvellous example of party loyalty from the honourable member for Chatsworth!

Whatever else we may think of the Premier, there is not a man here who will not give him credit for having a lot of courage. He had courage on this occasion. He in his turn poked his two fingers into the chest of the honourable member for Chatsworth. He did not poke too hard or he would have broken one of the brittle little ribs in his rib cage. He said, "Look here, Hewitt, don't you threaten me. Don't you threaten me or you'll know what will happen to you. I will see that every member of the crime and punishment committee who wants to speak in this debate will get an opportunity to speak. Don't you threaten me or you'll know what will happen to you." The honourable member for Chatsworth, this critic of me, slunk away with his tail between his legs like a whipped cur. Surely to goodness he is not going to deny that. There were about 15 or 16 witnesses to that particular incident.

Having made those few not exactly adulatory remarks about the honourable member for Chatsworth, and having given the House an opportunity to judge between my critic and me as to whether I would make a better member of Parliament if I were the same type of party man as he is, I will go on to deal with another gentleman in this Chamber, the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

The first thing I think we should do, in view of some of the most outstanding, outrageous and irresponsible remarks being made, in the North at any rate, by the Leader of the Opposition, is to arrange for the House to publish in detail the salary that he receives, the salary that all his officers receive, and all the lurks and perks that he receives from this Government, so that everybody will know that he is not the overworked, impecunious poor old battler that he parades himself as being, and so that everybody will know just how much he fought and why he fought in order to assassinate the honourable member for Bulimba.

After the ballot for the leadership of the A.L.P. was concluded on 1 July, the Leader of the Opposition returned to Townsville. He

came to the city the next day, Tuesday, for the Show. It was not long before the A.B.C. news office in Townsville got hold of him. With one or two exceptions the A.B.C. news office in Townsville can be rightly classed as a subbranch of the A.L.P. That office asked the Leader of the Opposition to appear on its weekly programme known as "Points North" and naturally he agreed to do that. The Premier should do all he possibly can to get that segment of "Points North". Mr. Speaker, you never saw such a transformation in all your life. He was not the ranting, raving extrovert we often see in this Chamber. He was not the fulminating tiger who is going to demolish Joh Petersen and everybody else. He was demure; he was docile; he was coy. As a matter of fact he was reticent; he was diffident. He was asked, "How did you become Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tucker?" He said, "Well, look, I want to tell you this: I had a great opinion of Jack Houston. I had nothing against Jack Houston. I was happy about his leadership. I gave him unqualified and unstinted loyalty."

**Government Members interjected.**

**Mr. AIKENS:** Honourable members opposite should get the film and have it screened in this Chamber. They would never have seen anything like it in their lives. They would not believe it was the Leader of the Opposition as we know him. He went on to say, "It came about this way: some of my mates said to me, 'Look, there's a vacancy for the leadership. Why don't you have a go for it, Percy?' So I decided to have a go for it and the numbers came up. I won."

As a result of that telecast a lot of people in North Queensland got the idea that he was not a bad sort of fellow after all, and that he had been a great mate of Jack Houston, as he called him. As a matter of fact he almost wiped the tears from his eyes when he said, "I beat Jack."

Let me tell the true story. The honourable member for Townsville West, as he was then, had been up to Townsville just prior to that. He was so ignorant of the move to depose the honourable member for Bulimba as Leader of the Opposition, as he claimed, that he told the members of the A.L.P. in Townsville the week-end before the leadership changed that he was home and dried to toss Jack Houston! Those were his exact words. His exact words were, "I'll do him by 20 to 13 at least and 19 to 14 at the very outside. You can put your boots on it; it is home and dry." If anyone wants proof of that I will produce it in a minute.

Let us not forget that this man, who was quite happy with Jack Houston, who gave him unstinted loyalty and fealty, is the man who moved the vote of no confidence in Jack Houston in the party room. He is the man who launched the vicious and venomous

attack on him in the party room, who said, "We will have to get rid of Jack Houston or we're sunk." I do not know whether he circulated it but a filthy story was circulated amongst certain waverers in the rank and file of the A.L.P. that during the last Federal election campaign when Snedden came up to Brisbane, the honourable member for Bulimba (Jack Houston) sneaked up the back stairs and had a secret luncheon with Snedden. That is one of the stories that were circulated amongst weakling members of the A.L.P. in order to get them to swing their votes from Houston to Tucker.

As I say, the Leader of the Opposition told members of the A.L.P. that he was home and dry, that he was a winner whichever way it went. He said, "Put your money on me; you can't lose." And believe it or not, they did.

"The Townsville Daily Bulletin" has an iron-clad rule that has never been broken in the 40 years I have been there and I have had a lot to do with it in 40 years in one way or another. It is that if an advertisement is to appear today it must be lodged in the office of "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" before 12 noon on the previous day. That is an iron-clad, implacable rule which has never been broken, and I will never believe that it has been broken or ever will be broken. The Leader of the Opposition was elected to that position, as he said, much to his astonishment and surprise. Of course, he did not expect it. He said on the A.B.C. that he was overwhelmed with gratitude for the mates who rallied round him at the last moment and assisted him to toss out Jack Houston. I think he was elected at about half past 2 on the Monday afternoon. The news became public at about half past 3 and the advertisement I have here appeared in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" the next morning. It reads—

"Congratulations, Perc Tucker, M.L.A., Member for Townsville West, Leader of the Opposition. A first for Townsville and North Queensland. Office: B.S.C. Building, Shopping Centre, cnr. Ingham Road and Hugh Street, Phone 79 8776. From Currajong A.L.P. Branch Members, (signed) A. J. Trower, Pres. F. M. Treacy, Secty."

Here is his photograph; I am not ringing him in. Trower and Treacy are two men who have been, for many years, very close personal and political friends of the Leader of the Opposition. Honourable members might think there is nothing wrong with this advertisement appearing in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" on Tuesday, 2 July until I tell them that it was lodged before noon on the previous day. It was lodged before noon on the Monday, four hours before the honourable member for Townsville West became Leader of the Opposition. It was all so cut and dried.

**Mr. Tucker:** It would have been difficult had I been beaten.

**Mr. AIKENS:** The Leader of the Opposition can laugh now. I suppose he thinks he is on top. He can laugh at the discomfiture of the honourable member for Bulimba, after stabbing him in the back, after shoving the dagger right in between his shoulder blades. I suppose he thinks he can laugh at that, but this advertisement was in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" congratulating him on his election to the leadership of the Opposition in the Queensland Parliament and it was lodged four hours before he pulled it off. Of course, he did not win by the 20 votes to 13 he said he was going to win by. He won by 17 to 15 and if the honourable member for Burke had come down he would have won by 17 to 16. If he had not worked so hot on some members of the A.L.P. he'd have gone down. What would have been his position had he gone down in the ballot and had that advertisement appeared in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" the next morning? What an embarrassment for the Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr. Tucker:** I'd have felt badly about it.

**Mr. AIKENS:** One of these days, when it suits my convenience, I will read out in this House the names of the 17 members who voted for the honourable member for Townsville West. I know them, and Labor members know that I know them.

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**Mr. AIKENS:** Look at them twisting and turning.

**Mr. Jensen interjected.**

**Mr. AIKENS:** I know you voted for Tucker.

**Mr. Jensen:** I told the A.L.P. in Bundaberg I did.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I have just put the finger on you.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. AIKENS:** I have seen a lot of Labor leaders come and go, and without fear of contradiction I say that the honourable member for Townsville West is the most irresponsible leader that the Labor Party has ever had in this Parliament. Some of the statements that he is reported in the Townsville Press and other news media as making are absolutely beyond belief; they are incredible. He has got to the stage where he will say anything, and now he blames the Premier for everything.

Not long ago he stood on the Bank of New South Wales corner in Townsville and screamed out, "Get rid of Japanese Joh!" Now the Leader of the Opposition gives the Premier another title and screams out, "Get rid of multi-national Joh!" How many other names he will have for the Premier I don't know.

Frankly the people of the North are sick and tired of these irresponsible diatribes emanating from the honourable member for Townsville West, who, by the grace of God and his own treachery, is now Leader of the Opposition. Furthermore, he knows very well that the people of Townsville are fully aware of what the National Government, led by Mr. Whitlam, is doing to them. They are being belted from pillar to post.

The honourable member for Isis, who was the previous speaker, and the honourable member for Bundaberg, who interjected a few moments ago, have claimed that the sugar industry is in a wonderful state. It is in a healthy state only because of abnormally high overseas prices for sugar; but of course they will not last for long. Furthermore, the Whitlam Government has already taken at least \$11,000,000 from the sugar industry by juggling Australia's currency and by increasing interest rates.

Quite a lot of work has to be done in North Queensland. In Townsville, for example, an international airport was promised for Garbutt. Now it is to be established in Port Moresby. North Queensland was promised by Mr. Fabian Sweeney, with the full approval of Mr. Whitlam, that the Federal Government would finance the second stage of the Ross River dam. All that the Federal Government can find now, however, is a lousy \$2,500,000 and it is forcing the State Government, under "multi-national Joh" and his crowd, and the Townsville City Council to find the balance of the estimated cost of \$9,000,000. That is the sort of spin North Queensland is getting from Whitlam.

It is interesting to read from the official records of Federal Parliament what Whitlam is doing for other countries while he does not have the money to do a lot of things that should be done in North Queensland. Last year the Whitlam Government gave \$188,000,000 to Papua New Guinea; it contributed \$64,000,000 to the Colombo Plan—and what a racket the Colombo Plan has become—and on a recent overseas tour, with a nonchalant and grandiloquent wave of his hand, Mr. Whitlam gave \$10,000,000 to the Philippines.

Our own defence forces are being allowed to run down. Fabian Sweeney, with the full approval of Mr. Whitlam, promised that an extra regiment would be established at Lavarack Barracks, but instead the strength is two regiments down. But Mr. Whitlam provided \$6,000,000 by way of defence aid to Malaysia and \$4,000,000 to Indonesia. No-one needs to be reminded that the Whitlam Government used an R.A.A.F. jet to transport a Murray grey bull to China as a personal present from Mr. Whitlam to Chou En-lai. At the same time the honourable member for Lytton, at considerable expense, went over dressed in a white coat as nappy-boy for the bull.

The other day the Whitlam Government sent over, at a cost of \$210,000, three or four plane loads of ornate furniture for the Embassy at Peking so that Whitlam could impress Chou-En-lai and Mao-Tse-tung with the opulence and affluence of the Australian Government. It virtually said, "Look, that is what we have got, so hop in for your cut; we have plenty left for you."

It also paid \$1,500,000 for a chromatic abortion known as "Blue Poles". This monstrosity was painted by three men who were on a bender—they were drunk—in New York. I know the sort of things people can see when they are drunk because many, many years ago I used to get in the horrors. I saw many queer things when I was in the horrors but never anything so queer as some of the A.L.P. members of this Parliament. While these three men were in the horrors they painted this picture and over went Gough and said, "This is a work of art; dish out \$1,500,000 for it."

I want to know how much it will cost the Whitlam Government to set up and establish, with ornate and opulent furniture, the embassies that it is setting up throughout the world in Communist countries such as North Korea and North Vietnam. Whitlam has money for all those things—money to squander with the reckless abandon of a drunken sailor—but he has no money for North Queensland and no money for the jobs really needing to be done. In addition, the Whitlam Government, by its juggling of currency, has cost the Mount Isa Mines people \$17,000,000. The Leader of the Opposition and other Labor people may say, "What does that matter? It is a big multinational corporation anyway." I suppose the company would have made an extra \$1,000,000 profit from the \$17,000,000 extra money it would have got but for the juggling of currency and the pegging of the copper price in Australia, but the other \$16,000,000 would have gone into North Queensland. It would have gone to pay the fine wages the company does pay and it would have provided the fine homes, roads, railways and various other services that the company provides for the people.

It does not matter to Labor that we were robbed of that \$16,000,000 and it does not matter that the sugar industry was robbed of many extra millions of dollars it would have got but for the way in which the Whitlam Government set out deliberately to crush all primary industries in North Queensland.

What a raw deal all the other farming industries have got! When we consider that Queensland is the greatest primary-producing State in the Commonwealth, and that North Queensland is the greatest part of this great primary-producing State, is it any wonder that North Queenslanders are, to use a very mild expression, browned off with the raw deal that they are getting from the Whitlam Government?

The Leader of the Opposition (the honourable member for Townsville West) sometimes does not know whether he stands with Whitlam or against him. Without doubt he is the greatest political contortionist in the history of this State. Not long ago I saw him depicted in the TV programme "This Day Tonight" standing on the lawn in front of Parliament House saying, "I am a Queenslander. If I think I should take Whitlam on I will take him on; don't worry about that." I know how well he will take Whitlam on! Every time the Premier of this State takes Whitlam on, the Leader of the Opposition rushes in to slander and abuse the Premier. We now have an amusing triumvirate, with the Leader of the Opposition, Jack Egerton and the Premier of Queensland all in the one corner. I never thought that I would see that, but that is the position because Jack Egerton does not want to see the Whitlam Government put out of office. He does not want to lose his directorship with Qantas or all the other affluent lurks and perks he is getting from the Whitlam Government. He is fighting to save his own hide and pocket and naturally is taking his stand on what is called the "moderate" side. Some people say that he has mellowed. That will be the day when Jack Egerton mellows; he will mellow only when his own personal interests are concerned.

The most shocking thing the Leader of the Opposition did—the people of North Queensland will never forgive him for it—was to go out and tell young people, as he did the other day, that the Queensland State Government is responsible for the shockingly high interest rates they have to pay when they buy a home on time payment. He accused the Minister for Works, and said that he put up the interest rates on housing loans from housing societies, and that he alone is responsible.

I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition or some other A.L.P. fanatic will tell me whether the Trade Union Building Society charges the same interest as the other building societies. I understand that it does. If the Trade Union Building Society has to charge the same rate of interest as other building societies, there must be a very sound reason for it. The very sound, inescapable reason for it is that the Whitlam Government, and the Whitlam Government alone, jacked up the interest rates to such an extent that all building societies have to pay over 9 per cent for their money. Because of that, they must lend it at 11 per cent or more in order to cut square.

When a man occupying a position of trust and confidence—the member for Townsville West occupies the position of Leader of the Opposition, which is alleged to be a position of trust and honour—descends to those tactics to deliberately distort and to deliberately cast confusion and chaos in the minds of the young people, we have reached a pretty poor state in politics.

That is the whole position. There are quite a number of other things I wanted to say, but I can see you looking at the clock, Mr. Speaker, so I will finish on that note. I say that, unless the A.L.P. in this House gets back to the old days, when we could at least expect some honesty, sincerity, loyalty, and political decency, it will never get back on the Treasury benches. I can remember seeing seated on the Labor Party benches in this House men whom anybody could look up to. What have we got now? A bunch of drop-outs and academic misfits.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. AIKENS:** I can understand the Leader of the Opposition being loyal to Egerton, because he would not be in this House but for Jack Egerton. In 1960, when the A.L.P. was looking for a candidate to run for the new Townsville North seat, Egerton and Duggan personally selected the honourable member for Townsville West to run for the Townsville North seat, in preference to the late Percy Lowes and Jimmy Eustace, two men who had given a lifetime of loyalty to the party.

**Mr. Bousen** interjected.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Fancy the honourable member for Toowoomba North butting in here! One of his own members—one of his best A.R.U. men, Jimmy Eustace, who had been in the A.R.U. for 25 years and who had been a loyal and sincere member of the A.L.P. for 25 years—was passed over by Egerton and Duggan in order to put in the honourable member for Townsville West, who had had an A.L.P. ticket for a lousy four years. I would expect that sort of an interjection from the honourable member.

**Mr. Lane:** He is their stooge here, isn't he?

**Mr. AIKENS:** I don't know what he is. I don't bother about him. When all is said and done, I do not have the time to stop and kick at every little cur that yaps at my heels. I believe in dealing with big issues. I know the people of North Queensland want big issues dealt with and they know that the Leader of the Opposition is not dealing with big issues. They know he has an obsession against the Premier. He has the nerve to say that Joh Petersen has an obsession against the Prime Minister. Where would one find a more fanatical obsession than the obsession of the Leader of the Opposition against our Premier?

I was at a very big football match in Townsville on Sunday last. I try these things to see how the people react to them. The honourable Leader of the Opposition was there, sitting out front, with a good old Labor Party supporter, Ben Bloom. I walked past them on my way to get a drink of tea or something. As I passed Percy and Ben Bloom, I sang out, "Percy, if Estates don't win this match, don't forget to blame Joh Petersen." The crowd roared. He has reached the stage where he will blame Joh for anything.

I don't care what he does. What he does is a matter for himself and the rabble of his party that is still left behind him. I guarantee that, if it went to a secret ballot again, even Jack Houston would do him like a dinner. What decent members of the A.L.P. (decent political members, of course; I am not making any personal comment) would do him in a race for the leadership now is nobody's business.

Mr. Speaker, having had my say for my beloved Northland and having tried to expose to the world what a rotten, raw, contemptuous deal we are getting in North Queensland from the Whitlam Government, of which the Leader of the Opposition is a supporter when he thinks it will suit his own personal and political convenience to be a supporter, I thank you for listening.

**Mrs. JORDAN** (Ipswich West) (5.15 p.m.): We have just listened to a time-wasting harangue from the honourable member for Townsville South concerning two members of this Parliament, one a Government member and the other the Leader of the Opposition. It is quite a change to hear him attack a Government member. I wonder at his flights of imagination and the fact that he must use such material and invective to make a speech in this House. Whom the A.L.P. elects as its leader and how it does so is A.L.P. business.

**Mr. Aikens:** We know how you voted.

**Mrs. JORDAN:** I do not care who knows how I voted.

**Mr. Aikens:** You voted for Tucker.

**Mrs. JORDAN:** Of course I did. I make no apologies for how I voted in this matter. I am not ashamed of what I did, nor is any other member of the A.L.P. That is our business. We do not interfere in the affairs of the honourable member for Townsville South or in the elections held within the National Party and the Liberal Party. How we vote to elect our leader is our business and we make no apology for what we have done.

In my speech I shall not waste the time of the House as the honourable member for Townsville South did. Once again at the opening of this session, I listened with great attentiveness to the Governor's Opening Speech, hoping to hear that something of major importance would be done for Ipswich. I thought that perhaps I would hear something about a new railway station after many years of "off again, on again."

But alas, the chief concern of the Government was again to be the super critic of the Australian Government even though the people of this country in December 1972 made their decision, and in May 1974 confirmed that decision, to elect an Australian Labor Party Government. Ever since that Government took office, we have been subjected by the Premier and other Government members to criticism after criticism of

the Australian Government, be it true or false. They have shown no recognition of what has been done by the Australian Government for this State.

As I sit and listen to their constant tirade against the Australian Government, I wonder what they found to speak about before the advent of that Government. I sometimes wonder if they are Australians and not only Queenslanders. The Queensland Government gives a strong indication, judging by Government members' speeches and actions in this Chamber, that it believes it is the Australian Government and that the Premier is the Prime Minister. And the Premier is the greatest holder of that belief.

Let us be realistic. By every standard of parliamentary democracy, the Australian Government did receive a renewal of its mandate—a second endorsement of its policies—from the people of Australia. It is time that the Federal Opposition and the Queensland Government faced up to this fact and began to play a constructive and co-operative role in the affairs of this country. It is time that the Queensland Government paid more attention to governing Queensland rather than spending time, thought, energy, and, more importantly, Queensland people's money in its political game against the Australian Labor Party Government in Canberra.

The Queensland Government does not hesitate to take credit for things set up with Federal money. We have only to look at the health centres and legal aid centres, for which some money came from Canberra. No credit was given in Ipswich—by Ministers anyway—when they visited these centres.

**Mr. Lane:** It was Queensland money.

**Mrs. JORDAN:** It was Australian Government money that set up those centres and no credit was given by either the Minister for Justice or the Minister for Health when they visited Ipswich to open them. It was not and it is not the God-given right of the Liberal Party and the National Party to always be the Government. But they seem to think it is. They have been playing that role for far too long—for so long, in fact, that many people are now getting rather tired of their continual disruptive criticism, particularly since the election following the double dissolution. I hear such opinions now being expressed by people who have been Liberal Party supporters and by people who, irrespective of their political beliefs, believe in democracy and a fair go. They do not want anarchy.

Certainly Queensland did not vote strongly for the A.L.P. at the last election, when the Premier flew around Queensland, at the Queensland taxpayers' expense, putting fear into people, telling half-truths, and giving exaggerated opinions wherever he went. They were for the most part only opinions—his opinions. Anyone who listened to, or

viewed, the proceedings of the joint sitting of the Australian Parliament, and listened to the talk of the community afterwards—

**Mr. AIKENS:** I rise to a point of order. Is not the honourable member breaching Standing Orders by reading her speech?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mrs. JORDAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pity the honourable member did not have more to do.

Anyone who listened to, or viewed, the proceedings of the joint sitting of the Australian Parliament, and listened to the discussions of the community afterwards, would realise that a different attitude has developed, and is still developing. Blind opposition and destructive criticism is now not enough to convince people, even in this admittedly parochial State of Queensland.

**Mr. Lane:** Why don't you leave it if you don't like it?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs. JORDAN:** Criticism and questioning of attitudes has come as a result of the "Queen of Queensland" stand by the Premier and the accompanying ridicule, even by some of the media. After all, the Queen is Queen of Australia, and this is accepted by the whole of Australia as well as by Queenslanders. Queensland is now gaining a reputation as the odd man out, and this I regret. This was made very clear at the Premiers' Conference, and I wonder where we are going and what will be the next odd step.

If the Government continues in this vein, to stay in office it will need more than the present gerrymander, which has been described as the worst that has been seen anywhere. It is a gerrymander under which the A.L.P., with 48 per cent of the vote, which is more than the combined vote of all the other parties, holds only 33 seats, whilst the National Party, with less than 20 per cent of the vote, has more seats than the Liberal Party and is the senior party in the coalition. No wonder the National Party is so scared of the concept of one vote, one value. I never cease to wonder that the Liberal Party goes along with the National Party on this issue, because it is the loser.

Before I turn to some matters concerning my electorate, I wish to refer to one point that the former Governor-General of Australia, Sir Paul Hasluck, made in his speech at the farewell dinner tendered to him in Canberra recently. He said—

"There is far too much public relations in politics today—I mean hiring people to sell you. Politics is not cigarette advertising. Don't let us get down to the state where we are asking electors just to vote for the best slogan—or to where we're asking the electors to vote

for the best public relations exercise. Let us get to the point where we are saying to intelligent Australians, 'This is the policy and not an advertising gimmick. This is not the fancy container that we want you to prefer. This is the policy we think will work. Vote for that.'"

I could not agree with him more, and, coming from him, it should make many people rethink, for he could not be accused of being partisan. It needed to be said. He made some important and pertinent points at that dinner as he made his farewell as Governor-General.

In this State the Government employs more public relations men than there are elected members of Parliament. One wonders who really influences people, and what role public relations personnel are playing, as against the role that parliamentarians are able to play. It certainly poses a very big question for all of us who are concerned about democratic government. In my humble opinion it is not a good trend, particularly with colour TV coming in next March and bearing in mind the effect it will have. The present trend could be a subtle way of eroding the status of Parliament in Queensland and even in Australia. Vigilance is very much needed in this sphere of public relations. It should not be a question of who has most money and who can outdo the other at the game.

I wish to speak now about the urgent need for future planning for another high school in my electorate of Ipswich West. For several years I have been urging that the Education Department acquire land for this purpose. Over 1,400 students attend the Ipswich State High School at Brassall, which has more than 80 teachers. I think the number is 86. The school is now far too big, and most unwieldy. Many pupils are unknown to teachers and many teachers are unknown to pupils. It is very impersonal, and discipline is at a very low level. It is almost an impossibility, particularly with so many very young teachers, to achieve much control during recess hours, let alone during school hours. I am not at all happy about some of the reports of happenings during recess hours. I have 13-year-old twin grandchildren attending that school, and I am greatly concerned about what I hear. I appeal to the Minister to plan urgently for another high school in the western suburbs of Ipswich, and thus reduce the big, complicated complex which the Ipswich State High School has become.

I also desire to make an appeal on behalf of the North Ipswich State School. With an attendance of 580 pupils, this school has been classified as a disadvantaged school by the co-ordinator, Mr. C. McDade, inspector of schools. Forty-five per cent of the children come from low-income homes. Approximately 50 per cent of pupils would live in old or substandard housing. The school is in a very old area of Ipswich, and is close to the Ipswich Railway Workshops and many

other industrial undertakings. As it is a densely built-up area, few recreational facilities are available in the vicinity.

The school itself further disadvantages the children in that many of the classrooms have poor lighting. Only two out of 19 have floor covering. Most have bare wooden floors. Classrooms in the main building have no shelving for storage of children's books. A good library is badly needed to replace the poky room now used. Inspections have been made by the Works Department and estimates prepared, but nothing gets done. The reply is always the familiar one—lack of finance.

Many children at the school need remedial attention, but only a few receive it, and much travelling to the remedial centre is involved. There is a long waiting list for this attention. A resource teacher at this school would be a great advantage, and I ask the Minister for Education to give urgent consideration to such an appointment. I urge both the Minister for Education and the Minister for Works and Housing to take action to raise the level of amenities at Ipswich North, and thus help these disadvantaged children. Many of the homes in this area were inundated in the recent floods, and much hardship has ensued.

While speaking about floods, I point out that my electorate of Ipswich West was among the hardest hit in the Australia Day week-end flooding. Thirty-one homes and their contents were completely washed away. They disappeared down the Bremer River. Many hundreds of other homes were inundated by flood waters and were badly damaged. There is still much heartbreak in these areas. Some people are rebuilding while others have had or are having their homes repaired.

At 5.30 p.m.,

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

#### REVOCATION OF STATE FOREST

**Hon. W. A. R. RAE** (Gregory—Minister for Lands and Forestry) (5.30 p.m.): I move—

“(1) That this House agrees that the proposal by the Governor in Council to revoke the setting apart and declaration as State forest under the Forestry Act of all that piece or part of State Forest 561, parish of Bribie, described as portion 281, parish of Bribie, as shown on plans Cg. 1890 and Cg. 1891, deposited in the Survey Office and containing an area of about 250 hectares, be carried out.

“(2) That Mr. Speaker convey a copy of this resolution to the Minister for submission to His Excellency the Governor in Council.”

The object of this proposal is to secure the approval of this House for the revocation of part of a State forest so that the

land concerned can be granted in exchange for a comparable area of freehold land which is to be surrendered to the Crown and permanently reserved as State forest.

For the benefit of honourable members I had a brief explanatory note and an illustrating map tabled with the formal proposal. I now propose to deal more fully with the various matters which preceded the acceptance of the principle of this exchange.

Following consideration of a number of applications to lease an area situated in the north-east corner of State Forest 561, parish of Bribie, for the establishment of improved pastures, an area of about 618 acres, being portion 281, was offered for sale on 2 May 1968 as a special lease for a term of 20 years at an upset annual rental of \$100 subject to normal forestry conditions but with a proviso that an application to clear and grass or cultivate the land would be considered.

Messrs. Robert McLean, Kevin George Norris and Ashley John Cooper purchased the lease at a rental of \$1,025 per annum.

Portion 281 is part of Beerwah State Forest, the greater part of which is being converted to softwood plantations, and the term of 20 years was fixed, having regard to the time when the land concerned would be required for planting and at the same time to allow the lessee a reasonable period in which to recoup the expenditure involved in development works. The lessees wasted no time in applying for permission to clear the land and, in view of the lease conditions and the fact that the area carried no commercial timber of marketable value, a permit to destroy trees over the whole area was duly issued.

This work was subsequently carried out and towards the end of 1971 the lessees made representations to the Minister and interviewed departmental officers to explore the prospect of converting the land to freehold or at the very least to get an assurance that a further tenancy would be granted upon expiry of the current lease.

The lessees pointed out that they had spent a considerable amount of money from their own resources developing and stocking the land and constructing structural improvements. It was stated that because of the nature of the lease they had not been able to borrow any money by offering the lease as security.

In these discussions it was made clear to the lessees that the Forestry Department had not been anxious to lease the land in the first place, except perhaps for unimproved grazing, but had altered its stand in view of the amount of interest shown and, by making the land available for a 20-year term, was allowing the maximum period of alternative use before using the land itself for growing softwood timbers, this being the purpose for which it had initially been reserved.

It was also explained to the lessees that, whilst it was indicated in the auction sale that clearing or cultivation would be agreed to, the construction of structural improvements should have been subject to specific prior approval and, had they sought approval for the type of structural improvements then effected, the implications of the construction of these improvements in relation to the term of the lease would have been brought to their attention.

When it was made known to the lessees that the lease area, which is all plantable land, would on present indications be required for conversion to softwood plantations immediately upon expiry of their lease in 1988 and that, in view of the necessity to hold the land for future plantation purposes, their application for conversion of tenure could not be entertained, they suggested that the matter might be resolved by exchange of the leased land on the State forest for an acceptable parcel of freehold land conveniently located in relation to the Forestry Department's reserves of planting land. This suggestion was accepted as worthy of consideration and the matter was held in abeyance pending a further approach by the lessees.

In January 1973 the lessees advised the Conservator of Forests that they had purchased certain freehold lands in the parish of Goomboorian, between the Tin Can Bay Road and Tinana Creek, abutting Toolara State Forest and were prepared to exchange 301 hectares of this land for a freehold title to the part of Beerwah State Forest held by them as a special lease.

Inspection of the freehold land disclosed that it is coastal forest country intersected by swampy areas. With the exception of about 35 hectares along Tinana Creek the whole area is suitable for planting with exotic softwood species, and the Conservator of Forest is happy to accept this freehold land in exchange for the part of the State forest to which I have referred.

The lessees have furnished written advice to the effect that they consider that an exchange as proposed would be one of equal value. Crown valuations have confirmed this.

I consider that the exchange of land as proposed will have no detrimental effect on the Crown estate and fully support the proposal to excise portion 281, parish of Bribie from Beerwah State Forest to enable the land concerned to be granted in fee-simple in exchange for the absolute surrender to the Crown of freehold portions 5V, 6V and 103, parish of Goomboorian.

I therefore commend the proposal for the approval of the House.

**Mr. BOUSEN** (Toowoomba North) (5.38 p.m.): This proposal is another instance of alienation by the State Government of Crown land and areas of State forests. As I have

said on previous occasions, the Australian Labor Party is utterly opposed to the freeholding of Crown land.

It is well known that the tottering coalition that currently governs this State has a taste for setting dangerous precedents. Similar irresponsibility has been shown by its counterparts in the Federal sphere, and happily this has reacted against them because the people of Australia do not like to see the Commonwealth Constitution flouted. But I am afraid that the precedents set by this irresponsible Government in the administration of land and forestry matters will have far-reaching and damaging effects.

The present Minister has presided over the excision of large areas of State forest land. We all know that earlier this year he pushed the excision of State Forest 175 in the parishes of Merinda and Uranilla. People now have good reason for assuming that, if they settle unjustifiably on gazetted Crown land and exploit it as if it were a legitimate grazing lease, they will eventually be granted freehold tenure.

Companies can feel quite confident that their voices will override even the protests of local shire councils and people of particular areas. Whenever it seems that opposition will be voiced by conservation groups the Minister ties an excision to some minor gesture towards the enlargement of our national parks and railroads it through Parliament. This is in fact what he is doing on this occasion. Now, however, he has learned another dodge—a sort of a barter agreement in which the Government simply swaps one parcel of land for another. The Minister may hope that, because it appears to be a straightforward transaction, it will escape close scrutiny. I assure him that honourable members on this side of the House are well aware of their responsibilities in so far as the alienation of Crown land and State forests are concerned. We are all well acquainted with the sleight-of-hand tactics the Government uses constantly to disguise its machinations in the eyes of the people of Queensland.

The trade which the Minister has arranged warrants close examination. Let us consider the deal the Government seeks to make. It wants to give away 250 hectares of State forest. In the light of the 25,000,000 hectares it has already alienated, that is not a very large area. In return, it is to receive about 300 hectares of land. I imagine that anyone would say that that is a very sound, or at least a reasonably good deal, involving a profit of 50 hectares. However, on reading a description of the land acquired I learned that a section of it is affected by periodic flooding. The Minister seems a little shy about giving a figure on how much land is affected. Perhaps it is more than 50 hectares. I also note that a large portion of the land in areas 5V and 6V are so permanently soggy they are known as "Fiddler's Green Swamp". We are to get Fiddler's Green

Swamp for the good land and the State forest we are to give away. What is more, the land that the pastoral company is to gain is much closer to a useful highway than the land it is to surrender to the State. I wonder whether this is such a good bargain after all.

The Minister defends the Government constantly by saying that the experts in the Department of Forestry approve. I have no doubt of the expertise of these gentlemen and therefore I do not believe that the Minister should attribute his views to them. The Forestry Department personnel are all professionals, people whom I hold personally in very high regard. I know that whenever I want information they are always straightforward and give me the information I seek. I know that they are dedicated to preserving the forests in the State of Queensland, but, thanks to the Government's policy, their hands are tied relative to what they consider is useful land, which should be State Forests held in reserve for the benefit of the State. It must be frustrating to them to find their planning initiatives constantly thwarted by the Minister's vacillation between his pose as a champion of conservation and his other pose as champion of commerce.

Eight years ago this land was resumed to become State Forest, and four years later it was leased. Now, in 1974, it is to be freeholded. I remind the Minister that "freehold" means forever. What happens if he should change his mind again?

In the forestry industry planning is absolutely essential. It must be remembered that forest products constitute the only natural resource that is perpetually renewable. Coal, oil, and other mineral reserves, once mined, are irreclaimable. Our forests, like all others, are dependent on photosynthesis and solar energy, which make them virtually infinite if their development is carefully planned, as it is in New Zealand. In the case of this revocation we face the risk that the land which the Forestry Department describes as "suitable for exotic conifers" will be allowed to revert to native scrub timber, which, however attractive and environmentally appropriate it may be, does not use the land to its best advantage. The Forestry Department must plan for future generations but how can it do so effectively if it cannot determine what land it has to work with?

During the debate on the amendments to the Land Act, whose voice was louder than the Minister's in demanding security in the timber industry? Perhaps he does not feel that State forests are actually a part of the timber industry any more than the Queensland Railways are part of the transport industry. Perhaps he does not think they are part of the environment. During the debate on the environmental parks legislation I remember that he told us he would

"seek and encourage" the advice of conservation organisations. I wonder what outside body advised him on this matter. A group called the Lenorco Pastoral Company, perhaps?

The reasons the Minister gives for freeholding the land are the same tired excuses he has trotted out on every previous occasion, with one difference. The Minister could scarcely say this time that the land is not suitable for forestry purposes. One of the reasons he supplies gives an interesting insight into the mental processes of a conservative Government. He says that the pastoral company purchased the lease at auction for a rental considerably in excess of the advertised upset price. In short, we are supposed to feel sorry for these people because they have enough money to pay more than other applicants.

I have used the term "curiously convenient" to describe the timing of this excision. It is convenient because the Land Act Amendment Bill that this Parliament passed some little time ago contained passages specifically designed to protect Crown rights to timber on freehold land. Of course, the legislation was wholly in keeping with the Minister's usual policy of too little, too late; but at least those clauses gave the planners in the Forestry Department a chance to control to some extent the use made of our vital timber resources.

I ask the Minister to remember the words of his colleague the honourable member for Landsborough, who said, "If this State is to grow in the future . . . it will need all the timber resources it can meaningfully muster." Obviously the Minister and the honourable member for Landsborough are not in agreement about our timber resources, yet this is a proposal which excises land suitable for forestry purposes at a time when, though assent has been given to the amendments, they have not yet been proclaimed. Those amendments will at least allow the Forestry Department to keep an eye on the timber on that land. Unless the Minister can make the amendments retrospective, that good, timber-bearing land is permanently lost to us. I ask the Minister: what is the position with the timber on this State forest that is now being given away, in the light of the Bill passed by this Assembly earlier this year, when he said that the rights to timber on Crown land would remain with the Crown, irrespective of whether the land was freeholded? What is the Minister's answer to that? If the Minister refuses to recognise the position created by this legislation, will he delay the matter until the Land Act Amendment Act has been proclaimed so that the Government controls the timber on the land that the Minister is now alienating?

The very facts adduced by the Minister in support of freeholding this land are arguments for the implementation of the Australian Labor Party's policies over the years, which are the only consistent land policies

ever offered in this State. Freehold tenure is so expensive that it is beyond the reach of all but the richest rural producer. Admittedly, the wise policies of the Federal Labor Government have made many rural producers richer; but, even so freehold tenure is not possible for most.

In the Minister's second-reading speech on the Land Act Amendment Bill, he spoke of A.L.P. proposals as being propaganda and criticisms of the Government's successful freeholding policy. He virtually told the people of Queensland that, if they did not like the Government's policies, that was their bad luck. I remind the Minister that even the Bjelke-Petersen-gerrymandered State of Queensland, with a "massive" 19 per cent support for his party, does not give the Government a freehold tenure of the Treasury benches.

Let us have a look at these "successful" policies. That ageing alliance of squabbling squatters opposite has succeeded in only one thing; its freehold farce has almost driven the small farmer from the land. Leasehold tenure is the poor man's main chance to work the land. Leasehold is the people's protection against irresponsible and unrestrained development—the sort of thing the Minister termed "commercial exploitation" in his speech on the environmental parks legislation last year.

The "bush barons" don't like it, because it prevents them from creating a feudal State under which the squattocracy owns the land and the people work it. Under a leasehold system, both the Crown and the tenant have their rights legally protected. No Crown tenant who does his job can be thrown off the land at a moment's notice. How different this is from the plight of the share-farmer who is subject to the landholder's whim.

There are two principles which the parties of privilege—the big business boys opposite—have forgotten. One is this: the equal right of all men to the use of land is as clear as their equal right to breathe the air, yet freehold tenure denies that right. The second principle of which I must remind members opposite is that labour can produce without capital; it cannot produce without land. If the people are denied land—and by freeholding land and making it one person's exclusive property, that is what is being done—production is stifled and poverty is produced. I am not exaggerating. The recent Henderson report shows that of all Australian States, Queensland has the greatest number of people below the poverty line.

I have spoken at some length on this matter because the Minister's remarks must not be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is principle, not propaganda, that causes the Labor Party to oppose freehold tenure. I do not expect that, after 17 years of wrongheadedness on the part of honourable members opposite I will convert any of

them to my party's view on freeholding. I wished merely to explain why we oppose revocation of State Forest 561 and why we will continue to oppose similar revocations however tempting a trade is offered.

When we are in Government next year the Minister will have the opportunity of seeing a more equitable system of distribution of land under the leasehold system.

It would appear that previously these people were refused land, yet the Minister said in his speech that, because of work carried out on the piece of land the lessees previously held, and improvements made, this device was being used for the purpose of freeholding land in this State forest. We oppose the motion because it constitutes a special device used by these people to freehold better land than that which they presently occupy.

**Mr. AHERN** (Landsborough) (5.53 p.m.): Over the past few minutes we have heard a dissertation by the honourable member for Toowoomba North on the doctrinaire attitudes of socialism in the Australian Labor Party and its land policies. We have come to expect this over the years. Whenever a Minister or other Government member mentions the word "freeholding", every member of the Opposition is instantly jarred into alertness, and the Opposition must oppose.

The facts are that the Minister has before Parliament a logical proposal for an exchange of some land in the State forest at Beerwah for some land in the State forest at Toolara. I think all logical people would agree that a reasonable decision has been made. I am one of those people who believe that a declaration of a State forest should not be so stupidly inflexible as to be not adaptable to a reasonable representation.

What in fact occurred is that a piece of Crown land was offered to a group in open competition. It was gained at auction by Mr. R. McLean and others. The area concerned is 250 hectares, as the Minister said. The area was developed immediately and we were quite happy with it at that time. There is no timber on the land. It was developed for pasture in the days of the pioneers in the industry in this area. The shire council was happy to see development taking place. The beef industry was being developed by a group of enterprising individuals who were prepared to put their money on the line in what was and still is a risk proposition. They did this and did well. They spent a lot of money. They applied for freehold and the Government looked at it.

The original terms under which it was offered precluded freeholding of this area. I make no secret of the fact that I made a representation to the Minister in which I said that this area of the State forest is

by no means a contiguous area. It is situated at the end of the Beerwah State Forest. A reference to the map tabled by the Minister will show that in effect it sticks out as a finger on the northernmost area. If it is planted to pine woods, it will be a risk proposition from the point of view of fire. It has freehold land all round it, and it was logical that one day it would be exchanged for an area more suitable for pine plantations.

Local officers are of this opinion, and constantly they are endeavouring to create more contiguous areas so that the land is more consolidated and easier to maintain. They do not want land that is in effect perched out in the middle of grazing areas that are a constant headache to those concerned with fire control. I make it quite clear that I hope that there will be other similar projects concerning the Beerwah State Forest. I know that there are some in the pipeline.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Do you know these people?

**Mr. AHERN:** Yes, I do.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Did you introduce them to the Minister?

**Mr. AHERN:** I did not, although I made representations on their behalf. They are my constituents. They live in my area, and they have done a good job in this agricultural development.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Did you get a sling?

**Mr. AHERN:** The honourable member for Archerfield has made an improper imputation against me. He suggested that I obtained some financial gain from the part that I played. I ask that he withdraw that statement.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member for Archerfield to withdraw that statement.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Mr. Speaker, I said "sling".

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will withdraw his statement.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I withdraw it.

**Mr. AHERN:** The honourable member made quite an unworthy comment. A group of people came to me with a proposition. I suggested to the Minister that it was reasonable, and now it has come before Parliament. This area will be excised, and another larger area will be added to the State forest.

**Mr. Wright:** It is not area that is the criterion. It is the use of the land, and the principle involved.

**Mr. AHERN:** Both areas will surely be planted to softwoods.

**Mr. Wright:** It was stated that one of the areas is a swamp area.

**Mr. AHERN:** I am in the very happy position of being able to give the honourable member a lecture on this specific point. I invite him and his friends, if they are worried about this exchange, to come to the Beerwah State Forest and have a look at the silvicultural methods employed there. The Minister says that all of the land in this area can reasonably be used, with the possible exception of 35 hectares. I am quite confident that that is correct. In this area of the Beerwah State Forest, there is a tremendous area of low, swampy ground. It has been drained, and much of this area has been planted very successfully with softwoods by furrowing and planting on the top of the mounds. After a couple of years, the trees grow quite readily in this environment in the forestry area. I invite honourable members who are interested in this matter to come to my electorate to see in the Beerwah area many hundreds of acres of this type of development where the trees are doing exceptionally well. In fact, they are doing better than those in some other areas because they are not so subject to drought. What the Minister has claimed in relation to this area is quite possible.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North said that in recent times a considerable number of revocations of State forest land have been brought before the Parliament. The facts as I know them are that every deal that has been made has been a sensible exchange, and it has resulted in a greater area of effective forest land being added to the State forest concerned. The Government can in fact take pride in the sensible exchanges that have been made to increase State forests. I am one who has wanted to look very closely into these exchanges, and I can say that I am quite confident that the additions that have been made to State forests have been made successfully. In my area, there are some others in which I am interested.

**Mr. Wright:** Why give freehold title?

**Mr. AHERN:** I think the freehold title is a basic tenet of our party-political philosophy. I think it is reasonable in the circumstances.

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

**Mr. AHERN:** Before the dinner recess someone on the other side was saying that the land should not be given in fee simple. As freehold land is being given by the people concerned, surely it is reasonable to offer the land in fee simple. They are giving us 300 hectares, so surely it is only reasonable that the 250 hectares which is to go to them as part of the arrangement should also be in fee simple. If it were suggested that there should be a leasehold title to the land, obviously such arrangements would not take place. In certain circumstances, with certain safeguards, and in a spirit of consolidating

areas to make sure that they are more contiguous around the outside, and thereby safer from fires and more manageable, I think freehold tenure is reasonable.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** Why should you go to them?

**Mr. AHERN:** We didn't. The parties concerned made representations to me, and I made representations to the Minister some considerable time ago. I am happy to support this proposal. It is the type of thing that an open-minded and reasonable Government should be prepared to look at and say, "We are flexible enough to entertain an exchange arrangement that is going to suit us and suit the owners of the particular land."

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Are Mr. and Mrs. McLean members of the National Party?

**Mr. AHERN:** Almost certainly Mr. and Mrs. McLean would not be members of my political party.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North said that the conservation groups and councils might be opposing this. I am quite sure that the Landsborough Shire Council would be strongly in favour of it; there is no doubt in my mind about that. The fact is that from a conservation point of view there is no timber on the land that is being given to McLean and others.

**Mr. B. Wood:** What cattle are on this land at the moment?

**Mr. AHERN:** I am not sure. It has been developed very considerably.

It has been suggested that machinations are involved and that dealing has taken place. From the Opposition side there has been heavy imputation of improper motives and so on. This is not so. It is a reasonable proposal and one which should be entertained. I am quite sure that the Minister is going to look favourably upon the one or two other proposals that I have put to him in relation to this area where a similar exchange of land would take place. When there is a reasonable parity in valuations, when the Forestry Department is going to benefit reasonably from a proposal, and when the State forest is going to be made larger thereby, why in heaven should such a proposal not be acceptable from the reasonable man's point of view? I contend that the present proposal should be supported by the House.

**Mr. B. WOOD (Barron River) (7.19 p.m.):** There is not a great deal of satisfaction for the Opposition in any part of this proposed revocation. However, the Minister has included a map in the notes he distributed. On previous occasions members have asked that a map of the relevant area be provided. At least I am pleased to see that he has acceded to our request. Of course, there are many more details that the Minister could have supplied, but he failed to do so. As I have said in similar debates, we would like to hear

in detail the comparability of the land in question. The Minister made some mention of the fact that the land that is now to be handed to the Forestry Department is in part swampy. He did not go into great detail and he did not mention whether the land to be converted to freehold title is swampy. From the evidence presented here today I would judge that the land the lessees are getting in freehold title is superior in probably every respect to the land that they are giving to the Forestry Department. If that is not the case, the Minister certainly has not proved his point. For example, as far back as 1968 these three lessees paid \$1,025 a year in rental. Even in these days that is a substantial rental, and to pay that amount then, they must have considered that the land was of substantial value.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** The upset rental was \$100.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** The upset rental was \$100 and they were prepared to pay 10 times that sum. So they must have considered that at some stage in the future, if not then, the land would be worth a great deal.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** In exchange, too.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** Well, I do not know about that at that time. In these proposals more information of relevance and importance should be included. No mention has been made of the future use of this land. It is on the near North Coast, a popular holiday area, and I have no doubt that at some stage in the future this land will be used for subdivisational purposes.

**Mr. Jensen:** The Japs might buy it.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** The honourable member for Landsborough makes no comment on that. I do not know how long in the future this will be, so why should a comparison be made on rural use? I believe any comparison made on rural use was not a proper one. In any case, why should it be made when the land will not necessarily be used for rural purposes.

**Mr. Tucker:** Once the land is granted in fee simple, the Government has no more to do with it.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** That is so. The only requirement then for subdivision is council approval. The Minister said he was satisfied with the comparable values. If he is satisfied, why did he not list those comparable values? Why not tell us what they are?

**Mr. Rae:** I will tell you in my reply.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** I thank the Minister. I presume that the Valuer-General's Department has looked at this land and declared that block "A" is worth so much and block "B" so much. I ask the Minister to give us these details in his reply and indicate the basis of assessment by the Valuer-General's Department and whether it was considered

purely for rural use or whether it was assessed as freehold land having possible subdivisional uses.

I think the Opposition is entitled to be rather sceptical about this in view of the incident here. When the Minister replies, I ask him to let us have that information. Unless he can look to the expected future use of the land, comparisons may not always be relevant.

I have a further question of the Minister. Why in the last year or 18 months has there been a discernible change in his policy? In my first three or four years in this Parliament, I do not recall as many proposals of this nature coming to the House as we have seen in the last 12 months. This must be the fourth time we have had a proposal for revocation of State forests, involving probably up to 10 different areas. Is the Minister now embarking on a new policy? Is he making a noticeable change from what has gone on in the past?

I am aware that usually State Government Departments are quite properly most concerned about setting precedents, because having once set a precedent it can be argued against them that they have to follow that precedent in the future. In other words, if it is good enough for one person it is good enough for another. Over the past 12 to 18 months precedents have been set and I am sure that they have caused the department, if not the Minister, a great deal of concern.

I want to know the Minister's attitude to this change in policy, if there is such a change. Certainly there is evidence that changes have occurred. But what is most disturbing is that the honourable member for Landsborough has indicated that this is not the end of it and that further proposals will be brought forward. He has told us that he has taken other people to see the Minister and they want the same treatment. This is going to continue.

**Mr. Jensen:** I want one for my gliding club, not for private enterprise.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** I suggest that the honourable member for Bundaberg write to the honourable member for Landsborough.

The Minister should have told the House the use to which the lessees desire to put this land. Although it will be freehold title, he could have inquired from the lessees what the future use of the land will be. The honourable member for Landsborough, who was so knowledgeable about this proposal, does not know the number of cattle presently on the property. I presume that the property must have reasonable potential as a cattle producing property, because evidently timber has been cleared. It cannot be a very poor block of land as has been hinted.

This proposal is too sketchy, both in the granting of the lease and in the presentation to Parliament; but because of the weight of numbers the Government will get it through.

The honourable member for Landsborough has said that it is a logical proposal. On the evidence that has been brought forward I suggest it is quite the reverse. He explained at some length that the area involved is a fire hazard and that it adjoins other areas prone to fire. What a lot of nonsense that is. All of us know that at the present time the entire State is faced with a high fire danger.

**Mr. Ahern:** You had better come up and look at it.

**Mr. B. WOOD:** I would like to do so. I hope that the honourable member for Landsborough has had a good look at it. His argument on the fire danger is a very hollow one and has no ring of logic about it. As I say, there is probably not one part of the State in which there is presently not a high fire danger.

The arguments put forward by both the Minister and the member involved are dubious and unconvincing, so I invite Government members to join us in our opposition to this proposed revocation.

**Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (7.28 p.m.):** I rise to support the Opposition spokesman on Lands and Forestry (Mr. Bousen) in his criticism of the Minister's proposal for the revocation of part of State Forest 561, parish of Bribie. I do so firstly as a matter of principle. The Opposition is against the policy of exchanging State forest reserves to suit the whims of private enterprise, and this Parliament should uphold the principle espoused by the Labor Party. Instead, however, the Minister has said in effect that if private enterprise wants the land, or if private individuals want it, Parliament should ensure that they get it.

I am also opposed to the Minister's proposal to give freehold title to land such as this. There is no real need for it. Regardless of what the honourable member for Landsborough has said, the State is getting a pretty poor bargain in this so-called exchange of 250 hectares of valuable land for 300 hectares of land the value of which is open to question.

This area contains a large swamp, and even though the honourable member for Landsborough has said that such swampland is ideal for the growth of certain types of softwoods, it seems to me that the honourable member for Landsborough is basing his whole case on the question of exchange. The swapping of 250 hectares for 300 hectares is surely not in issue. We are not arguing on that basis, whether it be a swapping of 250 for 300 or 300 for 500. Firstly, it is a matter of quality versus quantity. It is also a matter of the principle involved in allowing State land to pass into the hands of private individuals in freehold title. As I said, I am personally opposed to giving freehold title here.

By way of interjection the Leader of the Opposition said that Governments have no control over such title. I should like to know why freehold title is necessary. Why not a special lease with terms suitable to the people involved? When this matter was raised by the honourable member for Landsborough, he said that it was the philosophy of his political party. This is a very serious state of affairs. Can we take it that, from now on, whenever anybody wants land, he will always get it under freehold title? We certainly have not carried that policy through in other areas of the State when people have tried to get pastoral leases and so on. Why should we suddenly give freehold title on this occasion? I do not believe it is part of the National Party policy in general.

**Mr. Ahern:** They are offering land in freehold title.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** That does not mean that it has to be exchanged for freehold title.

In the first part of his speech the Minister said that it was an exchange of comparable areas of land. That is a rather general statement, and he did not bother to say in what way they were comparable areas; he did not give us any particulars. This matter was also raised by the honourable member for Barron River. The Opposition should be told of the particular characteristics that make it a fair exchange.

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

**Mr. WRIGHT:** We have no time to listen to the honourable member. He never says anything constructive, anyway.

The Minister also said that this area will be reserved permanently as a State forest. There is no guarantee of that. It could be changed tomorrow. I am not sure that the Minister is certain what his authority really is. In fact members of the Opposition are faced constantly with the dilemma of not being sure which Minister controls what.

While I realise that we are dealing specifically with State forests, I point out that recently I received some correspondence about a proposal to establish a national park at Mt. Etna near Rockhampton. The latter part of the letter reads—

“The matter of the declaration of a national park in the—”

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Haven't you read this booklet?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Will the honourable member please listen?

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

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Very well, I have looked at the directory the honourable member referred to. Now I will return to what I was saying.

The last paragraph reads—

“The matter of the declaration of a national park in the area is one for consideration by my colleague, the Minister for Lands and Forestry, and I suggest you contact him direct in due course.”

That letter was written on 12 August 1974, but on 18 June 1974, in reply to a letter written by Mr. McCabe, who is involved with a conservation group, the Minister for Lands and Forestry, writing about action concerning cessation of mining, surrender of leases or restoration of the area that would enable national-park dedication to take place, said that this “would be a matter coming within the responsibility of my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Mines and Main Roads. I have therefore referred your letter to him.”

**Mr. Ahern:** Is this relevant?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It is relevant to the point that we are not quite sure that Ministers know what their powers are. Even when the Minister says that he will permanently reserve an area as a State forest, we cannot count on it that he will have the power to carry this out. The matter is open to question. The Government has a rather poor record in State forests, whether in the southern or any other part of Queensland. In Central Queensland we have an area known as the Blackdown Tablelands, which is a State forest, but a lot of logging is taking place there. In spite of repeated representations to have this area set aside as a national park, nothing has been done. At this point I make a plea to the Minister—that is, if it is within his capacity; we are not quite sure because we have had differing correspondence—to consider this beautiful area 120 miles from Rockhampton. It is a sandstone plateau some 1,000 or 1,500 feet above the surrounding areas.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I am afraid that the honourable member is getting away from the proposal.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I make the one point that this is an excellent area with waterfalls and rain forests similar to regions around Sydney. The Minister should look into it. Instead of giving away all the State's forests, or parts thereof, he should consider how to improve the State by declaring such areas as national parks.

**Mr. JENSEN (Bundaberg) (7.35 p.m.):** The transfer of land to private enterprise is of considerable interest to me, because the secretary of the gliding club in Bundaberg wrote to the Forestry Department seeking the transfer of a small strip of developed land running by the roadside for a strip of old brigalow that is in State forests. The request was rejected outright, yet for private enterprise land can easily be transferred by the introduction of legislation and the use of other procedures in

this Assembly. I have written to the Minister advising him that the rope that leads the gliders away hit the power lines—a very dangerous situation. I have asked for a simple transfer of a strip of land for the gliding club, which was refused by the Forestry Department.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the honourable member for Bundaberg that he is straying completely from the motion and I will not tolerate it.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Yes. I realise that.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will return to the motion.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Yes. I was dealing with the subject of the exchange of land. The proposal is for a complete exchange. The land I speak of is held on a leasehold tenure by the gliding club, which is not attempting to freehold any land. It merely asks, in exchange for a piece of land running along the roadside, for a strip in the other direction so that the gliding club will be able to avoid the power lines.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I have made myself quite clear. The proposal in the motion deals with lands in the parish of Bribie. If the honourable member for Bundaberg knows anything at all about it, I would ask him to confine his remarks to it.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I know about this, Mr. Speaker. The Bill deals with private-enterprise land, and I am very concerned that by this means the Government can transfer land such as this when we have not been able to have land transferred to the gliding club in Bundaberg. That is my worry. I do not want to continue speaking about the gliding club, because the Minister is coming to Bundaberg at some future time to fly one of our gliders. Let us see whether he hits the power lines.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. LICKISS (Mt. Coot-tha) (7.37 p.m.):** Mr. Speaker, I hope that I will at least talk common sense, which has been absent so far in the debate from members of the Opposition. The matter before the House and the presentation of it from the Minister has met with the approbation of the Opposition, particularly in relation to the fact—and I think I quote correctly the remarks of the honourable member for Toowoomba North—that the Minister at least prepared a map. I hope that honourable members opposite are capable of reading a map. By the very nature of the outline of the area that is proposed to be exchanged, it will be seen that it is quite an irregular shape and would be very hard to maintain once planted. As a consequence, it shows a great deal of enterprise on the

part of the Forestry Department to square their blocks up, to consolidate them and to put them into workable order.

The area that is proposed to be exchanged for the irregularly shaped land—I will refer to it as the area near Beerwah or near Caloundra—it is not regular in shape and has obviously been made a forest reserve because it was a residual area from what appears to have been once a local government reserve. In other words, it was a balance area of waste land and probably it was handed over to the Forestry Department. I dare say it would have been handed over at the time of the Labor Government, because any waste lands that were not wanted for anything else were thrown over to forestry purposes.

In exchange for this we see the rather regular area of land of some 300 hectares adjoining the Toolara area, which is formed or outlined on one boundary by a creek. For the improvement of fire-protection measures and so that adequate forest husbandry and plantation methods can be exerted, obviously the squaring up of this area is a beneficial move by the Forestry Department.

The only other aspect that appears to be worrying the Opposition is so-called free-enterprise land. I have heard of freehold and leasehold land, but I have not yet heard of free-enterprise land. I thought that anyone other than Government who employed his labours to increase the production of land came within the free-enterprise sector. Surely Opposition members will not dispute that. I hope that in their own activities they exert some measure of free enterprise. "Free enterprise" is not a land tenure.

Tonight we have heard a lot of words about a relatively small matter. I compliment the Minister on the way he has handled it and the departmental advice, which I believe was the best advice that could be offered in the circumstances to regularise irregular areas for forestry plantation purposes. It is as simple as that. I do not think that the hogwash we are hearing from Opposition members adds anything to the debate or indicates knowledge of land administration generally.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON (Salisbury) (7.41 p.m.):** I join with other Opposition members in opposing the motion moved by the Minister. Unfortunately, I was not here when he outlined the full details but I have had an opportunity to peruse his prepared speech. It would appear that this swapping of land arose from the desire of the lessees, who have cleared the land, to retain the area with the object of establishing a softwood plantation.

The Minister spoke in terms of obtaining a comparable area in exchange. It sounds very simple and straightforward when it is put in those terms, but the reason we should oppose

a proposal to freehold or swap land is that during the Government's tenure of office, we have seen Crown land slipping out of the control of the Crown into the hands of private enterprise at an accelerating rate.

It is idle for the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha to lecture us and say that he hopes we can read a map because he then stuttered and stumbled and it was obvious he could not read the map himself.

He then spoke about our criticism of control and development of land by free enterprise, yet the Minister himself appeared on television recently and tried to explain away the land swap south of Point Cartright because of the unholy mess that was created in that area by the subdividers, with the concurrence of this Government, in lowering the frontal dunes by some 24 feet. The cyclonic seas broke over the area and we again witnessed the spectacle of a subdividing company being able to obtain about three times the area of land it originally held.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member to revert to the principle of the motion.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** This is the principle of the motion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I differ from the honourable member and would ask him to look at the motion.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** So long as it is a healthy difference. The principle in the motion is the swapping of land that originally belonged to the Crown—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Of certain land.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Of certain land, if you want to be specific, Mr. Speaker, that originally belonged to the Crown for another parcel of land that was purchased by the people who desired to acquire this Crown land. The swapping of this land never seems to react to the Government's benefit. The Government loses control of the land. I cited the case of land developers south of Point Cartright, who obtained about three times the area of land involved because the Government made one unholy mess of the original parcel of land by allowing these people to level the frontal dunes.

**Mr. Ahern:** That's not true.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Of course it's true. The Minister appeared on television and admitted it.

**Mr. Ahern:** It was 111 for 196 acres.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Yes, and the Minister admitted on television that that company would obtain a lot more land than it originally held in the area.

**Mr. Rae:** Not a whole lot more; just a reasonable area.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Not a whole lot more; just a few hundred extra hectares. Apparently that does not make any difference. In the first place, the land belonged to the Crown and most of it was given to the subdividers.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! For the benefit of the honourable member who might not have been in the House when the Minister moved this motion, I shall refer him to the proposal. It reads—

“ . . . part of State Forest 561, parish of Bribie, described as portion 281, parish of Bribie, as shown on plans Cg. 1890 and Cg. 1891.”

I hope the honourable member will confine his remarks to that piece of land.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I am not disputing the description of the land that you have ably given, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The honourable member must confine his remarks to that piece of land.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** What I am saying is that, as a member of Parliament, I am not going to stand by and see Crown land frittered away in this manner. Anybody who wants a lease of Crown land merely has to put a bulldozer through it and then say that he wants to apply for a lease. That is the principle contained in the proposal.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member is quite out of order. I ask him to direct his remarks to the provisions of the proposal.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** In addition to what I have already said, I challenge the purpose for which it is intended to use the land, namely, the furtherance of softwood cultivation within this State. Already most informed people dispute the wisdom of the complete destruction of natural timbers and their replacement by softwood plantations. One can drive along any highway in South-east Queensland and see areas that have been denuded of indigenous timbers and replanted with imported softwoods. The great danger in this practice comes from the complete alteration of the ecology of an area. It must also be remembered that the change to softwoods is being made merely to satisfy a false demand for softwood for pulping that has been created throughout Australia and many other countries. Forests are being denuded of indigenous timbers merely to satisfy the whims of cardboard makers and those engaged in the manufacture of various types of packaging.

I question the Government's wisdom in handing over land for further softwood plantations at a time when every effort should be made to retain indigenous hardwood and hoop-pine forests. The Government is completely changing the type of timber being grown in this State.

Like other Opposition members, I wholeheartedly oppose this type of proposal. I oppose it not only on the ground of what it contains, but because in every session of Parliament a little more Crown land is excised in the name of private enterprise.

**Mr. TUCKER** (Townsville West—Leader of the Opposition) (7.48 p.m.): I am in agreement with what members of the Opposition have said this evening, and I think we could be forgiven, if I may use the expression, for looking for the nigger in the woodpile.

**Mr. Frawley:** Have a look behind you and you will find him.

**Mr. TUCKER:** For once in his life, I wish the honourable member would say something intelligible.

**Mr. Frawley:** Before I am finished, I will say something that will finish you.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. TUCKER:** When those who are making application for this land swap first received the lease over the land in question, surely they knew that it was only for 20 years. It seems to me that a precedent has been set, and that all one has to do is to obtain a grazing lease, spend money on it for its use far beyond the period of the lease, and then cry "poor mouth" to the Government saying, "Look at all the money we have spent on the land. We have to get a more secure tenure than was granted to us before." That is exactly what has happened in the present case. Those who took the lease were told that it was for 20 years. In the knowledge that it was only for that period, no-one with any nous would spend an amount of money that could not be recouped within the 20 years of the lease. Perhaps over a period of time they came to accept the precedent set by the Government in its dealings with leases of this type.

Time and time again the Opposition has pointed this out. It seems a very easy way of ultimately acquiring a large piece of freehold land. I am looking at the map to see where this land is situated. It is not very far from Caloundra Head. It is an area that is well served by roads. I am also looking at the area of land which will be exchanged. It was apparently acquired not so very long ago by these people, or this company, with a view to exchanging it ultimately for the land in question. I do not like this kind of thing, and the Opposition does not like it, either.

Again I stress that, once the fee simple has been granted and the company has received a freehold title, there is no way in the world it will remain primary industry land or improved pastures. It could well be that by what we are doing we are in fact handing to these people a bonanza

by way of land for subdivision. The Minister has not explained this to my satisfaction or to the satisfaction of the Opposition.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Nor has the Minister mentioned what the selling price might be.

**Mr. TUCKER:** Ultimately it could well run into thousands and thousands of dollars.

The area to be exchanged is right out in the bush. It may be that it is good agricultural land; it may be that it is good primary industry land or a good area for improved pastures. I am looking at the area that is going to be granted to these people, over which they had a 20-year lease, and over which they are now going to have freehold title.

**Mr. O'Donnell:** The Minister did not inform us how much these people paid for this land.

**Mr. TUCKER:** No. I hope he will when he replies. These are some of the points that we are looking to the Minister to explain to us. It is wrong that the Opposition should have to argue along these lines. I know the soft line that is taken by honourable members opposite. We feel that it is designed to lead us off the track and lull us into some sort of sleep. I want the Minister to tell us why this has been granted, why it is so easy to get a grazing lease, and why it is so easy to exchange it ultimately for some other piece of land merely by saying that the land in question is going to be added to a State forest. It sounds a very good argument but on this occasion I do not accept it unless the Minister is able to give us some further explanation, especially when it is realised that the land could be subdivided later, which would mean that we had handed to the people concerned a great deal of money by giving them title to land that was part of a State forest.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE** (Mourilyan) (7.53 p.m.): I enter the debate briefly to refer to this Government's approach to State forest land. On many occasions I have made requests for the opening of such land for the benefit of sugar-growing areas in North Queensland.

We now have before us the proposed revocation of a State forest to benefit a group of people. I notice that one name mentioned is A. Cooper. I do not know whether he is the Cooper of international tennis fame who is also of subdivisive fame in respect of land near Wynnum. His wife is a very good friend of mine and she went through training college with me. However, I will not go into that.

In this Chamber I have repeatedly referred to misdemeanours of this Government in the allocation of land. I refer again to the King Ranch allocation, where land went for £2.6.8. an acre.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! King Ranch is not mentioned in the motion.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I am making a comparison and drawing attention to the fact that this has occurred previously. I am trying to draw an analogy.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will keep to the subject of the motion.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I am allowed to draw analogies. Many honourable members do that. I have a letter in my possession, which I can produce at any time, with regard to the 3,800 acres making up the tea plantation in Tully. This land is in the electorate of Mourilyan.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will get back to the proposal in the motion or resume his seat.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I again point out that the price for freeholding in this case has not been given yet with the tea plantation, although conditions were applied, the right to freehold non-arable land cost \$3.00 an acre. I have those conditions in my possession and the Collinses will never sell that land while I am the member for Mourilyan, nor will they have the right to sell it while I have that letter in my possession. Incidentally, nor will the Lands Department ever attempt to allow them to continue to grow those four-legged tea plants on that tea plantation.

In cases of this kind the Minister should elaborate on the facts associated with the land involved in the exchange. The inside facts should be given to the House together with the conditions on which the people concerned are being given the right to go onto the new land. When we see developers like Ashley Cooper and his confederates possibly enjoying rights to go anywhere in the State, we cannot help feeling that the young people in the State should be given similar opportunities. I have stated before that I am not an avid conservationist but I should like to see land opened for young people rather than for companies. I know of many young people throughout the Cape York Peninsula—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! This is a question of exchange of land. The honourable member is so far away from the motion that it is not funny. He will get back to the proposal or resume his seat.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** The young people of this State have no land to exchange. All they have are their own efforts in the State which I think are far better than either monetary amounts or land. The honourable member for Cook will bear me out that there are many eligible people throughout North Queensland who are able to work land. I am sure there are people in the southern part of the State also who would be able to work this land far better than companies can.

**Hon. W. A. R. RAE** (Gregory—Minister for Lands and Forestry) (7.58 p.m.) in reply: I have been in this House for quite a long time and have heard many extraordinary lines of debate conveyed to Ministers over various issues. This is one of the simplest exercises that could ever be brought to the House for consideration. It is a simple exchange of land. There is a small area of land which, in the first instance, people took up to do something with. At that time it was under forestry control and the department decided that, as they were not going to do any planting in the area for quite a long time, they would put the land up for lease to somebody who might be able to get a quid out of it. It is as simple as that. When the land was put up, some people availed themselves of the opportunity and by their own hard work and stewardship—call it what you like—and by using modern technology of soil and land usage lifted a couple of hundred hectares from ordinary, swampy, undesirable land to something pretty good.

**Mr. B. Wood** interjected.

**Mr. RAE:** I am making my speech and I propose to continue to do so. I will answer the honourable member at a later stage. I find it amazing that the Opposition suddenly come in now with their political philosophy of hatred of freehold. Opposition members hate anybody to get even one acre of land and this is where their whole thinking is completely out of balance and accord with progress. It is certainly not in accord with the desires of the bulk of people associated with life on the land.

Who cares if the people on this land make a quid? It is a good thing. I am all for somebody making a quid. In this case we demanded from them that they come up with something of equal value to their area or better. This they have done in an area that is more advantageous to the Forestry Department than the other area that they have been on since 1968 and on which they have paid an annual rental of approximately \$1,000.

**Mr. Bousen** interjected

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Toowoomba North has had the opportunity of making his speech.

**Mr. RAE:** The land that is to be acquired by the Forestry Department is a far better block. I feel that Opposition members are casting grave and almost irresponsible reflections upon the Forestry Department.

**Mr. BOUSEN:** I rise to a point of order. The Minister has implied that we have reflected on the staff of the Forestry Department. As you will recall, Mr. Speaker, I lauded the officers of the Forestry Department for the work they have done.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the Minister to accept the honourable member's statement.

**Mr. RAE:** I accept it. Let us look at this matter realistically and with good, sound common sense and reasoning. The Labor Party's land philosophies are totally different from ours.

**Mr. Bousen** interjected.

**Mr. RAE:** As the honourable member for Toowoomba North seems to want to provoke an argument, I tell him that never once did I hear him applaud, laud or even recognise my Forestry officers.

**Mr. BOUSEN:** I rise to a point of order. Again the Minister has cast a reflection upon me. In my speech I said that I, together with all other Opposition members, respected the officers of the Forestry Department. I ask the Minister to withdraw his remark.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the Minister to accept the honourable member's denial.

**Mr. RAE:** I shall do so, Mr. Speaker.

To get down to realities—the honourable member for Mourilyan gave us a long spiel about the North and King Ranch, which is totally irrelevant to the proposal under debate.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** I am talking about how you robbed us before.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Mourilyan has been interjecting all day and he has exhausted my patience. I now warn him under the provisions of Standing Order 123A. If he interjects again, I will deal with him.

**Mr. RAE:** It is important that I comment on the remarks made by those members who have spoken. Possibly I am taking up time on what is a simple issue, but I cannot imagine why Opposition members are so much up in arms about it.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North led for the Opposition and told us about his political philosophies. The Labor Party hates even the mention of the word "freehold". That is fair enough, but my Government and I like the word and the policy, and while we are the Government we will implement it.

The Leader of the Opposition asked the value of the land that we were exchanging. The Lands Department valuation for the Beerwah area is \$45,290 and for the Toolara area \$46,333. In addition the valuation of timber is \$6,700. So, we are doing very well from the deal.

**Mr. Tucker:** Will you guarantee that this land won't be subdivided?

**Mr. RAE:** I cannot give that guarantee if it is freehold land. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, once land is freeholded it goes out of the control of my department. I have nothing to do with freehold land.

**Mr. Wright:** This is the thin end of the wedge, isn't it?

**Mr. RAE:** I am not saying whether it is or isn't; but I'll bet the honourable member for Rockhampton has a freehold block himself. Any man with common sense would have freehold tenure. The honourable member should not be so blindly in allegiance with his party's philosophies as to get away from the fact that he would like his block of freehold land.

**Mr. Tucker:** If it were subdivided it could be worth \$500,000.

**Mr. RAE:** That might be so in a few hundred years but I do not know. I doubt it very much.

I compliment the honourable member for Landsborough, who showed tremendous knowledge of the area.

**Mr. B. Wood:** He did not even know the area.

**Mr. RAE:** He knows all about it because it is in his area.

**Mr. B. Wood** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! the honourable member for Barron River made his speech.

**Mr. B. Wood:** And a good one!

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! That is debatable. The Minister heard the honourable member in silence and I expect the honourable member to extend the same courtesy to the Minister.

**Mr. RAE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Landsborough Shire is very much in favour of this deal. This is progress and development, which we require in Queensland today. The honourable member for Landsborough spoke with full knowledge of his subject and gave an excellent coverage of the areas involved.

**Mr. Tucker:** Why would not the council be in favour of a subdivision that might return it—

**Mr. RAE:** I think the honourable member reads too much into the cup. He is trying to peer into a crystal ball but he will not make any sense of what he sees there, anyway.

The honourable member for Rockhampton rose to again convey his party's views on freehold and leasehold tenure. I do not see any need to answer Opposition speakers who seem only able to associate their thoughts with their terror and horror of allowing anybody the right to freehold land.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. RAE:** Every Opposition speaker said the same thing.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. RAE:** I have answered the honourable member.

The honourable member for Bundaberg took up the time of the House in an effort to induce me to go glider-flying. I did not know what he was talking about, but he rambled on about something affecting Bundaberg (his own area), which had nothing to do with the subject under discussion. It was a deliberate waste of time that held up the business of the House without serving any useful purpose.

I congratulate the honourable member for Mt. Coot-tha, who gave us a very interesting little story about planning relative to the two parcels of land. He covered the matter very well. If honourable members study the map I supplied, they will see that one area is a particularly useless bit of country to the Forestry Department, while the other one lends itself to a management-planning concept which will enable the department to get the best advantage from the area.

All in all the motion under discussion is of little consequence. Indeed, I thought it would have been settled by 6 o'clock. However, Opposition members love to talk on these issues and make a song and dance about nothing. They have their philosophies and we have ours. My officers and I agree on this deal. It is in the best interests of the areas concerned and the State of Queensland.

Question—That the motion (Mr. Rae) be agreed to—put; and the House divided—

AYES, 38

Ahern	Lickiss
Armstrong	McKechnie
Bird	Miller
Bjelke-Petersen	Moore, R. E.
Camm	Muller
Campbell	Neal
Chalk	Newbery
Crawford	Porter
Edwards	Rae
Fletcher	Row
Frawley	Scott-Young
Gunn	Small
Hartwig	Sullivan
Herbert	Tomkins
Hewitt, N. T. E.	Tooth
Hewitt, W. D.	Wharton
Hodges	<i>Tellers:</i>
Hooper, K. W.	Hinze
Houghton	Lane
Lee	

Noes, 30

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

PAIRS:

Knox	Burns
Murray	D'Arcy

Resolved in the affirmative.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon—  
Minister for Local Government and Elect-  
ricity) (8.15 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend  
the Local Government Superannuation  
Act of 1964, as subsequently amended,  
in certain particulars.”

This Bill makes a minor amendment to the Local Government Superannuation Act to provide that, when the annual salary of a permanent employee of a local authority as at 1 January each year exceeds the amount of annual salary on which his membership in the local government superannuation scheme is based at that date by at least \$100, additional superannuation has to be effected by the local authority in respect of the employee for the excess amount. In other words, the adjustment will be made once per year for each employee.

As the Act presently stands adjustments have to be made each time a permanent employee's annual salary is increased by an amount of at least \$100.

In the present economic situation where salaries are increasing frequently and by substantial amounts, local authorities and the Local Government Superannuation Board are confronted with a task of processing a number of adjustments each year for each of the 9,000 employees covered by the scheme.

The amendment will bring the local government superannuation scheme into line with most other superannuation schemes, including that of the Brisbane City Council, in the matter of annual adjustments of benefits. The amendment is supported by the Local Government Superannuation Board and by local authorities.

It is admitted that the provision for annual adjustments of superannuation instead of adjustments each time the salary of a permanent employee is increased by at least \$100 could mean some small loss of superannuation benefits. It should be stressed that the loss would be small even in the case of the death of a young member.

I am advised that the Local Government Superannuation Board operates a contingency account under which substantial benefits are made available in addition to the benefits provided under the Act. These ex gratia benefits apply to widows and estates of deceased members and it is felt that these benefits more than compensate

for the relatively small losses which would occur from the making of annual adjustments of superannuation.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

**Mr. BALDWIN** (Redlands) (8.19 p.m.): As the Minister anticipated, I can say at this stage, having some previous knowledge of the wishes of the Local Government Association of Queensland and local government employees as well as knowledge of what the Brisbane City Council did previously in this respect, that the motion meets with the concurrence of the Opposition. We can appreciate that the general principle is aimed at smoothing out the paperwork and accounting.

I was pleased to hear the Minister say that any possible losses that might occur through any change in the limits set for raising superannuation payments will be covered at least by the contingency account. We hope that this will be so. We accept the Minister's word that this has been covered in the calculations that were made in compiling this scheme. The Minister indicated at the outset that this scheme would apply to salaried employees. I do not know whether he meant salaried employees only.

**Mr. McKechnie:** All permanent employees.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** Apparently it is to apply to all employees whose incomes vary, and assessments will be made as at 1 January each year?

**Mr. McKechnie:** Yes.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** That is a welcome assurance to receive from the Minister.

I must say at this stage that the proposal is symptomatic of what is being experienced in the economy in general as a result of necessary wage and salary increases. I think it is my duty to point out, or at least to have noted, that we on this side of the Chamber are aware of the position in which those who are already in receipt of superannuation payments, and their dependants, are placed by such rises. I do not know whether the contingency account covers this situation, nor do I know whether the automatic rises that have been made in the payments from other superannuation funds are applicable to local government employees. This will depend, I suppose, on the financial health of the fund.

When the Minister is summing up the debate, perhaps he will be able to inform me, and other interested members, of the periods for the fixing of contributions and payments under the local government employees superannuation scheme. I know, for instance, that quinquennial assessments are made in other superannuation schemes. Perhaps the Minister could advise how often contributions and disbursements are assessed in the case of local government employees.

**Mr. Lee:** This Government is always looking after you in local government matters.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** I have asked a straightforward question in order to obtain information.

**Mr. Sherrington:** Perhaps the honourable member for Yeronga has no confidence in the Minister.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The honourable member for Yeronga might feel that the facts should be questioned. I am seeking information on how frequently these assessments are made. When we study the details of the Bill, we might be able to make a fair assessment of the financial shifts that could take place when an amendment such as the one now under discussion is implemented.

At the moment, I say on behalf of the Opposition that the principle of the Bill appears to be good. We welcome it, and we welcome the savings that it might produce. We hope that no anomalies will arise, and that no suffering results from the changing of the limits on assessments. Members on this side of the Chamber who have been employees of local authorities will no doubt have other comments to make at this stage of the debate.

**Mr. HARVEY** (Stafford) (8.24 p.m.): I commend the amendment being introduced by the Minister. I was rather surprised by his comment that its introduction has the concurrence of the Local Government Association, although I have alternative sources of information that lead me to believe that that is correct. Nevertheless, I am rather surprised that, for budgetary purposes, the association has agreed on the date of 1 January. The problems associated with local government budgeting at present are well known. At budget time the local authority must take into account the impact of a full year of the increased financial commitment by way of salaries and other remuneration. Therefore, it would make a determination as close as possible to the commencement of the budgetary period, probably at 1 June rather than at 1 January, because a lot of things could happen between 1 January and the presentation of its budget that would have a substantial bearing on the use of its funds. Although the Local Government Association apparently wants it that way, I personally am rather surprised because I consider that a council has much better budgetary control over its expenditure for the ensuing 12 months if it makes its determination as close as possible to the time of allocating funds under the respective votes for that year. It can then take into account the increases that it is likely to be required to meet in the first six months of that budgetary period. In that way it can make provision for a full year of increased expenditure on salaries, etc., plus what it expects will take place during that year. In the past councils have said, "The increase will be 16 to 20 per cent." In his last budget I think the Treasurer of Queensland nominated something of the order of 15 to 18 per cent.

What will be the situation of an employee who obtains promotion to a higher classification within a local authority? His promotion may mean an additional couple of thousand dollars a year to him. Will his contribution apply only from 1 January following his appointment, or will his case be dealt with separately?

I think it is essential that all superannuation schemes today should include a formula based on the cost index movement. Unless such a provision is included a person who receives an adequate superannuation payment on his retirement may find ultimately that, because of the reduced purchasing power of the money he is receiving, he has to obtain further employment to supplement his income.

I raise those points and submit them to the Minister so that if they are not covered at this stage they can be considered subsequently.

**Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (8.28 p.m.), in reply: I appreciate the support of the honourable member for Redlands. I can tell him that the scheme is very healthy indeed. The contributions are 7 per cent of the employee's salary, on the basis of a contribution of 3½ per cent by the employee and 3½ per cent by the local authority.

Briefly I will detail to him some of the aspects of the ex-gratia payments. The contribution ensures the employer superannuation payments as of right. The funds have been well managed and, as I said, are in a very healthy situation. The ex-gratia payments could vary according to the state of the fund, but the board has seen fit in recent times to lay down that if a man died under the age of 26 his widow would receive an ex-gratia payment of \$2,400 in addition to the normal entitlement. The ex-gratia payment decreases as the contributor's age increases, because the board's thinking is that the wife, and possibly the young family, of a young man are in greater need of an ex-gratia payment. At the age of 30 years the ex-gratia payment would be \$2,300.

It then begins to decline, and when he reaches 40 years of age, it is \$1,400. When he reaches possibly the last year of his employment, assuming he retires at 65, the payment would be \$110 at 64 years of age. That is not a great amount, admittedly, but at that stage it would be more than sufficient to cover anything he might lose by the fixing of the date at 1 January for the whole year instead of at any time when rises occur throughout the year as is the case at present. So I am confident that even a man of 64 years of age would not be disadvantaged, and a young man is very well treated by the board.

The honourable member for Stafford raised the question of the 1 January date and said he would be surprised if it had the

approval of the Local Government Association. Actually, the fixing of 1 January was supported by the Local Government Superannuation Board. On the general principles I have the support of the Local Government Association, but I discussed the actual date with the Local Government Superannuation Board and it thought that the most desirable date was the first day of the calendar year, which it believed would fit in best with its purposes. Actually, any date could have been fixed, but I accepted the board's advice that it should be 1 January.

It is understood that an adjustment will be made straight away if increases in salary follow promotion. In other words, if a man is promoted to a classification that attracts, say, \$2,000 per annum more, an adjustment will be made straight away; but any man remaining in the same job throughout the year will have the adjustment made on 1 January instead of, as at present, on every \$100 or more increase in his wage or salary.

The honourable member raised the question of a cost index formula and how this would affect the salary. I do not think I should go into that because it is not covered by the Bill, although I appreciate his concern that the salary should be adjusted according to the index. Of course, once it has been fixed, the provisions of the Bill would apply from 1 January the following year.

Motion (Mr. McKechnie) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. McKechnie, read a first time.

### CITY OF BRISBANE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (8.35 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the City of Brisbane Act 1924-1973 in certain particulars."

The prime purpose of this Bill is to include lands on Green, Mud and St. Helena Islands above low-water mark within the city of Brisbane.

As honourable members will be aware, the Government recently initiated action to have included in appropriate local authority areas all the islands off the coast of Queensland which are not presently so included. Formal procedures in relation to this matter under the Local Government Act are being processed at the present time and it is anticipated that, within a reasonably short period of time, the matter will be finalised.

Green, Mud and St. Helena Islands are located in Moreton Bay adjacent to the mouth of the Brisbane River, and it is therefore appropriate to include them within the city of Brisbane.

The boundaries of the city are defined by the City of Brisbane Act, and consequently an amendment of the Act is necessary to alter the boundaries. In terms of the Act, the boundaries of the city follow the low-water mark of Moreton Bay. There is thus no doubt that, under present law, Green, Mud and St. Helena Islands are not included in the city. On the other hand, it has been contended in some quarters that Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands are included in the city.

An examination of a map of the relevant area shows, however, that Fisherman Islands are separated from the mainland by the Boat Passage and there is a defined channel between Fisherman Islands and Bishop Island. It therefore appears that these islands are not embraced within the presently described boundaries of the city, and it is significant to mention that they are not zoned under the Brisbane Town Plan. To put the matter beyond doubt, the Bill provides that Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands, along with Green, Mud and St. Helena Islands, are included in the city.

I am advised that there is no freehold land on the islands concerned, the whole of which consists of Crown land. There are a number of special leases granted by the Crown over parts of the islands. Green Island is a recreation reserve under the Land Act. The Fisherman Islands are reserved for harbour purposes under the control of the Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland.

As a result of the alteration of the city boundaries by the inclusion of the islands mentioned, it is also necessary to make a consequential alteration of the boundaries of the adjoining electoral ward of Waterloo Bay. This is done by the Bill.

The Bill provides that the alterations of the boundaries of the city and the electoral ward of Waterloo Bay do not affect the power or authority of the Brisbane City Council as presently constituted or the status of the alderman presently representing the Waterloo Bay ward on the council.

I think honourable members will agree that it is desirable to include the islands in question in the city.

During the preparation of the Bill the question of the inclusion of Moreton Island in a local authority area was considered. Initially it was thought that the Redcliffe City Council would welcome the inclusion of Moreton Island within its boundaries; but the Redcliffe City Council objected to its being so included.

Under the Local Government Act the Governor in Council has the power to include Moreton Island within the city of Redcliffe, but as the Redcliffe City Council has objected to its inclusion I am hesitant to recommend it. On the other hand, Alderman Shaw and Alderman Ryan of the Brisbane City Council believe there are opportunities for Brisbane if Moreton Island is included in the city of Brisbane. As well I have had a brief discussion with the Lord Mayor on the inclusion of Moreton Island within the Brisbane City Council boundaries, and I have written to him on the subject.

It is my intention to consider before the second-reading stage of the Bill whether Moreton Island should be included in the city of Brisbane or the city of Redcliffe. I commend the motion to the Committee.

**Mr. BALDWIN (Redlands)** (8.40 p.m.): As the Government well knows, the Labor Party is, and always has been, very interested in the proposal to bring all land, particularly islands, under local authority control. I am aware that the situation in local authorities under the Local Government Act may not always be a healthy one under this Government. In that context I cite the case of the Redland Bay islands, and the conflict and controversy that occurred over the Torres Strait Islands.

The test of the pudding is in the eating and with the islands in Redland Bay I am sure that, although the principle was good, the action was rather belated. This has been demonstrated by subsequent events.

In the absence of something better for the islands of St. Helena, Green and Mud I see no reason to oppose this move. It occurred to me previously that something better could be done about Russell, Karragarra, Macleay, Lamb and Peel Islands. The Committee will recall that at the relevant time the island residents proposed the establishment of a new local government authority to be called the "Bay Islands Council". On my understanding of events at meetings it was their stated intention to try to get all the islands in Moreton Bay—including Moreton Island and North Stradbroke Island—included in a specific island council. I do not think any honourable member who has had anything to do with these islands will dispute that they have a peculiar environment.

**Mr. Lane:** A peculiar member, too.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The honourable member for Merthyr should not talk about his colleague from Murrumba that way. I am surprised at him.

Years ago there was a shire called the Shire of Quambi, which is the Aboriginal word for oyster.

**Mr. Frawley:** Did you look that up?

**Mr. BALDWIN:** No, I learnt that from people who lived long enough to have more sense than the honourable member. Being Aborigines they certainly had more manners than the honourable member who interrupts.

**Mr. Lane:** Quamby is up on the Burketown Road.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The word I am speaking about is not spelt the same as the one which the sorely misled and poorly educated honourable member has introduced to the debate.

**Mr. Lane:** Give us a bit of class war.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The residents and the Government of the day responsible for putting these islands in one shire had in mind a principle that was worthy of consideration although then it was not as evident as it is today when we consider the despoilation of some of the islands. If I and other honourable members had known more, sooner—if we had started off a decade ago—I would have been a strong protagonist of forming a bay island council, with all the bay islands under a local government authority of their own.

I would have done this even on the principle established for such authorities by this Government; that is, they must have a community interest, similar problems and so on, which are the prime considerations for the declaration of the local government areas. Unfortunately, the islands have been fragmented by grave lack of knowledge by many of us, I am afraid.

**Mr. Lane:** Is Red Island in your electorate?

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The honourable member for Merthyr continues to display his absolute ignorance in this Chamber. It is a wonder he has not ceased such interjections while I am on my feet. If he considered the matter properly and had a look at Russell Island and some of the old maps, it was once called Ruus Island. That answers his interjection, which displays a grave lack of knowledge of these matters.

In this instance I agree that there appears to be nothing better that we can presently do in relation to Green Island, Mud Island, St. Helena Island, Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands. I would suggest, however, that the inclusion of Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands would be related somewhat to the port of Brisbane survey. If so, it is more than ever necessary that those islands be included in a local authority area—and more particularly, Brisbane, which has the rest of the port authority within its boundary. The legislation would then represent an integrating move.

**Mr. Newton** interjected.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** Yes. There is only one local authority in the whole of Queensland capable of supplying the services that will be required when a new and modern port is established.

As I have said before in this Chamber, from the information that I have been able to glean from marine engineers, waterside

engineers and others knowledgeable in these matters, the Fisherman Islands and Bishop Island complex seems to be the most logical choice for the development of a new Brisbane port. On that very pressing point, I am forced to accept the inclusion of Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands in this proposal.

**Mr. Frawley:** Did Jack Munday okay this?

**Mr. BALDWIN:** Why don't you write to him—if you can?

I was interested to learn from the Minister that Bishop Island and the Fisherman Islands do not come within the city of Brisbane boundary because of the definition in zoning. I am one of those who previously thought that they were included.

I am very pleased to hear that Alderman Shaw and Alderman Ryan agree with this proposal. They would know what they were talking about and would appreciate the responsibilities they were accepting on top of those they already carry. I cannot take it on myself to object when two such worthy and experienced aldermen appear to be in favour.

I would be interested to learn the reason for the Redcliffe City Council's objection to accepting responsibility for Moreton Island. I suppose it considered what occurred following the inclusion of some Moreton Bay islands in the Redland Shire and would have some misgivings. However, I suppose these matters will come up at a later time.

I would also be interested to know the decision, if there was one, of the full council of the Brisbane City Council on the matter of the inclusion of Moreton Island in the city of Brisbane. The Minister made us aware that the Governor in Council has the right to include a new area in a local authority area. I take it that in a case as important as this one, which will extend the area of the Brisbane City Council still further, several matters would have to be looked at, not the least of them being the continual loud cries of "centralisation", "the all-powerful octopuslike extensions" of this local authority area and similar accusations that are levelled against the Brisbane City Council.

**Mr. Newton** interjected.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** As the honourable member for Belmont says, there is probably a nigger in the woodpile and we are trying to uncover him faggot by faggot.

If we are to take as a precedent the fact that over a period the Redland Shire Council has been given a sum of money—I believe it to be in the region of \$400,000 and I assess it would need every cent of that amount—

**Mr. McKechnie:** Some of that was loan money and some was grant.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** Yes. Looking at this proportionately and considering the problems that could accrue to the Brisbane City Council, it would be a fool to accept Moreton

Island for under \$1,000,000. However, that is a request that it must make. I hope that the island is not imposed on the council. After all, if Redcliffe could object and have its objection upheld, the same tolerance should be extended to the Brisbane City Council.

**Mr. McKechnie:** It has not been upheld at this stage.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** I drew that inference from the Minister's statement that there was an objection and his later statement that he had discussed the matter with the Lord Mayor and written to the Brisbane City Council. I was coming to that point anyway. Naturally I am curious and would like to know whether he has had a reply from either the Lord Mayor or the Brisbane City Council. By way of humorous digression, I hope, I trust that any communication he has received from the Lord Mayor is not of the same controversial nature as that which came before Parliament in the matter of redistribution of aldermanic boundaries.

I have already covered the possibilities and I am trying to make an assessment on behalf of a beleaguered Brisbane City Council, whose percentages of subsidies have been considerably cut over the past 17 years, and make a plea that if Moreton Island is imposed on the council against its will, at least a cash payment will be made to make the assumption more bearable to it and to the ratepayers of Brisbane, who will carry the final burden.

I am sure that other colleagues of mine on this side of the Chamber will take up some of the important details concerned with bringing the island of St. Helena under local government authority. I think we are all aware of the problems, the history and cultural value of St. Helena. As my time is running out, I shall leave it to my colleagues to cover that aspect of the matter.

In the light of what the Minister has told the Committee this evening, I say on behalf of the Opposition that we have no hard-and-fast objections to the Bill at this moment, but we reserve our final decision till we have studied the Bill in detail.

**Mr. HOUGHTON (Redcliffe) (8.56 p.m.):** I listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister's introduction of the Bill. I believe that this action stems from the problems associated with the development of the islands situated south of the city of Brisbane. This undoubtedly has caused a great deal of controversy and heartburning, and many problems for local government. I ask the Minister why the Bill has been introduced before a decision has been made as to Moreton Island. We all know that this island comes within the local authority boundary of Redcliffe, but the Redcliffe City Council does not want the problems and cost associated with the administration of Moreton Island. I say here and now that I will not support any Bill that does not include Moreton Island in

the Brisbane City Council area. I firmly believe that these islands, particularly Moreton Island, are national playgrounds, and I have said all along that I should like to see them declared national parks.

The cost of maintaining local authority services on Moreton Island would be more than the ratepayers of Redcliffe could meet. Of course, we all know what will happen to the islands when they come under local authority control. The moment they come under the administration of the Brisbane City Council, the Redcliffe City Council, or any other local authority, leeches from the council will be all over them. Health officers and other council officers will rush over there and have a pleasant holiday for a week. They will spoil many opportunities for those who would like to have a little place there for holidays for themselves and their families. I should not like to see Moreton Island become anything but a national park.

I think the honourable member for Redlands is on the right track when he says that all the islands should be the responsibility of one authority rather than the responsibility of a local authority that is unable to maintain them. There would surely be no speakers who would support the proposition that Palm Island, for instance, become the responsibility of the Townsville City Council. And what about Thursday Island? I think there are 32 ratepayers there. Much the same situation applies on Moreton Island, where there would be no more than about 20 ratepayers. The largest ratepayer there is an A.L.P. supporter, Mr. Jim Kennedy, who has done an excellent job on the island. Since he took over at Tangalooma, he has greatly improved communications on the island. It is now possible to dial Brisbane, Redcliffe, or anywhere else from Moreton Island, whereas it is impossible even to get a telephone installed at Redcliffe. Mr. Kennedy has therefore done some good for the island. Communications there are excellent, and I compliment him on what he has achieved.

Those who know the bay waters, as I do and as other members who do a little fishing know them, will realise that at present Green Island, for instance, has no meaning at all. There is nothing there. Admittedly Mud Island would have a bit of coral.

Fisherman Island and Bishop Island raise a doubt in the mind of local government as to whether they should fall within the jurisdiction of the Brisbane City Council. Surely before any decisions are made, the wishes of the Redcliffe City Council should be taken into account. Every consideration should be given to the wishes of the people in that area.

Bribie Island is different in that it is serviced by a bridge. No doubt most of us will live to see another bridge linking it with the mainland at the northern end.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is too much audible conversation on my left.

**Mr. HOUGHTON:** If it takes as long to get a bridge from Bribie Island to the military jetty area at Caloundra as it is taking to get another bridge across to Clontarf, we will be waiting a long time indeed to get a bridge leading from that end of Bribie Island.

The islands around Waterloo Bay are the responsibility of the Brisbane City Council. I know that my colleague the honourable member for Murrumba will support me in this. We have already notified the Minister that the Redcliffe City Council will not accept the responsibility for the maintenance and development of Moreton Island. It comes back to the same old story. The local authorities cannot fund what they are supposed to do now. I speak from experience. My area receives many visitors. In return for a small subsidy from the Government the Redcliffe City Council is required to clean up beaches and provide bathing and other facilities, mainly for the visitors. It is not good enough. The ratepayers have got to the stage where they cannot fund their own requirements. When Jim Kennedy or somebody like him starts a hovercraft service to Moreton Island, probably that area will develop. The moment it develops, health officers and others will flock there. We know what will happen then.

I hope that before the second reading of the Bill the Minister will be able to announce that the Redcliffe City Council's requests and the submissions of myself and the honourable member for Murrumba have been acceded to. I am sure that the Brisbane City Council would be only too happy to take over the responsibility of Moreton Island. I understand that the A.L.P. intends to establish a playground there for union members. I understand it is going to have a Billy Butlin's camp over there. Good luck to such a project. Perhaps the island could be developed along those lines. The Brisbane City Council is the local authority that should have the responsibility for its development. It has the greatest number of ratepayers and it could provide the necessary services far better than the Redcliffe City Council.

**Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (9.4 p.m.):** I support our shadow Minister (Mr. Baldwin) and the honourable member for Redcliffe. I, too, appeal to the Minister to give very serious consideration to the future of the islands in Moreton Bay. Any honourable members who have travelled throughout Australia as I have will agree that Moreton Bay with its islands is one of the most beautiful areas in Australia. For many years we have expressed a great deal of concern about its future. I know Moreton Island and the other islands very well. I spent most of my early childhood around them. I realise what a great asset they are to the city of Brisbane and, as a tourist attraction, to Queensland, and, indeed, Australia as a whole. I have grave fears about handing over the control of them to local authorities.

I say that not because the local authorities would not have good intentions but because they will have a legitimate complaint that they have not the finance to look after the islands. Will the islands then be allowed to deteriorate into dilapidated, run-down areas through lack of finance, supervision and control? Even at the present time tremendous vandalism takes place at bayside areas.

Moreton Island is mentioned in the Bill. No firm decision has been made about whose control it will pass to but honourable members on both sides of the Chamber know of the damage that has taken place on this great island as a result of vandalism. Great damage has been done by people driving beach buggies along the beaches and over the dunes and from time one sees home-converted jeep-like contraptions. Fishermen and people enjoying other recreational activities down there have had very narrow escapes from some of these vehicles. Again, this is because of lack of control.

When these islands do pass to the control of a local authority, whether it be the Brisbane City Council or any other, I cannot see how the authority will obtain the financial means to police, protect and develop them as they should be developed and protected. The most important thing, of course, is to preserve them. The honourable member for Redcliffe touched on a very vital matter in this regard. I think he reiterated what the honourable member for Redlands said, namely, that there should be one control for all the islands lying off the State of Queensland. At present, of course, we are considering just a few islands out of many in the bay. I could think of many other smaller islands further down the bay, some of which, I think, come under the control of the Redland Shire Council—Coochie Mudlo and some of the islands further down the South Passage.

My fear is that if these islands are passed over to the control of local authorities the councils will not be able to meet their responsibilities in connection with them. The Brisbane City Council already has far greater responsibilities than it can handle. When my electorate was much larger than it is today and extended as far as Nudgee and Pinkenba, the council of which I was a member in my early years could not look after it because of lack of finance. The Deepwater Bend area and other areas that used to be in my electorate were classic examples of neglect. It was not deliberate neglect by the council, which knew that deterioration was taking place; it was simply lack of finance. Now we are adding further to the responsibilities of these councils. I doubt the wisdom of this simply for the sake of taking the islands from Government control and placing them under the control of local authorities—unless I can be assured that the local authority concerned is capable of financially meeting its obligations in looking after the islands.

Perhaps in the second reading the Minister will give us a little more information and tell us how the local authorities might receive some extra assistance in providing the necessary facilities and the rangers to protect them. The most important feature of protection is the physical protection afforded by rangers, especially on week-ends, when vandals seem to take complete control of these areas. Even in our own electorates on the mainland the vandal takes over during the week-ends, when he knows that the police control in the areas is inadequate. We should have more rangers not only on the land but in the bay itself. They should be provided with fast patrol boats so that they can efficiently look after such islands as Moreton and Stradbroke.

This is all I have to say at this stage. I look forward to seeing the Bill. Perhaps the Minister can enlighten me and allay some of my fears that the local authorities might be unable to exercise proper control when we hand these islands over to them.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (9.9 p.m.): The proposed amendment of the City of Brisbane Act reminds me of an old saying, "Tall oaks from little acorns grow." It is extraordinary that this Bill is rather shrouded with possibilities. I do not think that any measure brought forward should allow for possibilities. It should be discussed much more fully than this proposed amendment has been discussed.

As honourable members are aware, I live in Townsville, which, if the Federal Electoral Act as planned, is implemented, will have a voting force of 80,000 persons. Off the city lie the Palm Islands. I gather from the third paragraph of this proposed amendment that that group of islands may come within its provisions. As tall oaks from little acorns grow, so will this Bill expand.

**Mr. Newton:** Where did you get that information from?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I don't have to get any information from anywhere. All one has to do is think, but unfortunately many members of the Opposition don't think. Frankly, a lot of members on this side of the Chamber don't think, either. I am not biting any acorn; I am biting facts.

On the Palm Islands live 1,200 human beings, who predominantly are first Australians. Although ethnically they are not first Australians, they claim to be and are regarded as first Australians. Under the proposed Federal legislation these 1,200 people will have a say in for whom they will vote and as to where they live, just as we have.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Why shouldn't they?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I am not debating that. I say they have. These 1,200 people presently live in a different shire and under

the control of a different council from that proposed under the legislation. According to the Bill—

**Mr. Newton:** Do you have a copy of it?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I have exactly what the honourable member has—and that's not much.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope that the honourable member for Townsville will tie in what he is saying with the motion before the Committee.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I am following the provisions of the Bill. Here it says that the three months' period of notice of intention expires on 5 August 1974. It also says—

"The proposed amendment in the above direction follows the direction of the Government to include in local authorities all parts of Queensland above high-water mark that are not presently so included."

**Mr. R. JONES:** I rise to a point of order. I should like to move that the honourable member table the page from which he is reading so that all of us can be made conversant with the document.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope the honourable member for Cairns knows what a point of order is. So far he has not stated any point of order.

**Mr. R. JONES:** My point of order is that the honourable member for Townsville is reading from a document that obviously has not been tabled by the Minister. I move, "That the document be tabled."

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Is the honourable member for Townsville willing to table that document?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Yes, Mr. Lickiss.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the honourable member for Cairns that he did not have a valid point of order.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** If the honourable member for Cairns wishes to look at my notes in my handwriting, he can do so. If he is able to read them, he must have a diploma in hieroglyphics.

I prefaced my speech by saying that tall oaks from little acorns grow. This legislation will eventually involve all off-shore islands in the State. Members of the Opposition remain silent; they cannot disagree with me. They have no point in asking to read my notes, which basically are probably the same as theirs. But if they wish to look at them they may do so.

Palm Island is a magnificent area occupied by 1200 people. When this proposal appeared in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" some months ago, there was no notification that Palm Island was to be included. However, the inhabitants of Palm

Island were somehow notified through the so-called Australian Government that they were to be included. They objected very strongly and said that they wished to run their own affairs.

Our coastal islands are the most magnificent to be found anywhere. They have great potential and are worth hundreds of millions of dollars in tourist revenue to the State. But who controls them at present? Every developer with a crackpot idea of making millions by selling property. What is more, advertisements are published interstate and overseas without restriction, so that many people have bought absolutely worthless and completely unimproved properties. There are no roads, sewerage or water. The local authorities have no control over them. What will happen to these magnificent islands?

**Mr. Hanson** interjected.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Medical latin is classical latin.

**Mr. Hanson:** I can speak dog latin.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** You speak only Italian.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member to address the Chair and confine himself to the broad principles enunciated by the Minister.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I intend to do so, Mr. Lickiss. If St. Helena, Green and Mud Islands are to come within the City of Brisbane Act, it stands to reason that various other Acts or Bills will affect other areas, including the city of Townsville. We already have the Townsville City Council (Sale of Land) Act, which was passed to facilitate very excellent development of land at the right price for the benefit of the ordinary citizen.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member to deal with the amendments to the City of Brisbane Act.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I have come back to the amendments.

**Mr. Newton:** It is about time.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** May I proceed?

**The CHAIRMAN:** The honourable member may proceed provided he deals with the City of Brisbane Act.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** These islands will now come under the City of Brisbane Act. It is quite possible that all the islands along the coast—this will affect other honourable members, especially members of the Opposition—will be included in certain local authorities.

**Mr. Tucker:** That is the flow-on.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The flow-on concerns who is to develop these areas. Where will the rate money come from? Tourism will not pay for everything.

The crunch comes somewhere along the line. The crunch is who will develop them and who will pay for the roads, sewerage and water reticulation? Magnetic Island had no town water supply until the city of Townsville reticulated water to it at great expense. Palm Island has a very limited water supply.

**Mr. Lane:** It has a wet canteen.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I agree that it has a very wet canteen. Other islands along the coast, which will eventually be covered by flow-on legislation, have no water.

**The CHAIRMAN:** They might be covered in flow-on legislation but we are not dealing with them now. We are dealing with the City of Brisbane Act.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The City of Brisbane Act will mention specific islands, but I doubt whether they have a sufficient supply of water to meet sewerage reticulation and normal household demand. Who will supply the necessary water? Will it be the citizens of Brisbane, who already have trouble with their local council about free-ways, excessive taxes and resumptions of land at the extraordinary price of \$10 a perch? Who will supply the money? No-one other than the State or Federal Government. It cannot be supplied by the Brisbane City Council. Who will supervise health?

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The city of Brisbane has resumed land at \$10 a perch. Alderman Jones is the best businessman I have met.

**Mr. Gunn:** He is one of Ned's boys.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I do not know whether he is one of Ned's boys or not. Who will supply the roads? We have a notice of resumption dated 5 August, which has now passed. We also have a note—this is a point I beg to make—

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Which ones? St. Helena Island, Mud Island, or which ones?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The Moreton Bay islands—Mud, St. Helena and Green Islands—have a notice of intention, which expired on 5 August. It is a proclamation. There is also one for objectors in regard to Palm Island, but it was never promulgated in the local Press. It was put through the Government Gazette, but it was never promulgated. That is the point I wish to make. If these things are pushed through, the public should know exactly what is happening. That is most important.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I gather I have caused a considerable amount of amusement, but it does not amuse me. I have been brought back to the legislation several times, Mr. Lickiss, but I ask you to give me some latitude, because I have prepared a statement. The legislation may deal with a proposed amendment to the City of Brisbane Act, but what are the implications of the principles underlying it? How far does it go? Do the little acorns grow into tall oaks? Do we have the local authorities assuming control over islands that are already under the control of a State Government department? Are we going to hand over the control of our islands to the Commonwealth? We have seen the off-shore legislation being sabotaged by our own State Government, which one minute opposes the National Government and the next minute almost agrees with it. Where do we go in this State?

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** That is the best point you have made.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I am not interested in points that appeal to the honourable member. I am interested in making points to the advantage of people who live on the islands.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** I am interested.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The people who live on the islands do not know where they are going. They are being confused by our State and Federal Governments. Let us realise that they are still citizens of this State.

**Mr. Bromley:** There is no-one down there.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** There are—1,200 of them. Go and see them. I know them well. We must understand the implications of the Bill. I suggest that it be rethought in the light of the implications that I have just pointed out.

Whereupon the honourable member tabled the notes of his speech.

**Mr. HARVEY (Stafford) (9.24 p.m.):** I am somewhat perturbed about the remarks of the previous speaker and to the document he was quoting from. He referred to paragraph 3 of the document and evidently expounded to the Committee information that the Minister has not presented, either on this occasion or previously. Therefore, we are left somewhat in the dark as to where the information and details came from.

**Mr. Lane:** Go back to sleep and that will solve it.

**Mr. HARVEY:** If I was like the honourable member, I probably would. Again if I was like him, I would be under the influence of liquor most of the time I was in this Chamber. Fortunately I do not come within that category.

**Mr. LANE:** I rise to a point of order. I take strong objection to the suggestions made by the honourable member for Stafford—

**Mr. Sherrington** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I was trying to listen to a point of order. I hope the honourable member for Salisbury will be silent while I am trying to listen to the point of order.

**Mr. Sherrington** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! When I am on my feet, the honourable member will remain silent; otherwise I will deal with him under the appropriate Standing Order.

**Mr. LANE:** The honourable member for Stafford suggested that I am under the influence of liquor on most occasions in this Chamber. That statement is objectionable to me and I ask him to withdraw it and apologise.

**Mr. HARVEY:** If it is offensive to the honourable member, I withdraw and apologise.

No doubt many problems and ramifications are associated with this proposal. I do not necessarily agree with some previous speakers on how islands should be developed and by whom. Our experience shows that other islands in the bay, which have not been under the control of a local authority or some other responsible body, have been developed in such a way that people have been exploited. This has occurred through lack of control over the islands. That factor must be taken into account in relation to future port development. In "The Courier-Mail" of 13 June a developer was reported as saying that he was waiting to see what happened there before taking any action on the adjoining islands.

Like the honourable members for Redcliffe and Wynnum, I know these islands fairly well. The Fisherman Islands at the mouth of the Brisbane River can be filled and reclaimed. No development has been undertaken. However, on Bishop Island, there are some small week-end cottages, which would not measure up to local authority requirements, and a kiosk.

**Mr. Low:** What about Tangalooma?

**Mr. HARVEY:** The only time I was there was when the whaling station was operating. During the war years I was at Cowan Cowan for a short time. I have not been back since.

Moreton Island must be considered also because it is a vast island and we do not want other than proper development. We want some type of supervision. We do not want to shut the stable door after the horse has bolted. We must learn from experience.

St. Helena Island should be preserved for historic purposes. It was a prison settlement and some of the old cells, the old bakehouse, the convict settlement and the underground cells still exist. It would not need a great deal of money to restore that island for historic purposes.

Some work has been done on Green Island in Moreton Bay by the Wynnum Rotary Club, which has established a barbecue and picnic area. There is no development at this stage on Mud Island.

The relationship of these islands to future port development must be considered and action to protect this particular locality for the establishment of subsidiary industry must be taken before it is too late. I consider that the action the Government is taking in relation to these islands is necessary. We have learned the error of our ways. Russell Island was subdivided and titles were issued by the Titles Office, yet some allotments are below the low-water mark. This must be avoided. These are the things that could happen if we did not take the necessary steps at this stage.

One of the previous speakers mentioned the cost of development of these islands. The honourable member for Redcliffe, being associated with a local authority having a vast mileage of foreshores, knows the cost associated with reclamation and protection of foreshores.

With development in that area, we must think of a reticulated water supply and the provision of electricity. A normal diesel or package unit would be inadequate to meet future requirements. These are all factors that have to be faced up to. The time will come when there will have to be a road link to some of the islands. Even a local authority such as the Brisbane City Council would need additional financial help to undertake these responsibilities in the development of the islands.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** A road link is something that many people would oppose.

**Mr. HARVEY:** That may be so. As a matter of fact, when one looks at the islands, particularly Green and Mud Islands, one sees that that could very well be the case. A road to Bishop Island would be only a small connection, but when one thinks of Green Island and St. Helena, it becomes a different kettle of fish. Probably there would be opposition to such a link. As the honourable member for Redcliffe mentioned, it has taken a long time to have a bridge constructed across Bribie Passage between the northern end of Bribie Island and Caloundra. I can well imagine the cost of providing a bridge to the bay islands, and the service that a bridge would provide to the rather restricted development on St. Helena would not really justify its cost. Such a bridge would have to be built from the Fisherman Islands.

At present I understand that the manager of Hurrigan Canvas Goods—I do not know his name—holds the lease of St. Helena for development of the island as a tourist resort.

If the island comes under the control of a local authority, what is to be the position of his lease?

**Mr. McKechnie:** The lease would stand.

**Mr. HARVEY:** The Valuer-General will have to go into these areas and assess rate levels, and rates will have to be imposed according to the services provided. Those on the island will have to contribute something towards local government supervision and development.

Consideration will have to be given to town planning and zoning of the islands. This is a fact that will have to be faced up to sooner or later. It is an important matter, because at the present time, with no zoning on the island, a person could establish virtually anything there, and subsequently there would be the embarrassment of getting rid of an industry, or whatever it might be, that was considered not to be compatible with the proper development of the island and adjacent islands.

If port facilities are to be established in the bay, consideration will also have to be given to subsidiary industries that may be associated with the port. These are all matters that will have to be determined, and, quite candidly, on this Bill I am keeping my priorities open until I have seen it. It could turn out to be very expensive for the City of Brisbane. At present, as a previous speaker mentioned, the cost of administering Brisbane is such that the total general rates do not even meet the city's loan-servicing charges. To impose additional costs on the city, without giving it financial assistance, would therefore place an added burden on the ratepayers of Brisbane.

Without doubt, as soon as a local authority takes over an area there is a cry from the people that they want this, that and all the other things that they have done without in the past. I repeat that it is necessary to place these islands under the control of some authority to ensure that they have properly planned development, that there is no exploitation of unsuspecting purchasers, and that any buildings or structures placed on the islands conform to the Brisbane building code or the uniform building code for the whole of the State. If corrective measures are taken now we may avoid serious problems at a subsequent time.

There is a need to deal with these islands, but I would not know what financial assistance might be forthcoming from the Government to help the local authority in handling the exercise. I agree with the honourable member for Redcliffe that the Redcliffe City Council could not afford to place the added burden on its ratepayers. I sometimes question what should be done in regard to Moreton Island.

**Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumba) (9.35 p.m.):** The present proposal by the Minister to include Mud, Green, St. Helena, Fisherman

and Bishop Islands in the area of the city of Brisbane is a most commendable one. I believe that all the islands off the coast of Queensland should be included in some local authority area. The Minister mentioned that he would consider including Moreton in the area of the city of Brisbane. In considering the Minister's proposal, I think we should pose certain questions.

I support my colleague the honourable member for Redcliffe in this. Jim Houghton was the first mayor of Redcliffe when it became a city. As a former mayor of Redcliffe, he has a wide knowledge of local government and all its problems.

Which of the four local authorities in close proximity to Moreton Island should control it? Caboolture Shire, the city of Redcliffe, the city of Brisbane or the Redland Shire? Which one of these shares the greatest community of interest with the island? Which area has the best practical access to the island? Moreton Island is separated from the mainland by Moreton Bay, and the distance from each of those four local authorities does not vary greatly.

The Caboolture Shire controls Bribie Island, and, as far as I know, the Caboolture Shire Council and the residents of Caboolture have no interest at all in Moreton Island. Redcliffe, with a fairly high proportion of boat owners, provides a fair number of the people who visit Moreton Island for short periods. However, Brisbane, the State capital, is the area which provides the greatest number of people who use the island and the facilities, if any, on it.

Brisbane is the base for all the transport services. It possesses a greater ability to finance any non-revenue-producing area such as Moreton Island. I feel that the city of Brisbane is much more suited than any other local authority to controlling Moreton Island. Brisbane residents form the greatest proportion of the landholders on the island, together with the visitors that go to Tangalooma, and also a big proportion of the landowners and users of the Cowan Cowan and Bulwer areas.

The Tangalooma tourist resort was mentioned earlier. It is an area of 99 acres leased by Mr. Jim Kennedy, who is well known to all members of the Committee. The honourable member for Lytton can be seen down there almost any week-end, staying in the presidential suite. That is where he was when his suits were stolen in Brisbane one week-end. There is one thing that disturbs me about the inclusion of Moreton Island in any local authority area. Jim Kennedy has protested about including Moreton Island in any local authority whatsoever, and that makes me suspicious. Why is he protesting so much about this? There is something wrong somewhere. Something stinks about this and I hope to find out what it is before I am finished.

The Redland Shire has already been given control of a number of islands. It has controlled North Stradbroke Island for many years. Probably the Redland Shire would have the greatest experience in the management of islands of this type. North Stradbroke Island is separated from Moreton Island by the South Passage, which is approximately two miles wide. By reason of the proximity of the Redland Shire mainland area to North Stradbroke Island and the other bay islands, it is probable that Redland residents would make the least use of Moreton Island.

Incidentally, the notes that I am using are my own typewritten notes. I heard some rude remarks from the honourable members opposite about something the honourable member for Townsville read. I typed these notes myself, so do not let anybody accuse me of having anything handed to me by the Minister.

If Moreton Island was placed under the control of any local authority, it would be immediately subject to the by-laws of that local authority. It would be necessary to formulate a town plan to have control over the use and development of that island.

Freehold and leasehold land would be rateable in a normal manner and would require the preparation of valuations by the Valuer-General's Department. But should a future valuation be unduly influenced by recent sales at very high figures, it could be necessary to establish Moreton Island as a separate financial division to permit the levying of a differential rate. This could be so, regardless of what local authority area controlled the island. On the other hand, some of the ratepayers on Moreton Island may be prepared to pay high rates on the assumption that such revenue would permit the council to provide improved amenities.

It is important to mention that, if Moreton Island were brought within the control of any local authority, it would be as much a part of that local authority as any other, and it should not be regarded as something apart merely because of its lack of physical contact. It should share a proportion of the total programme within the priorities set by the local authority irrespective of the particular contribution it makes to the total revenue.

In addition to rate revenue there would be some receipts from licence and permit fees but these would be fairly insignificant.

**An Opposition Member interjected.**

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I am coming to that. I think the islands should have representation on the local authority in which they are included. Each island should have aldermanic representation. I also think that grants should be given by the State and Federal Government for such purposes as the establishment of an administrative, construction and maintenance organisation and

development and control of public services, amenities and recreational facilities needed for visitors. The visitors to the islands contribute nothing to the finance of the controlling local authority.

There are roughly 300 residential allotments on Moreton Island, together with the Tangalooma resort. There is also an airstrip and several other blocks which are held by the Moreton Bay Boat Club and various other fishing clubs. There are 30 mining leases of areas ranging from 2½ acres to 5,632 acres.

I was an alderman in the Redcliffe City Council and I have enough knowledge of local authorities to estimate that the rate revenue from Moreton Island would be in the vicinity of \$10,000. Any other services such as sanitation and refuse collection would be charged according to cost.

**Mr. Marginson:** What is the valuation of Moreton Island?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I honestly do not know the valuation of Moreton Island; I am not an approved valuer, but I base that estimate on experience I had on the Redcliffe City Council in drawing up its Budget over six years.

In addition to a complete lack of normal local government services on the island, there are no educational facilities, medical facilities or police on the island. In fact, the water police attend to any problems that occur there.

**Mr. Davis:** Are there any bookmakers there?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I told honourable members before that this is my own estimate of Moreton Island.

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

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I crave your indulgence, Mr. Lickiss, to answer the honourable member for Brisbane. I feel that Moreton Island and the other islands previously mentioned would best be suited by being included in the area of the city of Brisbane because it is more capable of looking after any non-revenue or low-revenue area.

I will reserve any further remarks I have until the second reading of the Bill when I will have a copy of it.

**Mr. HARRIS (Wynnum) (9.44 p.m.):** First, let me say that I support the sound submissions made by members of the Opposition who have preceded me in the debate and which contrast sharply with those made by some honourable members on my left. It will be recalled that approximately 12 months ago I drew the attention of honourable members to what I then considered to be fraudulent practices engaged in by the Lands Department relative to the sale of land on Moreton Island. The Minister for Lands at that time (Mr. Sullivan)

castigated me for the remarks I then made, after I had proved to him, and—I say this confidently—also to the members of this Assembly, that this did take place. If it did not occur, why is the development of Moreton Island in such a chaotic state? Any honourable member who is conversant with the island would be fully aware of the problems that exist there relative to traffic and the provision of roads.

The first person who bought a block of land on the island had only to make a very small outlay to purchase four wooden pegs with which to mark the boundaries of his land. The purchaser of the adjacent block was required to provide only two pegs to mark his land, and each successive purchaser placed two markers to define the boundaries of his land. That shows a lack of proper control by the State Government over the subdivision of land on Moreton Island.

At that time the then Minister for Lands, when making a ministerial statement about the sale of Crown land on Moreton Island, said—

“The honourable member for Wynnum tells us that the Lands Department is guilty of fraudulent practice in that the defined roads in the locality are not trafficable.”

I made that claim in the knowledge that there were no trafficable roads on the island, and I hope that I am not forced to make a similar claim when the Government hands over the control of these islands to the Brisbane City Council.

I was also fully aware that the lithographs that were published and delivered to people to encourage them to attend the Lands Department auction sale were confusing. Of course, it was the intention of the Minister and his colleagues in the Government to confuse the people so that high prices could be obtained for the land. In fact, the prices paid for land on Moreton Island were approximately the same as those paid for land at Jindalee. In other words, the buyers of land on Moreton Island were sold a pup.

This is a shocking state of affairs, and I am pleased to think that the administration of the islands will be taken out of the hands of the Government. It shows no consideration whatever for people, particularly the workers, who wish to build seaside homes. I earnestly hope that when the islands are handed over to the Brisbane City Council they will be controlled in accordance with the council ordinances, and that all the necessary facilities and amenities, such as drainage, water supply, and electricity supply, will be provided.

The honourable member for Redcliffe said that the people of Redcliffe did not necessarily want Moreton Island to be included in their local authority area. I should think they wouldn't! Moreton Island has had such poor treatment that it should be given back to the Aborigines. But I have no doubt

that under the control of Clem Jones and his aldermen the island will be better off than it has been previously.

I am surprised at the secrecy surrounding the introduction of this measure. I am left wondering why it was presented so quietly. Is it because the Government will engage in another racket, one that will be utilised by land developers? Have some developers already approached the Minister or his colleagues, as the Queensland Cement and Lime Company did when it was fortunate enough to obtain a 99-year dredging lease near Mud Island? What will happen if the Brisbane City Council takes over these islands and endeavours to convert them into attractive residential areas? What effect will this have on the operations of the coral dredges and the barges that transport the coral from Mud Island to Darra?

Alderman Eric Shaw and I are greatly concerned about the pollution that will be created in the Wynnum-Manly area and in the surrounding district of Waterloo Bay. I am completely in favour of the inclusion of these islands in the city of Brisbane. In the light of the possibility of the port of Brisbane being established at the Fisherman Islands, what precautions are to be taken to prevent erosion? Honourable members probably are aware that 168 acres of mangroves are to be destroyed. What erosion will that cause, and what effect will it have on the ecology from the Fisherman Islands to Green Island and as far as Peel Island and to the northern end of Stradbroke Island?

Reference has been made to Jim Kennedy and what he has done at Tangalooma. He is prepared to invest a considerable amount of money in a private enterprise in that area, although he is a Labor supporter. Now the Government wants to castigate him for doing that. We need people like him on the islands in Moreton Bay.

I commend honourable members who have advocated that these islands be taken over by the Brisbane City Council, but my aim is to ensure that the Queensland Government does not allow the islands to be sold to developers who will exploit people wanting land for building purposes.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON** (Salisbury) (9.52 p.m.): I commend the attitude adopted by our shadow Minister for Local Government (Mr. Baldwin) that it might be preferable for all these bay islands to come under one island authority. I commend his thinking and I know that our local government committee will give the matter serious consideration before the second-reading stage of the Bill. I do so in the light of the remarks of the honourable member for Sandgate, who drew our attention to the importance of the Moreton Bay area to the city of Brisbane. It is quite obvious that there is division in the ranks of Government members about what will be the eventual fate of Moreton Island.

It is quite obvious that an island local authority would have no desire to accept responsibility for such a large area. For some time I have had considerable doubt about the advisability of dividing our bay islands amongst several local authorities.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** They do have some affinity with the mainland.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** I ask the honourable member to let me make this speech in a constructive way. I hope to make the Chamber realise the importance to Brisbane of the whole bay complex.

I believe that in one way the action taken by the Government is far too late. Over the years this bay outlet for recreation and pleasure has been subjected to such ill usage that we are now faced with a problem in the southern end of the bay where Garden, Karragarra and Macleay Islands have undesirable subdivisions that no-one can do anything about. If we look at the position in its true light and realise the significance of the bay to the people of Brisbane and many other people in South-east Queensland as an escape from the city, we will think not of dividing responsibility amongst local governments but of trying, as our shadow Minister suggested, to bring them under the control of one authority. I would go a little further than our shadow Minister and suggest that the whole of the islands complex should be under the control of an island authority. For years many people have suggested that the Great Barrier Reef complex should be under the one authority.

**Mr. Baldwin:** You mean a trust?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Similar to a trust, but an authority that would have the responsibility of planning the logical development—the correct type of development—and the conservation of those areas to ensure that they survive for all time.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You mean build bridges?

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** Whether it is bridges or not is of no consequence. I believe there is a grave risk that Moreton Bay will be lost to Queensland amateur anglers, professional fishermen, and so on if the development of this complex is not supervised very carefully.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** We do not realise what a great body of water it is.

**Mr. SHERRINGTON:** That is what I am attempting to convey to the Committee.

Apart from other considerations, many fishermen have enjoyed the pleasures of angling in the bay. In mercenary terms, it means employment in the construction of boats, trailers, and so on, the bait industry, the fishing tackle industry, and the many other activities required to sustain the sport of fishing in the south-eastern part of our State.

I very much fear that the bay has reached a crisis point. If we allow uncontrolled development of the islands, even to the degree presently evident on some of them, the bay will become so badly polluted in years to come that it will no longer be a haven for the fisherman or for any other aquatic recreation.

To my amazement, when I directed a question to the Minister for Primary Industries, who is responsible for fisheries in this State, he admitted quite cheerfully and candidly that, even though subdivision of this type on bay islands has been proceeding for some time, no attempt has been made to conduct an impact study. He excused that lack of Government activity by pointing out that a land-use committee was investigating the area.

A land-use committee is important, but so is the impact of intrusion by human beings into areas such as Moreton Bay. It would be a great tragedy for the State if the bay and its pleasures were lost to the people of our capital city. I repeat that I believe that the crisis point has already been reached.

I must say I am not very enthusiastic about a proposal for the Brisbane City Council to be responsible for one section, the Redland Shire Council to be responsible for another section and possibly the Albert Shire to control the southern end of the bay. I would prefer one simple authority, whether it be deemed a trust or a development authority or whatever term one cares to apply to it. Certainly, it should be a body that would have the capacity to plan the uses of the bay and its islands to ensure that no detrimental development takes place that could lead to the deterioration of the area as a natural attraction for recreation by Brisbane dwellers.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt interjected.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I have only touched briefly on some aspects of this matter. The honourable member for Chatsworth spoke in jocular vein about locking up some of the islands and allowing no development. He did not realise how near the truth he was. Very soon we will need to take steps to ensure the preservation of the areas that are necessary for fish population chains so that they may survive. Unless this is tackled and unless the Moreton Bay islands are viewed as one vast complex requiring careful planning, we will run the risk of destroying an area on which we depend. This could happen with divided local authority control. If, for instance, the Redcliffe City Council took over Moreton Island, its first thought would be to develop the island to obtain rate revenue from it.

Mr. Frawley: You are wrong there. It would not do that.

Mr. SHERRINGTON: I am afraid that the honourable member has more faith in human beings than I have. I am not condemning any local authorities when I say

that they resent land in their areas that is not rateable. I can well understand this attitude having regard to their responsibilities.

I would rather we discussed the establishment of an authority similar to that suggested by the honourable member for Redlands, with whom I differ only in terminology. I would prefer the Moreton Bay area to be looked at as a vast treasure house for people's enjoyment. It should be planned sensibly and properly. This can only be done if the whole complex is placed under the control of one body.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (10.3 p.m.): It was not my intention to enter this debate but after hearing the honourable member for Townsville castigate the Minister concerning off-shore islands, particularly in the Townsville area, I feel I must. The honourable member claimed that Opposition members did not know what they were talking about as he was able to quote from a document, foolscap size, in printed form, clause 3 (a) which he said dealt with off-shore islands in the Townsville area.

The honourable member for Cairns moved that he table the notes, but the notes the honourable member tabled do not contain the document from which he quoted. I have been a member of this Assembly for some time and I have had a similar motion moved while referring to notes, so I treat the matter as being serious. Obviously the honourable member was endeavouring to mislead the Committee about the document that he held in his hand. He left the Chamber without tabling the document from which he read. It is obvious that it was not tabled, as there was nothing in the documents he tabled that was of foolscap size, in printed form, and nothing that dealt with clause 3 (a). On behalf of the Opposition I say that he has wittingly obstructed the wishes of the Committee and blatantly bypassed a motion moved by the honourable member for Cairns. He held the Chair and the committee in contempt by his action here this evening.

Hon. H. A. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon—Minister for Local Government and Electricity) (10.5 p.m.), in reply: The honourable member for Redlands agreed that it was desirable that the three islands that I mentioned in the first place, namely, Mud, Green and St. Helena, be included in the city of Brisbane. He, like me, was unaware until recently that Bishop and Fisherman Islands were in doubt. I am confident that the three first-mentioned islands are not in the city of Brisbane, but there is some doubt about the others. The Bill resolves that doubt completely, and makes the situation of Bishop and Fisherman Islands perfectly clear. From discussions that I have had with the Lord Mayor, I am able to say that the Brisbane City Council is content to have Mud, Green and St. Helena Islands included in the authority of the Brisbane City Council.

The honourable member for Redlands asks what finance will be available to the Brisbane City Council should it take over administration of Moreton Island. I should like to make it clear to the Committee that, as the Bill stands, it contains no mention of Moreton Island. I intend to have further discussions with the Brisbane City Council on the matter, and I am awaiting a reply to a letter that I wrote to the Lord Mayor. Pending receipt of a reply, I leave that question open. I do not intend to discuss in any great detail the pros and cons of including Moreton Island in the city of Brisbane, because that situation may or may not arise. I shall advise honourable members of the position in due course.

The honourable member also asked whether I had received a reply to the letter written to the Lord Mayor. In fairness to the Lord Mayor—he has not had time to reply.

The honourable member for Redlands also raised the question of the Redland Bay islands, namely, Macleay, Karragarra, Russell and Lamb. These were freehold lands, and they are in a different category from the other islands that are mainly Crown lands and have been controlled to some degree by the Government. No authority, except to a very limited degree the Titles Office, had any control over the Redland Bay islands, and consequently they were wide open to exploitation. The other islands that we are dealing with now are open to exploitation, but to only a limited degree compared with the others.

This also raises the question of finance for the Redland Bay islands, which most likely will not be available to the Brisbane City Council for Mud, Green and St. Helena Islands. The fact that the Redland Bay islands were freehold lands, and were not controlled by a local authority, allowed exploitation, and the Government felt that it was necessary to assist the Redland Shire Council to overcome the problems that had been created. As yet, similar problems have not been created on the three islands at the mouth of the Brisbane River, and the purpose of the Bill is to keep ahead of the problems that were encountered in the Redland Bay area.

The honourable member for Redlands and others raised the possibility of establishing a separate local authority for the whole Moreton Bay islands complex. There is no legal provision for the creation of an additional local authority in Queensland. It would therefore not be competent in law for me to suggest that there should be such a special local authority.

The honourable member for Redcliffe asked why no decision had been made concerning Moreton Island before the Bill was brought down. The situation is that the Local Government Department has proposed that Moreton Island should go into the city of Redcliffe. The city of Redcliffe has very

firmly objected to any inclusion. It is supported by residents in that area. On the other hand, two members of the Brisbane City Council—Alderman Shaw and Alderman Ryan—have expressed a desire to have the island included within the city of Brisbane. This is not the official opinion of the Brisbane City Council. That has not been obtained yet. I had discussions with Alderman Shaw and with the Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor has left his options fairly open so far as Moreton Island is concerned. He has said that the Brisbane City Council is prepared to accept the other Islands—Mud, Green and St. Helena.

The honourable member for Redcliffe said he would like to see Moreton Island made a national park. There is nothing in the Bill to prevent that. All national parks on the mainland are part of a local authority. This gives them additional protection in that the ramifications of the Local Government Act can be applied by the local authority to stop abuse, not so much in the national park but on the borders surrounding it, which could cause damage to that particular park.

The honourable member referred to Palm Island and Thursday Island. Those islands are not the subject of this Bill. It is purely applicable to the city of Brisbane and those islands which may be included within the boundaries of the city of Brisbane. The other approximately 1,000 islands off the Queensland coast are all in the process of being included within the adjacent local authorities. As the honourable members know, the Torres Strait Islands were first included in the Town of Thursday Island, and this was subsequently altered to the Shire of Torres. That action is completed.

I think it is also completed in relation to certain other local authorities. Due notice has been given in a newspaper circulating in the area of all the other islands off the Queensland coast and the period for objections thereto has closed. It is a matter now of confirming or adjusting the various suggestions that the Local Government Department has advertised.

So it leaves purely those islands which may be included within the Brisbane City Council area, as the sole ones that require legislation to decide whether they go. I could not quite understand his comment that doctors and health authorities would ruin Moreton Island. I will look into that a little more deeply. Moreton Island is mainly Crown land. Should it pass into the control of either the Redcliffe City Council or the Brisbane City Council its zoning would be a matter for that local authority.

But the Crown does retain quite a bit of control in that the island is largely Crown land. Whether it is desirable or not I do not intend to discuss at this time, but it could be that the local authorities would enter into agreements with developers to develop these

islands. Some honourable members have expressed the opinion that this would not be desirable. This is a matter that would be for the determination of the local authority concerned. Should Moreton Island pass to the Brisbane City Council, the Brisbane City Council would have control and would decide what should occur. After all, whether it is the Brisbane City Council or the Redcliffe City Council, the local authority is made up of the elected representatives of the people of that particular area. Whatever the situation, the local authority is in the best position to provide services such as health inspection, land use and control and, above all, building control on the islands. I am well aware that there are many sub-standard dwellings on some of the islands off the Queensland coast. I should imagine that the local authorities would allow a reasonable time for these to be brought up to a reasonable standard but any new buildings would almost immediately come under the control of their various by-laws, including building by-laws.

The honourable member for Sandgate mentioned that Moreton Island was of great benefit to Brisbane. I thoroughly agree with him. That is why, to some degree, I believe that the Brisbane City Council is the most appropriate authority to have control over these islands. While I appreciate that, because of the sparseness of the area, it would be impossible to control vandalism, the use of beach-buggies and so forth entirely, we have passed the control of beach-buggies over to local authorities and this would give the Brisbane City Council a greater opportunity to preserve what the honourable member for Sandgate rightfully regards as Brisbane's heritage. I believe that they would be able to police the area much better than anybody else. But I concede that there are problems.

The honourable member for Townsville spoke about the inclusion of Palm Island, which is outside the ambit of this Bill. However, the intention of the Local Government Department to include Palm Island in Townsville was advertised in newspapers circulating in the area and the Townsville City Council has agreed, by a vote of six to three, not to object to the inclusion of Palm Island within its boundaries.

**Mr. Tucker:** What was its main argument?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** For inclusion?

**Mr. Tucker:** Yes.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** Health was one of the reasons. The Townsville City Council is concerned about health. After all, Palm Island is an Aboriginal reserve within the meaning of the Act and it will remain so, so that virtually all the expense of running that island will be borne by the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs in the future as it is today. I understand that the Commonwealth Government has committed itself

to providing water and sewerage for that island and I know that the Department of Local Government is doing the planning on behalf of the Commonwealth Government and the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs in this regard.

The honourable member for Stafford said that some of the islands in Moreton Bay have been exploited owing to lack of authority. Unfortunately, we all have to agree with him. That is why we want this legislation. He suggested that we do not close the door after the horse is out. To some degree that happened in the bay islands now included in the Redland Shire area and we do not want it to happen to the other islands. So in this case we are closing the door before the horse is out and I trust that we will preserve these islands and not have the problems we had on Lamb, Karragarra, Macleay and Russell Islands.

**Mr. Tucker:** Do you say that subdivision will be the prerogative of the local authority rather than the Lands Department?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The local authority will bring the islands under its zoning system and this will exercise some control. Where there are leases, this will have to be done in conjunction with the Lands Department.

The honourable member raised the matter of the cost of developing these islands. I admit that this is a problem. Maybe it could be done by developers if the local authority thinks fit. It may or may not. It will very likely compromise in that it will have some development and preserve these islands as, in the words of the honourable member for Sandgate, Brisbane's heritage in the bay.

The honourable member for Murrumba supports the proposal for the five islands mentioned in the Bill to go to the Brisbane City Council. He also supports the necessity for the inclusion of all Queensland islands under the protection of a local authority.

**Mr. Tucker:** It is rather peculiar to me that one minute you are trying to break up the Brisbane City Council and now you are adding to it.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** This Government has never reduced the size of the Brisbane City Council.

**Mr. Tucker:** You are talking about it.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The Leader of the Opposition has never heard me speak of it. He may have heard discussions elsewhere, but he has never heard me say it was the intention of either the Government or myself to fragment the Brisbane City Council. I have never said that.

**Mr. Tucker:** Do you mean the Liberals said it?

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I am not saying which other people have said it. All I am saying is that the Leader of the Opposition cannot find where I have said that I believe the city of Brisbane should be fragmented.

**Mr. Tucker:** You must have heard statements on your side of the House.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I have heard them from many quarters. I have even heard them from the Opposition side. My aim is to do the right thing by a local authority, whichever it may be. The Government through me has not at any time endeavoured to fragment the city of Brisbane. I believe that the addition of these islands is in the best interests not only of the city of Brisbane but of the islands and the State of Queensland as well.

**Mr. Newton:** Your attitude has changed dramatically since the redistribution, of course.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** No, there has not been any reduction in the size of Brisbane or in the powers of the Brisbane City Council.

The honourable member for Murrumba feels that Moreton Island should be included in the city of Brisbane. As I have said, this is a matter that will be discussed at a later stage, and I will then give members all the information I have on Moreton Island.

I do not want to confuse the issue. Only five islands are mentioned in the Bill, and they are: Mud, Green, St. Helena, Bishop and Fisherman Islands.

Naturally I agree with the honourable member for Murrumba that they will be valued in due course by the Valuer-General and that the landholders will be paying rates.

The honourable member for Wynnum asked why the secrecy surrounding the introduction of the Bill. I do not recall the publication of the provisions of any Bill before it was introduced in Parliament. The Press have been aware for a long time that it was the intention of the Government to include all islands off the Queensland coast within local authority areas. Quite some time ago I issued a Press statement to the effect that it was the Government's intention to introduce legislation to include those islands near the mouth of the Brisbane River. Admittedly I named only three—Mud, Green and St. Helena—which I thought was sufficient at the time. I cannot see where the honourable member gets his secrecy.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** He is trying to create a mystery where there is none.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** That is quite correct. He implied that secret agreements had been made with developers. Nothing could be further from the truth. No developers have been invited or encouraged to discuss with me anything of this nature.

The honourable member for Salisbury supports the creation of a separate local authority for the Moreton Bay islands. It is not within the power of our present legislation to create another local authority.

**Mr. Tucker:** I don't think he said a local authority.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** He did early in his speech, and later he put forward a further suggestion. He suggested a separate local authority for the Moreton Bay islands and later he said the whole of the bay would be in jeopardy if too much development takes place in the bay. He hoped that a trust or development body would be set up.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** He made both points. He began with a local authority, and as he went along he switched to a preference for a trust or a development body for the whole of the bay.

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope that the Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will involve the Chair in their conversation.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** The honourable member for Salisbury also made the point that local authorities resent the inclusion of land in their areas unless it is rateable. He said that if the Redcliffe City Council gained possession of Moreton Island it would exploit the island. I refute those claims. I do not think local authorities are so mercenary as to accept land only if it is rateable. After all, they grant many concessions, and I believe that they approach this whole matter in a reasonable manner.

The honourable member for Belmont claimed that the honourable member for Townsville did not table a document relative to Palm Island from which he quoted. I am not aware of any document associated with the proposed Bill that in any way mentions Palm Island. If the honourable member for Townsville was quoting from a document that mentioned Palm Island, it did not relate to the Bill.

**Mr. Newton:** Thank you for clearing that up.

**Mr. McKECHNIE:** I believe I have covered all matters raised by honourable members who took part in the debate. If on looking through my notes I find that I have not done so, I will try to give a more detailed explanation in my second-reading speech.

Motion (Mr. McKechnie) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. McKechnie, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.