

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1974

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

PAPERS

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

Report of The Nominal Defendant (Queensland), for the year 1973-74.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under—

Co-operative Housing Societies Act 1958-1971.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

The Southern Electric Authority of Queensland Acts, 1952 to 1964.

Regulations under—

Hospitals Act 1936-1971.

Apprenticeship Act 1964-1972.

Sawmills Licensing Act 1936-1974.

Report of the National Trust of Queensland for the year 1973-74.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**CLOSURE OF "BEULAH" GIRLS' HOME, CORINDA**

Hon. J. D. HERBERT (Sherwood—Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services) (11.4 a.m.): I feel it desirable to inform the House of the circumstances surrounding the closure of the "Beulah" Girls' Home at Corinda.

The home is run by the United Protestant Association of Queensland (Incorporated). It was licensed as an institution under section 31 of the Children's Services Act for the purpose of caring for children under the care of the Director, Department of Children's Services. As such an institution, there was an obligation on the governing authority, pursuant to section 40 of the Act, to provide adequate care and training and generally to observe the requirements and directions of the director.

For some time the director and his officers have been most dissatisfied with the general control and maintenance of the institution. After consideration of the circumstances and reports from his officers, and after consultation with the Solicitor-General, the director, pursuant to section 39, called upon the governing authority to show cause why the institution should not cease to be a licensed institution. This notice was dated 11 June 1974. The section enables the governing authority, within two months from the receipt of the notice, to show cause.

The grounds on which the director considered that cause should be shown were:

1. That the person in charge of the said institution has allowed an unauthorised person to exercise custody and control over children in her custody.

2. That the person in charge of the said institution has wilfully and persistently failed to co-operate with the said director and his officers in matters relating to the welfare of such children.

3. That the governing authority has failed to maintain every part of such institution at all times in a fit and proper state for the care of a child with respect in particular to the bathroom.

4. That on several occasions during the month of March 1974 the governing authority failed to ensure that seven of such children, required by law to attend school, did attend school.

5. That there is grave suspicion that particularly girl children in the said institution have been and are likely to be exposed to moral danger.

6. That the governing authority failed to observe and carry out the requirements and directions prescribed by the above-mentioned Act and the regulations thereunder and by the orders of the director in relation to the said institution and the care of the children therein.

The file in respect of the institution contains material in support of each of the allegations.

With regard to the fifth ground, one girl has become pregnant when at the home, and there were suspicions that the older girls, at any rate, could be in some moral danger, particularly as boys were allowed to sleep on the premises. Notwithstanding an order that the boys be excluded, it was discovered that compliance was not made with this direction.

In response to the notice to show cause, a reply was received from the association in the following terms:—

1. Mrs. Brandon was the person authorised by the association, in the absence of the matron.

2. With the exception of Glenn More's sleeping at the home, contrary to the department's ruling, we know of no other specific instance of matron's disobedience. Until now we did not know this had taken place.

3. The president found, on examination of the home, everything in a fit and proper condition with the exception of the downstairs bathroom, which is minus a door.

4. The president has taken full responsibility for this action and, we understand, has given an explanation of same.

5. The governing authority regrettably acknowledges that Glenn More has been allowed to stay, without its knowledge, on several occasions, contrary to the instructions of the governing authority.

6. The governing authority knows of no incident, other than the incident referred to in clause 5, where the matron has deliberately disobeyed or acted contrary to the orders of the director.

In addition, the director personally saw the Reverend T. M. Kirkwood and Pastor Fulton. The director explained the full circumstances to the reverend gentlemen.

The Reverend Kirkwood on 12 August 1974 intimated to me that there may have been a misuse of the home's funds to the extent of over \$900 for the general purposes of the United Protestant Association of Queensland (Incorporated). When I pointed out to him that he was in charge of both organisations, he said that he signed cheques in blank and by inference charges his fellow executive officers with misappropriation. In the circumstances, I have requested the Auditor-General pursuant to section 38 of the Act to audit the accounts and report thereon to me.

Having regard to the representations to me, the director nevertheless considered that the licence should be revoked and made such a recommendation to me. Pursuant to section 39, I have given authority under my hand for the licence to be cancelled as from 7 September 1974. In view of the impending cancellation of the licence, it has become imperative to remove the children at the home and place them ultimately in approved residential facilities.

Throughout, the attitude has been that the interests of the children are paramount—not only to me, but to the director and staff. It is far from correct to suggest that no grounds were given. The governing authority has been aware of the director's attitude for some two months, and it is inconceivable that the person in charge of the home should not have been acquainted of the position.

It is regretted that the actions of the department in the interests of the children have been made the occasion of publicity which has not served the interests of any parties concerned.

Mr. Kirkwood advised departmental officers not to blame Mrs. More as she was acting on instructions and advice from Ald. Gordon Thomson, A.L.P. alderman for the area. I am informed that Ald. Thomson was present yesterday, taking photographs.

I am advised that the association is not, in fact, "united" and a number of members agree with my department's action.

The circumstances surrounding this incident are extremely distressing, but honourable members can rest assured that my paramount concern is the welfare of the children involved.

I commend the officers of the department for the manner of their performance in the circumstances, which called for dedication and restraint.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

LAW SCHOOL FOR JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY

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

Will he consider setting up a special committee to investigate the education of the legal profession, with particular emphasis on tertiary legal study, with a view to starting a second Law School at the James Cook University?

Answer:—

"The establishment of a Law School at a University or Institute of Technology is a matter for the consideration of the Council of the University or the Institute concerned. Extensive investigations and consultations with academic, professional and other people of the particular locality involved would be undertaken by the council concerned or by a committee set up by the council for that purpose before any such Law School could be established. I would mention that in February, 1973, the Council of the Queensland Institute of Technology set up an Advisory Committee consisting of representatives of the Institute, the University of Queensland, the Bar Association of Queensland, the Queensland Law Society Incorporated and the Department of Justice to consider the possibility of establishing a Department of Law at the Queensland Institute of Technology. I understand the Advisory Committee has furnished its report and this report is now under active consideration."

USE BY COMMONWEALTH LABOR GOVERNMENT OF TERM, "AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT"

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the practice of the Whitlam Labor Government of deleting the word "Commonwealth" wherever it appears and substituting the word "Australia"?

(2) Is the Whitlam Government acting constitutionally in referring to the Commonwealth Parliament as the Australian Government?

(3) Is this in compliance with Chapter I, Part I, paragraph I of the Commonwealth Constitution?

(4) Does this also apply to the Australian dollar-note issue, in which the words "Commonwealth of" have been deleted, leaving only the word "Australia"?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) "I understand the Commonwealth Government has an *Acts Interpretation Act* 1973 providing for the use of the term 'Australian Government' in

official references. However, I am not aware that the requisite alteration has been made to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act in this regard. Quite frankly, I do not care what Mr. Whitlam's Government calls itself—the people of Australia presently use a variety of descriptions. So far as dollar notes are concerned, their value is such under the present Commonwealth Government that the Prime Minister and his colleagues must bitterly regret the day they started to interfere with the currency's value, let alone the actual note format."

PUBLIC TRANSPORT, MACKAY AND
PIONEER LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS

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

(1) On what date did the licensed bus operator in Mackay surrender his licence?

(2) Since that date, have there been any applications to his department for the whole or any part of the surrendered licence and, if so, who are the applicants and for which routes did they apply?

(3) Has the Mackay City Council or the Pioneer Shire Council entered into negotiations with his department, either jointly or severally, with a view to accepting the responsibility for public transport in their areas and, if so, what stage has been reached in these negotiations?

Answers:—

(1) "A formal surrender notice to take effect on May 18, 1974, was dated April 16, 1974."

(2) "No."

(3) "No."

ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER FACILITIES
IN NORTH QUEENSLAND SCHOOLS

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

(1) Is he aware that in many schools in North Queensland classes could not be taught effectively during this year's prolonged wet season as a result of poor natural lighting during the lengthy periods of rainy and overcast weather?

(2) Is he also aware that in many schools there is a general shortage of power outlets created by the increasing use of audio-visual equipment in all schools?

(3) As most of these schools have now been wired electrically under the Government's programme to provide fans in schools, will he consider the installation of lights in all schoolrooms, starting with those areas which have lengthy periods of rainy and overcast weather and thus help

to retain good eyesight for the future generations, and also the installation of at least one power outlet in each classroom?

Answers:—

(1) "No. Where Principals of schools bring to the notice of the Department of Works the fact that lighting is poor, action is put in train to improve the conditions, where considered warranted."

(2) "No. In view of the increasing number of items of electrical equipment being used in schools the standard provision of power outlets has been increased to four—a double power point at the front and rear of each classroom. Where application is received from the Principal the number in existing classrooms is increased, subject to availability of funds, to the standard provision."

(3) "I have previously given consideration to this matter and have approved, in principle, the installation of artificial lighting in school classrooms where considered warranted and subject to the availability of funds. At this stage priority is given to the older classrooms and particularly to those schools where local conditions severely restrict natural lighting for lengthy periods."

RIVER FERRY SERVICES IN METRO-
POLITAN PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

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

As I have been informed that an economist named Dunne undertook a study to investigate the potential use of the Brisbane River for extending the existing ferry services with the aim of relieving peak-hour congestion on the roads, has such a study been undertaken by Mr. Dunne or any employee of departments under the Minister's jurisdiction? If so, when will the results of the study be made public?

Answer:—

"Yes. The State Government's Urban Public Transport Committee has carried out a study on the potential of the Brisbane River and its contribution to urban public transport. Mr. Noel Dunne was in fact the economist who worked on the project under the immediate direction of the Director, Transport Planning and Development. The study is not yet complete, but I believe it is important for me to inform the House where we are on this matter. The first approach of the study was to review the existing developments and advances in river transport technology. As some Honourable Members would be aware, work in this area in the United Kingdom is quite exciting. Our study team looked into hydrofoils, hovercraft and other G.E.V's, which in technical jargon stands for Ground Effect Vehicles. In all these cases the costs far exceeded the benefits of the environmental, and

social impacts such as larger wave wash and higher noise levels were undesirable. The study team focussed their main attention on existing ferries which, while being slower are still quite capable as people transporters. One immediate problem found was that access in the C.B.D. or if you like, the city area, was generally poor and unattractive. Several more wharf sites are being considered and the total area under consideration stretches almost from Riverview in the west to the mouth of the Brisbane River. One item mentioned is that as our port development proceeds, it is quite feasible that the down river journey by ferry to the port or other industrial complexes could be a proposition. Of course another feature which detracts from better exploitation of ferry services is the tortuous curving path of the Brisbane River. The ideal waterway would be one with a straight, well behaved channel. Unfortunately, these curves and bends in the river have influenced our road and rail corridors so that today there are many cases where there are more direct ground routes to the C.B.D. than via the river. Part of the study's finding was that the January floods caused widespread damage to sheds and wharf facilities and this is being more closely investigated. A ferry service connecting the Queensland University to the C.B.D. is another case under review. This would cut short the Coronation Drive journey and at the same time ease road congestion. Another feature I am sure Honourable Members will appreciate is that our development and so our transport demands have tended to be in a north-south direction whereas the Brisbane River generally has a west-east path, thereby being contrary to the demand vector direction. One final point that the House should be made aware of is the current relative contributions of the various transport modes to the public transport scene. The Brisbane City Council buses account for 58 million passenger journeys each year while private buses carry between 15 and 20 million passengers. Commuters on the Queensland Government suburban trains number 30 million per annum and ferries provide for four million passenger journeys or about five per cent. of public transport journeys. Now while this is only a relatively small percentage of the overall public transport systems available, it nevertheless points to an area of future potential growth which will lead to better use of the Brisbane River in the public transport arena."

MINING OF MINERAL SANDS, COOLOOLA

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

(1) Is he aware that sand-mining companies have been mining the beach, in areas declared as havens, on the isthmus to Double Island Point at Coolooloola?

(2) In view of public concern that this could result in considerable erosion, has the officer of his department, who was permanently stationed in the Coolooloola area to supervise the activities of sand-mining companies, been withdrawn from the area and, if so, when did this take place and for what reason?

Answers:—

(1) "I am aware that Cudgen R. Z. Limited has been mining the beach from Freshwater Creek to almost as far north as Double Island Point since May 1973. Operations have been confined to the beach and the dunes have not been interfered with. It is not known what is meant by 'havens'; however, there are two prominent sand blows just south from Double Island Point, and the more northerly of these stretches right across the isthmus. These blows have been in existence for many years and are not connected with mining in any way."

(2) "The last departmental officer to supervise sand mining activities in the Coolooloola area was withdrawn on March 19, 1974, as, in view of the performance of the company concerned, Cabinet decided that the cost of maintaining an officer and 4-wheel drive vehicle in the area was not warranted but, instead, random inspections have been carried out."

SAND-MINING LEASE 1049, MORETON ISLAND

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

(1) Who are the holders of Sand-Mining Lease 1049, situated at the north-east of Moreton Island?

(2) Is his department aware that a substantial part of the area covered by this lease has recently been cleared of all plant life?

(3) Has the clearing been done as a preliminary to mining the lease? If so, what precautions have been insisted upon to ensure that there is no possible erosion of the area?

Answers:—

(1) "Mineral Deposits Limited is the holder of Mining Lease Application No. 1049, Brisbane."

(2) "The Department is aware that a very substantial part of the lease application, which comprises 'live' dune up to a distance of two miles westwards from the east coast of Moreton Island, is devoid of all plant life and has been so for many years."

(3) "The clearing of the plant life has not been done as a preliminary to mining the lease but would appear to have been done by nature."

POLICE REGIONS

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

(1) Further to his Answer to my Question on August 27 in relation to the proposed changes in police regions, how long will the department take to complete them?

(2) What regions have been determined?

(3) Has the work-load been determined in the regions and, if so, what number of police will be deployed in each region?

Answers:—

(1) "No definite period has been determined."

(2) "Northern, Central, North Coast, Brisbane, South Eastern and Southern Regions. The Northern, Central, Brisbane and Southern Regions are the existing regions. North Coast and South-Eastern Regions will become operative as from October 1, 1974."

(3) "No."

GOVERNMENT PURCHASE OF HOUSES IN FREEWAY AND OTHER PROJECTS

Mr. N. F. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked
The Premier,—

(1) In relation to proposed or past construction by his Government of freeways, pre-schools, schools or other projects, how many houses, flats or units have been purchased by the Government?

(2) How many in the above categories, for each of the years 1969 to 1973 and for 1974 to date, have been (a) resold, (b) removed, (c) demolished, (d) relet and (e) unoccupied?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "The details sought by the Honourable Member are not readily available and their compilation would involve the employment of a relatively large number of officers for a considerable period of time. In all the circumstances, the cost involved in such a statistical collation could not be justified."

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (COT DEATH)

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

(1) How many deaths were attributed to what is known as "cot death" for the years from 1969 to date?

(2) If there was an increase, has a research section been set up to investigate the causes of the deaths and to determine why Queensland has a higher death rate than other States?

(3) If a research section has been set up, what personnel has been appointed to the research team and in what hospital or institution is it based?

(4) If no research group has been set up, does he intend to set one up?

Answers:—

(1) "The term Cot Death has now been replaced by the internationally recognised term Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Accurate figures for the numbers of deaths from this condition in Queensland are available only in the Brisbane Coroners District. To date the Bureau of Census and Statistics has no special category for the classification of such deaths. In the Brisbane Coroners District, deaths attributed to this condition are as follows:—1969, 21; 1970, 23; 1971, 26; 1972, 31; 1973, 31; 1974 (to August 29), 24."

(2 to 4) "These figures do not indicate a significant increase during this period. There is no evidence that a higher death rate from this condition occurs in Queensland than in other States. The best measure of the incidence of this condition is the number of cases per thousand live births. In the Brisbane Coroners District, this is approximately 1.5 per thousand live births. Similar figures occur in other States of Australia and in other countries in the world. The problem of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome has been studied intensively by the staff of the Institute of Forensic Pathology in Brisbane for the last 20-25 years. Surveys have been undertaken and Queensland was the first State in Australia and one of the first localities in the world to recognise the vital importance of the social worker in the support of the bereaved parents. At present, all such parents are visited by one of the social workers of the Health Department, sometimes on many occasions and are assisted in their adjustment to the death. Continuing investigations at the Institute of Forensic Pathology and the State Health Laboratory are being maintained and liaison with research projects in New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia is maintained by the medical staff of these institutions."

LOW-COST FREEHOLD LAND FOR HOUSING

Mr. Abern for **Mr. Müller**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Further to his reported statement in *The Courier-Mail* of August 24 in relation to a Commonwealth-State lower-priced land scheme for housing, will he do his utmost to ensure that any land which is made available will be on a freehold basis in order to encourage individual home ownership, which is basic to the Australian way of life?

(2) Will he also undertake to make a full statement in relation to these negotiations at an early date?

Answers:—

(1) "Any joint scheme between the Commonwealth and State Governments designed to provide residential land at reasonable prices will be based on the freehold system of land tenure. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth Government is insisting on the use of what is known as 'restricted freehold' title and this is the main impediment to early settlement of a suitable financial agreement. The restricted freehold envisaged by the Commonwealth Government is a form of freehold which reserves to the Crown the right of redevelopment of land to some other form of usage. In effect, the freehold title will specify that land use is limited to residential purposes only. If at some future time the land goes over to, say, commercial or industrial use the Crown, and not the owner of the land, would be entitled to the amount of the resultant increase in land value. Before the land could be used for commercial or industrial purposes the owner would have to pay to the Crown the difference in land value. Upon payment of the amount of the increased land value, the owner would then surrender his freehold title restricting use to residential purposes and be issued with another restricted freehold limiting use to commercial or industrial purposes. Whilst this form of tenure might be substantially better than the leasehold form originally insisted upon by the Commonwealth Government, it still deprives the individual of what has long been traditionally recognised by Queenslanders as a basic right. There is no question that our share of available Commonwealth funds will serve a useful purpose and we are keen to co-operate on this issue. However, the principle is important. It is not desirable that a section of the community be forced to accept such a form of land tenure. Press reports have revealed that the Commonwealth Minister in charge of the Department of Urban and Regional Development regards this move as Stage 1, on the basis that at a later stage all existing freehold titles in all towns and cities will be made subject to the restriction I have described. My Government believes there is an important principle involved and is convinced that all Queenslanders should be entitled to unrestricted ownership of their homes if that is their wish."

(2) "Negotiations are still proceeding with a view to resolving this title difficulty. When and if resolved, it is intended that any financial agreement will come before Parliament for consideration."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

DISCOUNTED PETROL PRICE

Mr. TUCKER: I ask the Premier: As one petrol company, through one of its garages, can offer members of the social club of a commercial firm petrol at 5c

a gallon discount, why cannot this cheaper price prevail for all motorists throughout the State?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I think that the Leader of the Opposition knows the answer to his question. I should like to ask him why the Federal Government removed the differential.

Mr. TUCKER: I rise to a point of order. Is the Premier able to ask me a question without notice?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member refers to "Erskine May" he will find that a Minister can reply to any question in any manner.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I will not ask the Leader of the Opposition that question. Perhaps he would not be able to give me the answer. But the Commonwealth Government did something terrible to the people of this State firstly by increasing the price differential to 5c a gallon and then by terminating the scheme and forcing country people to pay higher petrol prices. The issue is far more important than is indicated by the Leader of the Opposition's question, the answer to which he already knows.

Mr. TUCKER: If the Premier took notice of it, he would be able to do something about it.

COMMONWEALTH ROAD GRANTS

Mr. NEWBERRY: I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: Has it been brought to his notice that, under the new Commonwealth Road Grants Act, distribution to the States from petrol tax will be 50 per cent of the amount collected as compared with 70 per cent under the old Act? Would it be correct to presume that the remainder of the tax collected in this way will be directed to the financing of the Federal Government's socialistic programmes?

Mr. CAMM: It appears that under the three Bills relating to the distribution of road funds to the States the total amount envisaged will—on estimation, anyway—be less than 50 per cent of the tax collected. Previously the States enjoyed a reimbursement of up to 70 per cent of petrol tax for road purposes. The reduction will, of course, have a serious effect on the construction of roads in all States. Although the figures indicate that the actual sum is higher than the amount the State received during the preceding five years of the operation of the Act, when inflation is taken into consideration the value of the amount available for road construction in this State will be less than that received during the preceding five years.

STATE GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. NEWBERRY: I ask the Treasurer: In view of the fact that the Commonwealth Government has made available to local government in Queensland a grant of \$8,000,000,

will he inform the House of the State Government's contribution to all councils throughout the State in the same time?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Is that without notice?

Mr. Newbery: Yes.

Mr. Sherrington: He has made it a bit hard, hasn't he?

Sir GORDON CHALK: No. If one knows one's work, it is not too hard.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Chair does not need any assistance from the honourable member for South Brisbane.

Sir GORDON CHALK: The interjector insinuated, I think, that it is a Dorothy Dix question. It is not.

Mr. Sherrington: Not at all.

Sir GORDON CHALK: Having worked on the State Budget over the last two months or more, I think I could be expected to know the figures for the preceding year. I believe that the idea behind the question asked by the honourable member is: as State local authorities have received almost \$9,000,000 by way of grants through the Australian Grants Commission, what amount of money has the State made available by way of subsidy or free grant to those same local authorities? The answer is: approximately \$21,000,000 during the last 12 months.

PROPOSED ROADWAY THROUGH NEWSTEAD PARK

Mr. LANE: I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: Is he aware of the public concern being expressed currently about the proposal of the Brisbane City Council to construct a bitumen vehicular roadway through Newstead Park, near historic Newstead House? Will he advise whether, in the interests of conserving the maximum area of parkland in Brisbane, he has any authority to prevent the construction of the proposed roadway through Newstead Park?

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am well aware that considerable concern has been expressed by the public in Brisbane relative to the proposal by the Brisbane City Council to put a road through Newstead Park. I understand that most of Newstead Park is held by the Brisbane City Council under freehold. When the City Council holds a park in fee-simple, the responsibility for any development within the park rests entirely on the Brisbane City Council.

ADMINISTRATION OF PALM ISLAND

Mr. ROW: I ask the Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs: Will he continue to cause appropriate action to be taken at Palm Island to ensure the preservation of the rights of the Aboriginal

residents on the reserve, particularly in view of the misleading and disturbing utterances and actions of recalcitrant and insurgent socialist members of the Labor Party?

Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT: Any action I have taken relative to Palm Island has been taken in good faith. I took careful note of the petition that came to me and to me each signature on it seemed to be different from all others. At no time did I act in this matter without taking due cognisance of the petition and the people concerned. As Minister in charge of Aboriginal and Island Affairs I am responsible for carrying out the wishes of the people. It was clearly indicated by the petition that at least two-thirds of the people on Palm Island desired that the council be dissolved and a new election held. Whether Senator Keeffe, Charles Perkins or anyone else is involved is of no concern to me. As Minister in control of Aboriginal and Island Affairs in this State I have a duty to perform and I will do it to the best of my ability. People like Mr. Perkins and Senator Keeffe are of no concern to me. My concern is for the welfare of the Aboriginal people on Palm Island. At present, we have on Palm Island Les Stewart, as administrator, and other good officers. I can only say to the honourable member for Hinchinbrook that what I have done has been done in good faith. I hope and trust that, in due course, justice will be done.

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKLET, "RECORD OF LEGISLATIVE ACTS"

Mr. WRIGHT: I ask the Premier: Will he explain why the booklet entitled "Record of Legislative Acts" printed by the Government Printer at the request of his department is distributed only to members of the Government parties? To alleviate the obvious discrimination which is being practised, will he now have copies of this booklet sent to all members of this Assembly regardless of political affiliation?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I do not know the details of the question asked. I will have a look at the matter.

REDUCED INTERSTATE RAIL SERVICE

Mr. R. JONES: I ask the Minister for Transport: What is the present need for the retention of only two interstate rail services per week and when it is expected that normal services will be reinstated?

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: I feel that the honourable member should really be asking this of my colleague in New South Wales. However, the position is that originally the problem was caused by the fuel shortage, and my information is that the present ban of the Transport Workers' Union—

Mr. Davis: What!

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: We have this difficulty locally. It is of no use the honourable member for Brisbane saying, "What!", because we have the same situation here locally.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. K. W. HOOPER: At the end of the week we could find ourselves in difficulty here in Queensland. So far we have not had to restrict our services, but we will have to if the ban continues. The position is as clear as that. The honourable member for Cairns asked a very relevant question. I take strong objection to the interjection of the honourable member for Brisbane. I am attempting to give the information to the best of my ability and I will endeavour to obtain that from New South Wales and advise the honourable member for Cairns.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I now warn the honourable member for Brisbane under Standing Order 123A. He is a persistent interjector. This is his last chance.

Honourable Members interjected.

At 12 noon,

Mr. SPEAKER: As this is a day allotted for the Address in Reply, I now call on the Clerk to read the order of the day.

Mr. HARTWIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Last Tuesday I tried to ask a question in this House—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I well remember the question of which the honourable member sought to give notice last week. It was disallowed. However, I would have the honourable member understand that other members, too, have the right to ask questions and, if they are quicker off the mark, and rise before he does, that is his bad luck. There is no point of order.

Mr. HINZE: Mr. Speaker, I find it impossible to get your call when I want to ask questions in this House on behalf of my constituents. Apparently you've got your favourites.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HINZE: Don't "Order" me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I now warn the honourable member for South Coast under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. HINZE: I'm not going to jump up every time—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for South Coast will now leave the Chamber.

Mr. Hinze: You've got your favourites!

Mr. SPEAKER: I now name the honourable member.

NAMING OF MEMBER

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have had occasion to name the honourable member for South Coast. I have witnessed many disgusting exhibitions in this House in the years that I have been here. The honourable member has been treated very well in the asking of questions despite the fact that possibly he holds the record for the number of questions disallowed. What he said was a reflection on the Chair. I ask the House to view the matter seriously and I ask the Premier to consider this when specifying the period of suspension.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier) (12.1 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate your remarks in this regard. It is necessary that all honourable members respect your authority.

I move—

"That the honourable member for South Coast be suspended from the service of the House for the remainder of the day."

(Opposition laughter.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the Premier and other honourable members that the honourable member for South Coast has already been suspended for the remainder of today. However, as the Premier has moved the honourable member's suspension for the remainder of the day, there is nothing I can do about it.

Motion (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) agreed to.

Whereupon the honourable member for South Coast withdrew from the Chamber.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY

Debate resumed from 29 August (see page 456) on Mr. Lane's motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (12.2 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I desire to speak briefly about the speculation inside this Chamber, in public circles and in the Press that this Government would establish a separate ministry of conservation and planning. I question whether that is the best way to handle conservation matters. I say quite clearly that we, as a Government, should always err generously on the side of conservation and conservationists. From the advice available to me, I am of the opinion that the establishment of a separate ministry would not be the best course.

In dealing with these matters, the Government has two clear choices. One is to establish a separate ministry to incorporate all of the agencies and departments, wherever they may be, that deal with conservation. The other, which I believe is

more desirable, is to maintain a small group or cell in each department directly responsible for conservation matters and to establish a co-ordinating council to bring together, in a spirit of co-operation, all people concerned with these matters.

Yesterday, in my electorate, I had the unique opportunity to talk to representatives of all State foresters and I was able to discuss these particular matters with them informally. All States except Queensland have established conservation ministries, and I asked these gentlemen their opinion of a centralised approach to conservation and regional planning. Their general opinion was firmly against any such type of action, and they urged that we in Queensland resist the setting up of a gargantuan department that would become too large and unwieldy to act in the spirit in which it had been established. In those States in which such departments have been created, frictions have developed between various departments that could have been prevented from within if Queensland's methods had been followed. I agree that conservation work in Queensland needs to be extended, and that more should be done in the various departments in conservation matters; but the gentlemen to whom I referred very strongly urged me to resist moves to centralise all matters of conservation in one department.

Let us look at the various matters that are dealt with in Government departments. Fauna conservation, for instance, would come under the administration of a ministry of conservation. At present it is handled by the Fauna Conservation Branch of the Department of Primary Industries, and there it is in an excellent position to take advantage of the great amount of research work constantly being carried out in that department. In addition, there is in that department the possibility of an exchange of qualified personnel on a scale that is very desirable. Removing the Fauna Conservation Branch from the Department of Primary Industries and setting it up as a separate bureaucracy would merely lead to unnecessary duplication, or even triplication. I do not see how anything would be achieved by such a move.

The Department of Primary Industries also contains the Fisheries Branch, and to remove any aspect of the control of fishing from that department would, in my opinion, be a mistake. Indeed, the transfer of this activity to the Department of Primary Industries has benefited the fishing industry tremendously, because it has had made available to it the marketing expertise of departmental officers. There would be disadvantages in taking the Fisheries Branch from the Department of Primary Industries and placing it in another department.

I turn now to the Forestry Department. In most of the other States, the national parks service has its own group of rangers. In Queensland, foresters are responsible for national parks work; they are in a unique

position to manage national parks and know the areas that are potential national parks. National parks and forestry generally must to some extent be integrated in the future to meet the general recreational needs of the community. After all, Queensland has only a limited number of national parks, and the possibilities for extending them are not very great.

However, within easy reach of Brisbane are vast areas of State forest, and there is no reason why these areas could not, and should not, be used for recreational purposes in the future. To remove them from Forestry Department control would be a mistake, because again there would be duplication of effort and a loss of expertise, as well as the loss of additional areas that could be made available for recreational purposes.

Let us now look at the work of the Water Quality Council, which is presently part of the Department of Local Government. There are very good reasons why it should be within that department rather than standing on its own. In my area, the council has deliberated on some matters of water quality, and they relate directly to local authorities. The Water Quality Council was able to liaise with the Minister for Local Government and Electricity, and this enabled the provision of sewerage to be extended in both Landsborough and Maroochy Shires. That liaison was valuable, and I think it would be a mistake to divorce the Water Quality Council from the Department of Local Government.

There also are very good reasons why the Air Pollution Council should remain within the Department of Health. Its activities relate fairly directly to health and its personnel can be interchanged to some extent with personnel of the Department of Health. Having in mind laboratory facilities in particular, I think there is value in retaining the council within that department.

I do not think it has been suggested that the Water Conservation Branch should be included in the new department, but it would be a mistake to do that.

An argument could well be put forward that regional planning is becoming so important in our everyday life, in decision-making in this place, and in local government, that a separate ministry should be established to deal with it. However, I do not think it would be advisable to muster all the sections to which I have referred in one ministry simply to enable the Government to say, "We have a Ministry of Conservation; therefore we have something of which we can be proud." This move would not necessarily mean that the Government was doing anything really meaningful in the cause of conservation generally. In fact, I hope I have made it clear that such a step might prejudice the work already being done and make it more difficult for certain officers to work effectively.

I reiterate that the Government, in its everyday decisions, should always err on the side of conservation; but I do not think that Governments should be judged in the field of conservation by whether or not they have a Ministry of Conservation. They are either conservation-minded generally, or they are not. I hope that the National-Liberal Government will take such a decision very slowly and not merely put on the cloak of a Ministry of Conservation because people are saying very vocally, "You haven't even got a Ministry of Conservation."

A Government that deliberately set out to be anti-conservation generally might first set up a Ministry of Conservation to show the world that it is conservation-minded, thus clouding its other actions.

Mr. Tucker: What are you suggesting?

Mr. AHERN: I am suggesting that a Ministry of Conservation, gathering together all the agencies that have to do with conservation in one central department, should not be established. It has been urged very strongly that that should be done, that it is done in other States. I am submitting that conservation can best be implemented from within the existing departments.

Conservation generally is a very complex question, and decisions on conservation and regional planning are some of the most difficult that the Government has to make. It must ensure that the costs of environmental controls are assessed realistically because all of us have to bear them, and all that the community wants is a reasonable effort in this direction, not an effort that will bankrupt industries or prevent the establishment in this State of a great number of industries. I do not think that any member of the community wants to see the ultimate of zero growth. Clearly that would not be acceptable.

The community as a whole wants additional employment opportunities for the future. It wants to see some growth with reasonable environmental controls. It is for us to establish where the cut-off should lie. Young people in the community are not prepared to accept that there is to be no increase in the standards of living in the traditional sense of those words as we have come to understand them in the past. I hope that this Government will endeavour to provide continuing growth and development, with reasonable environmental controls, in the interests of the young people in the community.

In the few minutes left to me I wish to make particular reference to the fluoridation of public water supplies. At this point in time Queensland is the last State in Australia to act in this matter. Every other State has done something about it; but here in Queensland we are very slow to move.

Mr. B. Wood: Are you against it?

Mr. AHERN: I am in favour of it.

The World Health Organisation has recommended it. Some 100,000,000 people in the world are drinking fluoridated water to their great advantage. It is the most dramatic health measure that any Government can undertake. Among young people it halves dental caries and does away with idiopathic mottling virtually completely. If we are prepared to grasp the nettle, as it were, we can take action, at very small cost to the community, which will halve the decay, pain and suffering in our children.

Mr. B. Wood: Which Minister is responsible?

Mr. AHERN: The honourable member is barking at my heels. If he will wait a minute, I will develop this argument.

In the other States of Australia the Health Department has taken full responsibility, and has instructed the public authorities administering water supplies to implement fluoridation. That is the situation in every other State; but here we are ducking the issue by saying that we pass the ball to the local authorities and that we will indemnify them against any action that might be taken against them. The local authorities want the Government to take over responsibility in this field. An article in the State press headed "State lead urged on fluoridation" reads—

"The State Government should direct local authorities to introduce fluoride into their water supplies, Cr. F. A. Rogers said last night in Brisbane."

Councillor Rogers is the chairman of the Queensland Local Government Association.

It is right that the local authorities should want us to undertake it because it is a responsibility that is properly ours. This Government cannot even be said to be encouraging local authorities to do anything about it. No more than two years ago the Gympie City Council took a decision to fluoridate the water supply for the city of Gympie. The former Minister for Local Government instructed the Gympie City Council to hold a referendum on the issue. We all know how much can be achieved by referendums. It is my party's policy to undertake the fluoridation of water supplies by the State Health Department.

From time to time there have been arguments against fluoridation on the basis of the health hazards it might cause. So many millions of people throughout the world are drinking fluoridated water that these hazards would have arisen in great proportions if those arguments were valid. Obviously they have not arisen. In some countries we have had generations to establish whether these dangers occur. They have not occurred, and they do not occur. Most Australians are drinking fluoridated water; but in Queensland we are not. Apparently we are not game to do it.

The argument is used that we should not encourage mass medication, and that we should not ram something down people's throats, but every local authority in Queensland pours tons of sodium hypochlorite into its water supply to kill off the germs in it. Chlorine is a halogen. Hypochlorite is a sister compound. Mr. Speaker, hypochlorite is going into your stomach, and my stomach every day of our lives as a public health measure. Immense quantities of alum are being poured daily into the State's public water supplies for the express purpose of precipitating out any suspended matter.

Any argument that can be levelled against fluoride as an ion can also be used against chloride as an ion. They are, as I say, sister compounds and similar in every respect. Any opposition that can be raised against fluoride can also be voiced against chloride, or common salt. It is an undeniable fact that nearly all the salt that is used daily to flavour our foodstuffs, such as our eggs in the morning, is iodised salt. Salt is iodised to prevent the proliferation of the thyroid gland, and without an intake of iodine a great number of people would have to undergo thyroid operations.

Fluoridation is both a simple and safe procedure as well as an inexpensive one. In spite of that, however, it is resisted in Queensland, and I cannot for the life of me see why. The State Health Department should have the authority of Parliament to instruct local authorities and others who are responsible for the supply of water to the public to fluoridate their supplies. Only a very small proportion of the State is presently fluoridated. In fact, only eight or nine of the 131 local authority areas throughout Queensland are fluoridated.

Mr. Tucker: We've had it in Townsville for 10 years.

Mr. AHERN: Townsville is a very fortunate area in that it has fluoridation. I believe that the Gold Coast, too, has it. The City of Brisbane, on the other hand, does not, and there is a marked difference between the rate of dental decay in children living in the metropolitan area and those in Townsville or any other fluoridated area. In fact, the rate of dental caries in Brisbane is twice that in Townsville. Queensland should follow the recent example set by Victoria, and fluoridate its water supplies.

The Dental Association has urged the Government to introduce fluoridation on a State-wide basis. It has pointed out that there is presently a drastic shortage of dentists. In fact, a recent survey showed that 350 dentists are required immediately to overcome the present dental caries problem in the under-14 age-group. Apparently there are insufficient dentists to treat children in that age-group, let alone those in older age-groups.

Finally, as I have said, fluoridation is the most dramatic measure that the Government can take in caring for the health of the people. It is my party's policy, and I urge the Government to undertake the fluoridation of the State's water supplies. I repeat: Queensland is the last State in Australia to fluoridate its water supply.

Mr. B. WOOD (Barron River) (12.23 p.m.): Recently, the Labor Party in this Parliament has given the lead to a reluctant Government by indicating firmly its intention to introduce a ministry of the environment and decentralisation when it is elected to office at the next general election. I am very pleased to have been given this responsibility.

The previous speaker, the honourable member for Landsborough, apologised for the Government's failure to create such a portfolio—no doubt anticipating my remarks. Obviously he was struggling to find justification for the retention of the present system. In fact he argued that it is preferable to have small groups or cells in various departments. Believe me, small groups or cells have proved, and will continue to prove, to be ineffective. They act very slowly. They have no influence. The honourable member warned us to be wary of any government that, to use his words, just says it is interested in conservation and puts the title to a ministry. I agree with that portion of his speech. But he should have realised that that is the present situation; Queensland already has a Government that is just saying it is interested in conservation.

Today I propose to speak in general terms on some matters affecting the environment and decentralisation. This so-called Government has been slow to recognise the problems of the environment. Legislation introduced so far into this Parliament has followed the introduction of similar legislation in most Western countries. The Government's tardiness has not helped the situation in Queensland, but its real lack of interest in environmental matters is very evident from its failure to give any sort of priority or importance to necessary administrative action. That importance is recognised by the Labor Party and it is indicated by its giving notice of intention to establish a separate Government department for it.

The laws in Queensland are not comprehensive enough and the Government is not interested enough in their implementation. Care of the environment is of first importance and the Government should recognise that. The environment is our worldly home. Obviously we should attend to its protection and improvement. The Queensland Government cannot do that properly under its present organisation. For example, much of the responsibility for environmental protection is given to the Environmental Control Council, which comes under the authority of the Co-ordinator-General's Department. That department is administered by the

Premier and there lies the problem. His first and only priority is a constant barrage against the Australian Government. He has no other interest, no enthusiasm for any other project. Certainly he has not displayed any concern for the environment. Last week he showed the Assembly that he displays no interest in routine, ministerial work in his department. I suppose that is only to be expected from a man who spent his time knocking down trees and spreading insecticide. In all respects he is destructive and not constructive.

Although the need is clear for top priority to be given to this task it cannot at present be given. I shall go further into the existing disorganisation. Responsibility for major environmental, conservation and anti-pollution matters is spread among at least seven Ministers—half the Cabinet. With such a scattering no Minister gives any priority to these matters; they are simply added to his major responsibilities. Although the honourable member for Landsborough indicated that each department or Minister had cells in which he was interested, the fact is that each of the Ministers has some environmental matters tacked onto his portfolio as small items. In his mind they are minor because they are extras that have no particular relevance to his main portfolio. That is where the honourable member for Landsborough is so wrong. The Ministers are no better than the Premier, but of course the organisational structure is against them before they start.

Let me cite but a few examples. The Minister for Primary Industries has, included with other conservation responsibilities, jurisdiction over legislation dealing with soil conservation and fauna protection; the Minister for Conservation controls legislation affecting beach protection and pollution of water by oil; the Minister for Local Government administers the legislation for clean water and litter control; the Minister for Lands controls national parks and marine national parks; the Minister for Health controls the Clean Air Act; and the Minister for Works and Housing administers the Animals Protection Act. And of course I could enlarge on that list. In the light of such disorganisation and lack of priorities how can the Government attend properly to these important matters? I must be fair and concede that the Queensland Government did consider establishing a separate department. Apparently the honourable member for Landsborough did not know that. But the job was too much for it. In its own words, immense organisational problems prevented it. For confirmation of that statement honourable members should read the first issue of the Government's journal entitled, "Environmental Control". Overseas countries and other States in Australia have not found any great difficulty in taking this important step but this Government admitted

that it lacked the ability and the interest to set up the special department that is needed.

The Labor Party has both the ability and the interest. We recognise that today environmental issues are certainly the most critical of all problems confronting Governments and the people they represent. This applies as much to Queensland as to any over-populated, excessively polluted and heavily exploited area in the world; for, while we may not yet have experienced all the horror of mass pollution and destruction of the environment, we must quickly learn the lessons so dreadfully displayed elsewhere. It takes little time and effort to destroy and pollute but tremendous effort to reverse it—if indeed reversal is possible. Already Queensland has suffered. We must restore what we can and prevent deterioration to the level experienced in other places.

It will become necessary for the State to accept responsibility for the management of the whole environment and all influences affecting it, as Governments should have learned by now that the public show too little concern. This is equally true of the ordinary citizen who litters the streets, sprays too much dangerous insecticide in his own garden or cares nothing about the emissions from his precious car and is reluctant to pay more for better design, of the farmer whose careless husbandry or unnecessary clearing of timber brings about soil erosion, and of the large industry which finds cheaper the production methods that pollute the air and the waterways.

Legislation will have to be wide-ranging and strict. Regrettably, people will have to face harsh penalties for breach of anti-pollution laws. I note that recently the chairman of the Environmental Control Council (Sir Charles Barton) told a petroleum industry seminar on anti-pollution practices that the laws place too much reliance on voluntary industrial participation. I believe that his remarks are relevant to all sections of the community. I trust that the Government will take notice of this advice in the short time it has left. All the Acts have provision for penalties, but the fines are few and the amounts small. Only a handful of people have been prosecuted for littering our countryside, yet that is the most frequent of all. The Litter Act has absolutely no effect.

While I am on this subject, I must be critical of members in this Chamber, including myself. It is just as well that proceedings here are free from prosecution, for, if a litter control officer walked in as we walked out after a day's littering, he could do well for himself. Invariably, we leave the Chamber with the desks and the floor well littered with paper. We are no different from other citizens in expecting someone else to clean up after us.

We have an Act covering oil pollution in our harbours and coastal waters but when oil spills occur, deliberate or not, little punitive action is taken. The same applies to

the discharge of pollutants into rivers and streams. Our air pollution laws are flouted—but what happens? Mount Isa Mines Limited was fined \$50 for failure to comply. I am sure that worried the company! Any concern big enough need not fear a penalty at all. All it need do is obtain an exemption or change to the Act, as the Greenvale nickel companies did last year.

Answers to questions in the House indicate how little concerned the Government is. Examination of our streams, coastal waters and air shows how serious the problem continues to be. Obviously the Government must begin to be serious on these matters. I repeat emphatically that the provisions will need to control the activities of all—the big and the small alike. We must not tolerate the continuing pollution of our waterways and of the air that we breathe. Governments and people must recognise that these are among our most important resources and act accordingly.

However, other controls are needed as well. We have a vast State, but some supervision must be exercised over the use to which land is put. We cannot continue with the policies that have prevailed since the continent was first settled. The need then was to exploit the land for the production of the food and materials required to sustain life. Our ancestors had little cause for concern about natural life and the environment. All too often their's appeared to be a harsh and unsympathetic environment that needed to be tamed; but that has no relevance today.

We need to take steps to give us a proper understanding of land, its nature, its capability, its hazards when used for differing purposes and how these can be avoided, and also to determine the needs of the community for land for various uses. So as far as possible, land use should be determined after a proper study to understand its capability and suitability for different uses and after consideration of the requirements of the community.

As a first step, the Government should take note of the Land Conservation Act which was passed in Victoria four years ago. It provides the legislative base for a full study of all Crown lands in Victoria with the object of permanently reserving substantial areas for national parks, wildlife reserves and forest parks so that at least 5 per cent of the State is preserved for ever.

A Labor Government will take such a step. It will not allow "immense organisational problems" to deter it. In time, greater authority will be exercised over rural industries as to the use to which land is put. I note with approval the comments of the Australian Government Report on Rural Policy in Australia, which include—

"Ownership of land carries with it responsibilities for future generations. Freedom to use that land should be

limited to those uses which are consistent with maintenance of land quality. As a general guide and with some important qualifications, land should be preserved for purposes for which it is particularly well suited; standards and guidelines need to be developed, however, to permit reconciliation of economic, physical and environmental criteria of suitability."

As just one aspect of this, I wish that the Minister for Local Government and Electricity would translate some of his words into action. In the journal "Local Government" in August 1973, he is quoted as expressing concern at the loss of valuable rural land to urban subdivisions and describing it as an undesirable trend. I quite agree with that statement as well as his statement that local authorities must exert greater controls. But the fact is the present legislation does little to help local authorities.

Mr. McKechnie: They are extending their areas from 20 to 40 acres to achieve this.

Mr. B. WOOD: Yes, but there is still too little they can do. We can see this in the Mulgrave Shire with the gazettal of a new town plan. The local authorities still have too little control.

Local councils need State Government assistance to carry out studies of the sort I have described as well as more autonomy in town planning to permit rational land usage. At present, they have too little control over developmental activities within their boundaries and, in particular, as the Minister supports, the uncontrolled loss of prime rural land for urban development must be regulated. The Minister should back up his words with some action.

Most agricultural development in Australia has been soundly based, but there have been too many instances of enterprises that have adversely affected the environment, particularly causing soil erosion and creating conditions that are not capable of correction. Governments must provide guidance for rural producers but as that alone will often be insufficient, they must also take legislative action. In brief, a Government must ensure that land is put to the use to which it is best suited, whether it is for a particular agricultural use, urban or recreational development, or left in its natural state.

Nowhere is the need for land-use surveys more apparent than in the sand-mining industry. The demand for minerals from the sand will increase and we must take every step to avoid the conflicts of the past. The Queensland Government should be able to tell interested companies where they can mine. This can be done only after thorough examination. It has never been desirable to retain a system in which the miner seeks a lease in any area and mining wardens and the Government have to decide whether that area is acceptable. With this system the Government has too little to control over locations for mining.

I should like to see more local authorities gazetted by-laws permitting tree-preservation orders. While they are difficult to enforce, some councils have orders requiring approval for the removal of trees or shrubs until subdivided land is ready for home construction. It is often preferable to retain trees when areas are being prepared for subdivision, especially if the timber is unique or very long established. We should realise, of course, that in most soils it takes only a few years for new growth to provide a suitable alternative.

The Government is taking far too little action in the gazettal of additional national parks. Queensland simply has insufficient areas designated in this way at present, and there seems to be no sign that Government action will increase such areas. I could mention areas north of Cairns that are desperately in need of protection by means of the declaration of national parks. Weymouth Holding is a critically important area. It is of international significance, yet the Government does not appear to be particularly interested in it.

Mr. Burns: It is overseas-owned.

Mr. B. WOOD: That is correct. The Government would have to purchase the holding, and there is no reason why it should not do so. The area is so important that the Government should do that.

Mr. R. Jones: Will you tell the House the particular significance of Weymouth Holding? Some members may not be aware of it.

Mr. B. WOOD: It is a unique tropical rainforest area. It has quite a variety of rainforest patterns, and it encompasses types of forest that are not being preserved at the moment. There are other areas, too, that need preservation. There is the area north of Daintree, between Daintree and Cooktown, especially round Cooper Creek. There is too little preservation in Queensland of rainforest on flat country. There are areas of rainforest on mountain slopes, but there is an insufficient variety of swamp land and flat land rainforest preserved.

Another matter that I should like to mention concerns environmental studies. In recent years these have been called for before the initiation of major projects. I agree with that requirement, as long as it is understood that environmental studies are not the answer to all problems. It must be appreciated that no thick volume produced by a firm with a fine-sounding name provides all the answers. It must be accepted that such studies will have some restrictions. Nevertheless they are important, and they represent an advance.

One of the problems with environmental studies is that too few of them are being made public. There is controversy around Townsville at the moment over the Greenvale nickel project. Obviously the refinery will cause a good deal of pollution. A very

comprehensive environmental study has been made, but the people in the area have no way of knowing the contents of the report and of judging for themselves whether it is satisfactory. Townsville is only one area; the same thing could be happening in many other parts of the State.

I believe that when an environmental study is called for by a Government or any other authority, that fact should be advertised and the people should have the right to make submissions to those carrying out the study. I believe, further, that the study should be made public and that the people should be able to comment on it. If that were done, there might be an acceptance of some of the findings of environmental studies.

I have been talking a lot about more and more regulation, but it is certainly necessary. There is only one action that will prevent the continued scattering of "stubbies" and soft drink and beer cans all over the countryside. Legislation will just have to be passed making it necessary for all beverages to be sold only in containers returning a reasonable deposit. There is no other answer. Recycling of steel and aluminium cans and glass bottles will never be successful because people will still scatter them everywhere. Manufacturers will have to be told that many of their products will have to be packaged in a more economic manner. Take, for example, the packaging of shirts in expensive and fancy containers. I am not so much concerned about the cost to the consumer as about the cost to the community for disposing of that packaging.

In the same way, I see the tendency for the marketing of milk in cartons as undesirable. They use a scarce resource, add to the cost to the consumer, and create a disposal problem. If all milk in this State was sold in cartons, the amount of disposable trash each year would be enormous. Manufacturers will have to be compelled by law to retain the bottles. So this and other Parliaments must act.

We must also act to regulate the use of pesticides by home gardeners. One has no problem in walking into a store in Brisbane and buying pesticides that are properly banned in other countries. But we wait for laws on this. We seek stricter control of pesticides and fungicides in rural areas. Our food is contaminated—not sufficiently to cause us danger, we are told, but we still consume D.D.T. and chlorinated hydrocarbons—and a responsible Government would be taking stronger action to keep our food pure. People in Brisbane eat contaminated food; there is no question about that. I am not reassured by statements that contamination is at an acceptable level. There should be no contamination.

These are the major problems of our age: the air we breathe and the food and water we consume are contaminated; our countryside and wildlife are under attack, and in some cases they have been destroyed;

we are vandals in our own homes. The present Government fails to understand the situation and fails to act seriously. As the Government, the Labor Party will give the priority to environmental matters that is urgently needed.

I propose also to speak about decentralisation. I do not intend to argue the merits of decentralisation; I accept that the arguments in favour of it are not to be seriously contradicted. I intend, therefore, to speak about ways of attaining the results that the Government only talks about. Decentralisation must be considered an integral part of the development of the State as a whole, as it should strive for a balanced development by promoting country development to balance the rapid advances of the metropolitan area.

There was a time when decentralisation was considered necessary mainly to prevent a drift from rural areas and the consequent loss of services and other benefits. It was also considered desirable to fill the vast empty spaces of the country areas. More recently it has become increasingly important to take positive steps to ease the various tensions following rapid growth in metropolitan areas. So that decentralisation has a twofold advantage.

There is another factor that has changed, too. Once it was considered desirable by many to move to the cities for the sake of convenience and the amenities and advantages the city offered, especially in employment, education and social life. Now there is a readily discernible tendency for people to seek to move away from the city, with all its problems, into rural areas. For some, country life is much more attractive than city life. To some measure this movement is made up of people who move to retirement or semi-retirement, or who seek to live on their own farmlet and perhaps work in the city nearby. This trend has some undesirable features, but alert Governments should appreciate that many people do seek to leave their city confinement, and should provide the opportunity for them to do so.

I do not intend to detail the figures which demonstrate the very strong tendency for Brisbane's growth rate to advance much more rapidly than rural areas. I would be hard pressed to detail many positive steps taken to reverse this trend. The Government gives only lip-service to the idea of decentralisation. For example, in my area it has acted time and time again to reduce Government services. Rail lines have been closed all over the north of Queensland, the most recent one being the line from Mt. Surprise to Forsayth. It has closed small community hospitals, and intends to close more. It has closed the Parada Research Station on the Atherton Tableland. It has threatened—and the situation is still in doubt—to bring down the Cairns Regional Electricity Board.

The Government correctly talks about Queensland being Australia's most decentralised State, but forgets that Australia is about the most centralised country in the world. I do not want to be unrealistic about this matter. I am not going to claim that previous Labor Governments were entirely responsible for this. For a start, Queensland's past position was due almost entirely to its geography, particularly a long coastline with suitable sites for ports to service inland areas. The extensive agricultural development meant that the population was well spread over the State, and many major centres emerged to service agricultural interests. Increasing industrial development since the war has seen the population drift more and more to the cities, and definite planned steps to overcome this have been slow to come, and generally ineffective.

I do not want to be critical only of the Government; private enterprise has acted in a similar manner, often avoiding its responsibilities to rural areas. Many firms now centralise activity in Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne. Private insurance companies are no different from the State Government Insurance Office. They all handle their major accounting in Brisbane, and it is from this city that they send out their renewal notices. The Railway Department is no different from private firms in that it has reduced its clerical staff in the major provincial areas.

Too often a northern resident has to add air freight to the cost of a spare part, because the stock of spares held by some firms is limited to the most common items. It is easier for them—and perhaps cheaper, too—to call a Brisbane office for the part. The consumer pays for the cost of the phone call and the air freight, and loses valuable time. Whatever savings the firm may have made are certainly not passed on to the customer.

Mr. R. Jones: Even if the parts are in stock, some of them still charge air freights.

Mr. B. WOOD: Some do.

The Government should actively seek to encourage existing firms to maintain a high local interest. It is remarkably illogical that it does not do so at present. As it takes some measures to encourage enterprise away from Brisbane, why does it not do something to stop other firms from running down their activities in remoter areas?

I do not agree that private enterprise should really need incentives to retain existing staff and facilities in rural areas, but shall later indicate some measures that would encourage it to do so. This Government is facing the problem of ensuring that a reasonable proportion of the increase in population settles in rural areas. I acknowledge that this is no easy task, but, by adding certain meaningful policies to its rather meagre list, some rewarding steps will be taken.

Today there is great emphasis on selective decentralisation, that is, the selection of a likely centre and its designation as a growth centre. In the past the aim in Queensland has been to offer various minor concessions by which it was hoped to entice industries out of Brisbane, but to no place in particular. It is now considered to be more practicable to establish a growth centre, and there locate a variety of activities and industries which complement and support each other. At present the industrial estates of the Department of Industrial Development are used almost exclusively by industries already established in, or receiving their initiative in, that particular centre. There has been no success in attracting industries to relocate their Brisbane businesses in another centre.

In the planning that is involved in the development of a growth centre great encouragement is given to industries to relocate, and industries of a suitable nature are actively sought by planners. Allied with this should also be the relocation of suitable Government activities. I do not propose to discuss growth centres in detail, but will indicate certain concessions which we would expect to be available. I also point out that they should be available to prospective industries or businesses in other places.

It should be noted, too, that it is desirable for a Government to designate other cities as being worthy of maximum assistance or of other assistance. For example, in New South Wales certain towns have been selected by the Government for maximum assistance, while others may qualify for lesser concessions. In Queensland a Government might plan two growth centres, say, Townsville and Toowoomba, and select a number of other centres as warranting particular attention. It is necessary to do this rather than offer incentives without planning. That has proved ineffective.

I note that in certain circumstances the New South Wales Government offers to maximum assistance areas loans of 100 per cent of the finance required for land and factory buildings at 8.85 per cent, and to other areas loans of up to 60 per cent of needs at a higher rate. That Government will also guarantee loans up to and sometimes beyond \$50,000 for land and buildings. This is more useful and flexible than the assistance given by Queensland, mainly through its offers on Crown industrial estates.

We should take note of the Victorian Government's offer to carry on rail without cost all material necessary for relocation and to reimburse the cost of transfer of key personnel. Victoria also has a uniform electricity tariff. That principle would be of great assistance to industries in North Queensland, where power costs are much higher than elsewhere in the State.

In South Australia the Industries Assistance Corporation has the power to make loans or to subscribe directly to a company's

capital by purchasing shares. It can also make cash grants to country industries to extend their operations or for research and development purposes.

In New South Wales, subsidies are available for training unskilled labour and for the cost of technical consultant services to enable smaller industries to keep up with technical developments.

The Leader of the A.L.P. in Queensland has indicated that when Labor becomes the Government it will offer pay-roll tax concessions to encourage businesses and industries to establish themselves in decentralised areas.

I believe that Governments should give greater consideration and pay greater attention to financial assistance to regional development boards. Approximately 11 such boards are established in Queensland, and they do a good job in their respective areas. The Government should recognise their ability just as it uses their services. But it could use their services more and, in particular, could help them to a greater extent, especially on the financial side. These boards consist of the people who are most involved in the industrial, commercial and tourist development of their areas. They have both keen local knowledge and enthusiasm, and I believe that the Government should give them financial assistance. As I say, they do a very fine job. The Government should also ensure that these boards have direct representation on the regional councils.

In immigration the Queensland Government has done very little to attract migrants to areas outside Brisbane. The Government has missed a golden opportunity, because obviously many migrants come to Queensland without any firm idea as to where they wish to settle. They are, as it were, open to offers, yet the Government allows the great majority of them to settle in Brisbane, simply because there are very few job opportunities elsewhere.

The measures that I have outlined are only a few of the many that Queensland should consider, for they offer valuable assistance to decentralised industry and are additional to the present incentives that are offered. However, with the emphasis on manufacturing industry, insufficient attention has been given to other major areas of employment. I have already said that the activity of government should be more widely dispersed. There is no reason why the Education Department and other Government departments could not be relocated in a variety of centres. It seems ridiculous that the Government is continuing to develop the George Street area and concentrating a substantial number of public servants right in the heart of Brisbane.

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

Mr. B. WOOD: I wonder if anyone has carried out a survey to determine the number of public servants, both State and Federal,

whose motor vehicles contribute to the traffic congestion in the city each day. I am sure the result would be very surprising. We should have a long-range plan to move these departments, or some of them, into country areas and the suburbs of the capital. I do not believe that the Government should construct any more buildings in the city area.

An Opposition Member: Do you think the Department of Primary Industries should be out in the bush somewhere?

Mr. B. WOOD: That would be quite suitable.

To my knowledge, no Government has endeavoured to induce private offices to play a role in decentralisation. Even with advanced accounting machinery and computer operations, offices are relatively labour intensive. Although they have a large number of employees, they have the distinct advantage of requiring no materials for manufacture so that freight costs are hardly significant. As freight is one of the major problems in locating industries in non-urban areas, this fact is very important. It means that there are fewer problems to overcome. High rents in the metropolitan area would provide an added incentive to move out. I see no real reason why large offices should be located in Brisbane. I am sure that commercial enterprises have not considered this matter. The Government should investigate the possibilities and inform suitable commercial undertakings. Insurance offices and banks seem very suitable for this type of decentralisation activity. It certainly appears that there would be less difficulty in their decentralisation than would be experienced by manufacturing industry.

It is not easy to reverse well-established trends in our community but it is important that we should do so, especially in the areas of environment and decentralisation. These are very important areas which will determine, to a very large degree, the quality of life of Queenslanders in the future. The standard of living that we face in the years to come will be determined very largely by the action or inaction of the Queensland Government. The people may be sure that a Labor Government in Queensland will introduce all necessary measures to ensure that the necessary action is taken.

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (2.18 p.m.): It is traditional in this Parliament—and an excellent tradition—that honourable members on rising to speak to the Address in Reply pledge anew their personal loyalty to Our Sovereign Lady the Queen and on behalf of their constituents voice a similar pledge. This I do now for myself and for the overwhelming majority of the residents of the Ashgrove electorate—and in so doing I am neither perpetuating a mediaeval anachronism nor conforming to a stale and outworn convention.

What I am doing—and what we all do—is to make in a formal and solemn manner a considered reaffirmation of our belief in, and our support for, that system of democratic government evolved over a thousand years of British history which we call the Westminster system, and which is probably the most valuable part of our national heritage.

This system, and indeed all democratic systems, are under challenge today, both from within and without. It is not hard, if we merely trace a few of the interjections that are made in this House, to indicate where some of the danger lies within our system. It is therefore a good thing that by this symbolic act we should regularly, Parliament by Parliament, strengthen our own allegiance to, and encourage the faith of others in, the principles under which we are governed—principles which, if properly applied, provide the greatest possible measure of ordered freedom with a proper balance between the rights of the individual and the well-being of society as a whole.

I spoke of challenges to these principles, and he would be blind indeed who could not see that here, in Australia, in the United States of America, and in the United Kingdom itself, the very home and citadel of democracy, our traditional methods of government of the people, by the people, for the people are under threat. Alien philosophies, which have at their core a distrust of—a contempt for—the processes which try to obtain a measure or a consensus of public opinion, are rapidly gaining ground and we are to be persuaded how much better off we would be were we to resign power and leadership to self-appointed elitist groups, as is the case in those countries which have fallen under Communist dictatorships.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: What about Fascist dictatorships?

Mr. TOOTH: Fascist dictatorships as well, yes. I know that the honourable member is very sensitive to any reference, critical or non-critical, to the Communist dictatorships. Indeed, if he wants to see what dictatorship of any kind is like, whether it be of the Right or the Left, I hope he has the opportunity to see some of the films that have recently come from Portugal.

That our traditional constitutional structure of Queen and Parliament is our greatest defence against the possibility of similar disaster befalling us here has been attested by one of the most influential Marxist theoreticians of this era, Professor Harold J. Laski, a man who during many years infected thousands at the London School of Economics with the Communist virus.

He it was, and none other, who stated that the major barrier to the creation of a socialist state in Britain was the Crown.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The Crown is an anachronism, though. You must admit that.

Mr. TOOTH: That is precisely the point that I am contesting. If the honourable member listens, he will hear a reasoned argument. It is one he may not accept, but one I think he should at least consider.

Let me say that it is a commonly held misconception that the Monarch is a completely powerless figurehead without any real authority; but those—and mark this—who are dedicated to the destruction of our system of government do not make that mistake. That is why they miss no opportunity—and it is going on in a particularly active form today—to ridicule and pour derision and contempt upon the institution of the monarchy and bring it into disrepute. They have an object and a purpose in doing this. They know that the Queen and her representatives possess certain reserves of power. They are rarely used, because fortunately the need for their use rarely arises; nevertheless, they are constitutionally in existence and may be moved into action if the normal exercise of authority by the duly elected representatives of the people is called in question or is challenged to the point of impotence or paralysis. And let me say, in passing, that we see signs of this—a real possibility of this—in Australia today.

Mr. B. Wood: You are putting us to sleep.

Mr. TOOTH: The honourable member himself has had a little practice in that exercise within the last couple of hours. I would suggest that he does not judge me and my contributions to the debate by his own.

Why do we in this Parliament swear personal allegiance to Her Majesty? Why similarly do judges and magistrates and police officers, soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and innumerable functionaries of State? Not to the Premier, mark you, nor to the Prime Minister for the time being, nor to some other transient political figure, nor to some vague abstraction such as the Constitution but to the throne and person of Her Majesty the Queen—the Monarch who in constitutional theory never dies.

Let me quote from an authoritative work on the Royal Prerogatives:—

"The danger of royal absolutism is past; but the danger of Cabinet absolutism, even of Prime Ministerial absolutism, is present and growing. Against that danger the reserve power of the Crown, and especially the power to force or refuse dissolution, is in some instances the only constitutional safeguard. The Crown is more than a quaint survival, a

social ornament, a symbol, 'an automation, with no public will of its own'. It is an absolutely essential part of the parliamentary system. In certain circumstances the Crown alone can preserve the Constitution, or ensure that if it is to be changed it shall be only by the deliberate will of the people."

Thus it may be seen that, of the safeguards to our fundamental rights and liberties, the monarchical system is by no means the least; indeed many of us believe it is the first and the greatest not only by reason of the things I have already mentioned but by reason of the numberless intangible things—traditional thoughts and attitudes, yea, and affections so strongly rooted in our historical past.

It is very interesting, if I may draw attention to the fact that honourable members opposite are revealing themselves. I am very glad that I have taken this opportunity to raise these matters and discuss them, because, one after another, they are giving a clear indication of the truth of the points I am making and propose to make and of the underlying policies and strategies of the Australian Labor Party not only here—where perhaps it does not matter very much—but also in the National Parliament. I shall come to that shortly.

So long as the Crown remains, there is always an area of power, usually dormant, and of influence which the politicians can never invade. Cabinet Ministers are constantly reminded of their correct role by their titles, "Ministers of the Crown". The very existence of the Crown places an ultimate limit upon the power aspirations of elected persons against which we were once warned by none other than the late Dr. Evatt himself. The power! The aspirations! I think his phrase was, "The arrogance of elected persons." The monarchy is not an infallible barrier against dictatorship, but, so long as the Monarch or her representatives function, the aspiring dictator can never gain total power.

The hereditary monarchy fosters national unity and social stability. Immediately the Monarch dies, the eldest member of the family, trained and educated for a task of destiny, ascends the throne and, as I have already reminded you, claims immediate allegiance with the herald's cry "The King is dead, Long live the King".

Mr. Davis saluted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member for Brisbane that he has already been warned under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. TOOTH: There is no power struggle, no friction, no period of frightening uncertainty but a sense of instant continuity. The Monarch has no political past and no party followers to reward, and has no party opponents who detest the Monarch. Although honourable members opposite, probably in very considerable numbers, oppose the

monarchy, I doubt if they detest it. There is no need for spectacular triumphs or cheap gimmicks to win popular support. The history of the Crown has been one of personified continuity and stability, combined with gradual, orderly evolutionary change. Parliament should represent the popular will, but the continuing Crown represents nationhood, unity, ancestry, and the whole traditional background and ethos of the people.

It may thus seem strange that there are people in high places amongst us who wish to discard all of this, and it is not unreasonable to ask why. That is what I am doing now. I am putting the question to my friends opposite: why do they desire to discard all these things? Let me recall the euphoric days of late December 1972 and January 1973, with the confident assurances that Australia would be a republic within ten years. Let us remember the reports of new Cabinet Ministers who refused the ceremonial handshake with the Governor-General. Let us not forget the farcical contest for a new national anthem, still-born almost before it was conceived, and then the pathetic cover-up of a rigged ballot in which one-quarter of one percent of Australians were alleged to have made a decision for us—a decision which I for one, speaking as a third generation Australian, whose forebears were amongst the pioneers of this land, reject as trivial, unworthy and lacking in any status whatsoever.

Why have these foolishnesses been inflicted upon us? Is it because Professor Laski's disciples in this community accept his dictum that the Crown is a barrier to the creation of a socialist society? I am sure that that, in part at least, is the reason. In Australia, the Crown is an essential element of our Federal Constitution.

Mr. Jensen: Sweden has a king, and it is a socialist country.

Mr. TOOTH: I suggest the honourable member for Bundaberg listen to what I am saying.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I take it that you are not a republican?

Mr. TOOTH: I certainly am not a republican, and I take it that the honourable member for Archerfield is. I should be very interested to know the nature and quality of the republicanism that he espouses. Is it the republicanism of the West, or the republicanism of the East? Or is it the republicanism of the Republics of the Soviet Union? I think that is a fair question to ask seeing that the honourable member has interrupted in this debate.

Were the Crown to be suddenly removed, our Constitution would fall to pieces, and a fresh structure would have to be rapidly created in its place. This, I am convinced, is what many of our political personalities to the Left of centre really want, because they are men in a hurry. The provisions that

already exist in the Constitution for evolutionary change are far too slow and cautious for them. The founding fathers, in their wisdom, whilst providing for change and development, were well aware of the dangers of political precipitancy from impatient reformers with a "big brother" mentality. How many potential "big brothers" do we see around us today—and not too far away, either? They are big not only physically but in their aspirations.

The founding fathers therefore built into the Constitution a series of checks and blocks to ensure that reforming enthusiasts, however well intentioned (as well as those of evil intent, of whom there are many), should not be able to move very far ahead of public opinion, but should be able to proceed only in step with the will and consent of a clear majority of the people in a majority of the contracting States.

This is why immediately after their victory in December 1972 certain A.L.P. personalities began to talk of a republic in the not-to-distant future, and in ways both crude and subtle to downgrade and denigrate the Crown in public esteem. For "Crown" read "Constitution", and the whole purpose of the exercise is exposed. That is why Government members are concerned. They are concerned not about some mediaeval pageantry or some ancient conventions but about the living Constitution of this country, and that is what the argument is about.

It would be appropriate at this point to stress once again the importance of some of our constitutional safeguards to all the smaller States, and indeed to all parts of Australia outside Sydney and Melbourne. I know that some people hesitate to say this, but I want to say it. With a prescience for which we must be profoundly thankful, the founding fathers foresaw the development of Sydney and Melbourne into the gargantuan monsters they have both become. They foresaw the possibility that these two cities of themselves alone would ultimately wield such electoral strength that they could dominate the Australian political scene and manipulate national policies to their special advantage—and to the disadvantage of the rest of the Commonwealth. That is something which every Queenslander, of any kind of political thought or even of no political allegiance, should think about.

Human nature being what it is, this is what one would naturally expect; but one would not expect a great political party with the history and traditions of the A.L.P. to deliberately exploit that natural instinct and to pursue policies deliberately aimed at promoting the interests of the southern capitals at the expense of the rest of the continent. Yet that is what I charge them with having done and of intending to continue to do, thus making the very word "Commonwealth" a term of scorn and derision in the land. No wonder they are so anxious to abandon the title "Commonwealth", with all its wealth of history and

tradition, and to expunge it from our documents and formularies and even from the facades of our public buildings.

To create a secure power base in Sydney and Melbourne from which to dominate the rest of Australia is the clear strategy of the back-room boys at the Federal headquarters of the A.L.P., and to achieve this any other interests will, if necessary, be sacrificed; and so we turn once again to the Constitution to note the safeguards provided therein by the structure and procedures of the Senate—a Senate which they, understandably enough, are pledged to destroy. Indeed, the President of the Senate, speaking during the last few days—not as President of the Senate, I hope, but as a member of the Australian Labor Party—has stated that the Senate should be destroyed. So there is no doubt about where they stand.

One can read in the A.L.P. platform many things about which they will say. "Well, it is there. It was put there by old Jack So-and-so in 1924. Don't take it seriously." I certainly take seriously anything and everything that one can read in their platform. It is there because they believe it; they mean it, and they intend to carry it out.

Mr. Wright: Do you support an Upper House in Queensland?

Mr. TOOTH: No, I do not.

Mr. Wright: What are you arguing against the abolition of the Senate for? Don't you think this works well as a single House of Assembly?

Mr. TOOTH: The situation is completely different. The honourable member's comment reveals the utter superficiality of the thinking of honourable members opposite. The point is that the Commonwealth Constitution is a constitution that was created by the union of a number of sovereign States.

Mr. Wright: To represent the States. But the Senate represents parties now.

Mr. TOOTH: The honourable member knows as well as I do, if he is half as politically aware as I am led to believe he is, that when the Government of the day has a majority in the Senate, the State representation in the Senate operates in the party room. When the situation is as it is now, more than likely it will operate upon the floor of the Senate. But the Senate never ceases to operate. It is vital that we remember that. Every Australian who is remote from the great southern centres of population must take note of and realise that this is of importance to him and to his fellow citizens.

We must remember these safeguards. When we do, we realise anew how precious is that Constitution, and the Crown which locks it all firmly in place and upon which in law it all depends. That is a plain, legal

fact. If anyone is in any doubt let him ask any constitutional lawyer or any judge he may have as a friend or an acquaintance.

Among the many strange and varied activities of recent times has been a redrafting of the style and titles of the Monarch in Australia from which the words "Defender of the Faith" have been omitted. I am not going to take time at this stage to argue about that but to suggest, in the Australian context, that we substitute the title "Defender of the Constitution", because that, in effect, is what the Monarch is.

To sum it up, remove the Crown and you destroy the Constitution. Destroy the Constitution and you emasculate or destroy the Senate and all other safeguards against centralist domination and sectional tyranny, whether from the Left or the Right.

Mr. Jensen: New Zealand hasn't got a Senate.

Mr. TOOTH: I remind the honourable member that New Zealand hasn't got an A.L.P., either.

Mr. JENSEN: I rise to a point of order. The Minister said that New Zealand hasn't got an A.L.P.

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

Mr. JENSEN: He clearly doesn't know——

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

Mr. TOOTH: I do not think the people of New Zealand would be very happy to hear the comment of the honourable member for Bundaberg.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I advise the honourable member for Bundaberg to remain silent.

Mr. TOOTH: Seen in this way the Crown is in very truth much, much more than "a quaint survival, a social ornament, a symbol, an automaton with no public will of its own". It is indeed an absolutely essential part of our parliamentary and constitutional system and, as such, must be defended and will be defended to the limit of the democratic processes available.

I shall be interested in the reaction of honourable members opposite to what I am about to say. There have been clear indications in recent times of a long-range, carefully planned policy not merely to promote the republican idea in this country but simultaneously to create the mechanism and the situations which will enable that goal to be achieved. It is an open secret that the Commonwealth Government has, not only here but also in Europe, archivists, lawyers and other researchers hard at work preparing

the necessary information, both legal and historical, to enable action to be taken when a propitious moment arrives. Whether this will present itself at a time of internal turmoil, political or industrial, or possibly at a time of international tension is anybody's guess. All options are being examined and all will be kept open.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that what may appear to be smart, up-to-date and intelligent attitudes towards traditional loyalties should be recognised for what they really are—stages along the road to a complete restructuring of the Government of Australia—and therefore to be rejected firmly and completely.

It was with some trepidation that I decided to talk about this particular subject, because I felt that it would not interest many honourable members. The reception I am receiving from members of the Opposition, however, gives a clear indication that they are aware of the truth and validity of what I am saying and they are parties to the plans that I am outlining.

Mr. Marginson interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Wolston will have the opportunity of making a speech later on if he wishes to.

Mr. Marginson: What rubbish!

Mr. TOOTH: If it is rubbish it is amazing that the honourable member for Wolston should become so heated about it.

Mr. Marginson: We are back to the school days now.

Mr. TOOTH: It appears that it would be to the benefit of the honourable member for Wolston if I cease replying to him. Obviously he is very disturbed about this.

Let the prophets of republicanism in this country be warned of the hazardous path they are treading, be they the Communist commissars—

Mr. Davis: Oh!

Mr. TOOTH: I thought I would get that response from the honourable member for Brisbane. Let me remind him of the statement made by Mr. Munday less than four weeks ago. As I was saying—be they the Communist commissars who only four weeks ago openly proclaimed their intention to take over the affairs of the nation by industrial disruption, or be they the more subtle and persuasive Left-wing politicians and journalists who use the insidious weapons of ridicule and derision, which is what honourable members opposite are trying to do now. But they won't deter me.

There is an increasing ground swell of apprehension and resentment against them, which will inevitably become a storm if they persist. And this will indeed be tragic, as it will create another chasm in an already

riven and fragmented society. The fragmentation of our society is very largely the result of the policies and action of the Federal Government that came into power in December 1972.

Honourable members will recall that, in referring earlier to the attitude of certain A.L.P. personalities towards the Crown, I suggested that it was only in part directed towards the promotion of a republican sentiment in this country. In my view it had another, and from the A.L.P.'s point of view almost as important, object.

Since the end of World War II a flood of migrants from various parts of Europe other than the United Kingdom have moved into Australia, and they have joined us in such numbers that by now they are a significant section of the electorate. Coming as they did in the majority of cases from countries which had fallen under communist tyranny, the vast majority of them, irrespective of their social or economic status, were basically and in most cases fiercely hostile to the socialist Left. They thus presented an almost insoluble problem to the Australian Labor Party.

Try as it would, the A.L.P. could not reverse the image it had acquired in their eyes—that of an ally and fellow traveller of international Communism. This, of course, is not surprising, as substantial numbers of A.L.P. members are indeed those very allies and fellow travellers. To the political strategists guiding A.L.P. policy it ultimately became clear that it was fruitless to try to convince our European-Australian citizens that the Labor Party had purged itself of Left-wing contamination, and so they cast round for a diversionary tactic, one which would possibly counterbalance or cancel out the problem of their Communist affiliations. They hit upon the device of presenting themselves as the champions of a new Australian nationalism with a strong flavour of anti-royalist sentiment. They were aware that many European migrants, whilst fiercely anti-Communist, had little or no affinity with British people and they decided to exploit that situation with a kind of “to hell with Britain, let's cut the painter” Australianism.

In pursuing these tactics the Federal Government may have snatched some temporary political advantage, but I feel sure that ultimately it will rebound against it. To begin with, these policy attitudes have had repercussions one would naturally expect not only amongst the old Australians of one, two, or three generations vintage, but also among those who have recently arrived from the United Kingdom. Surely they must resent this very obvious ploy at their expense particularly as the Commonwealth Government, to demonstrate its evenhandedness, has instituted a number of irritating and inconvenient administrative measures which operate to their disadvantage; but most important of all has been the way in which

events have developed in the Government's relations with their Communist friends overseas.

Early last year our European fellow citizens witnessed the arrogant demeanour of the Yugoslav Prime Minister, who descended upon us shortly after the change of Government and was received with almost slavish obsequiousness. More recently it became known that the Government of this country has surreptitiously recognised and accepted the incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union, thus making us Australians accomplices in one of the most brutal acts of aggression of modern times—and all apparently in the interests of the Prime Minister's schemes to cut a figure at the United Nations forthcoming General Assembly and, later, on the world diplomatic stage.

Then there has been the continuing story of Solzhenitsyn and the long saga of his efforts to promote, amongst his own people, what we in this country would regard as the most simple and elementary principles of freedom and justice. I remind honourable members that this book is available. I suggest to them that they spend a couple of dollars and buy it.

Mr. Jensen: What is it?

Mr. TOOTH: It is Solzhenitsyn's last and greatest work. The honourable member should read it.

There is much that I should like to quote from this book but I shall only say that towards the end of a chapter on "The Interrogation" Solzhenitsyn wrote—

"We have lost the measure of freedom. We have no means of determining where it begins or ends . . . By now we are even unsure whether we have the right to talk about the events of our own lives."

That brings me to the next item in this series of events. I refer to that young, talented boy, Ermolenko, who was recently endeavouring to leave the Soviet "prison" to become an Australian citizen. We know what happened to him. We know where the responsibility will lie for what happens to him in the future.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: There was a habeas corpus out, and they took him.

Mr. TOOTH: That is right. They simply ignored it. That demonstrates the respect they have for law when it crosses their political intentions.

I shall have to omit a great deal from my notes, because I wish to turn to a matter of local interest. I wish I could also say that it was of local importance, but its only importance arises from the fact that certain Commonwealth Ministers, and in particular, the Minister for Social Security, are endeavouring to magnify it out of all proportion.

Most members will be aware that back in 1970, I took steps to promote an investigation, which ultimately resulted in a decision to establish community health services centres throughout the State, as and when—I emphasise this—sufficient professional staff became available.

During the Federal campaign of 1972, the A.L.P. spokesmen announced plans for Federal financial support for such centres. This we are very happy to accept, and we have indicated our willingness to do so. But the Federal Government attached certain conditions to the provision of these moneys, one of which was that there should be an acknowledgment of Commonwealth involvement when each centre was established. We said that was acceptable. On each and every occasion when I have issued a statement regarding these matters, due acknowledgment has been made; although let me say in passing that we have never agreed with the proposition that Commonwealth Government involvement was in the nature of largess or a gift, for which we should be humbly and subserviently grateful. The Commonwealth collects taxes from the State's taxpayers on behalf of the State as well as the Commonwealth, and to expect the States to assume the attitude of grateful mendicants, when accepting crumbs from the rich man's table, is really a bit much.

I have, however, as honourable members well know, always been a man of peace, and, particularly as the amounts involved were relatively trivial when related to total health expenditure, I saw little point in making an issue of the matter. I have, however, in recent times been publicly assailed, both by Dr. Everingham and Mr. Hayden, for not making what, in their view, was due and proper acknowledgment, and the matter has now reached the farcical position where apparently the Ministers concerned have complained to the Prime Minister.

Mr. Whitlam has written to the Premier about the matter. What an extraordinary state of affairs! How busy those gentlemen must be with great matters of State if they can afford the time to indulge in this nonsense.

Mr. Lane: Looking for kudos.

Mr. TOOTH: That, of course, is what it is.

Let me make the position plain. In the last financial year, out of a Health Department budget approaching \$170,000,000, the Commonwealth's contribution towards Queensland's community health services centres was to the tune, in round figures, of \$1,000,000. The Commonwealth's total contribution towards this exercise was \$1,000,000. I feel bound to say that I cannot conceive of a more paltry and puerile

exercise than that mounted by A.L.P. representatives in this State regarding the acknowledgment of Commonwealth assistance.

I repeat that acknowledgment has been made on each occasion when a public statement has been issued. It is not my responsibility to do more than that, and it is beyond my power to direct sub-editors, when they are selecting from any statements the points they desire to publish, as to what they shall use and what they shall discard. If Commonwealth politicians feel that the matter is of sufficient importance to make public complaints about it—and to involve the Prime Minister himself with the Premier of the State—then let me say that clearly they have lost track of where they are going. Let me advise them of a simple little exercise: go to the editorial offices of the papers where they feel they are not receiving sufficient prominence, sufficient publicity and sufficient kudos.

Mr. N. F. JONES (Everton) (2.57 p.m.): After listening to the Minister for Health—and I suppose I should remind honourable members that he is the Minister for Health, because he spent but a few minutes dealing with his responsibility under that portfolio—I thought I may have been in another place at another time. It brings back memories of one Ian Smith, who made pledges of loyalty of the same type prior to negating the sovereignty of the Crown in Rhodesia. The Minister's speech today was very reminiscent of Ian Smith's statements prior to his taking Rhodesia out of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to be able to speak in this Address-in-Reply debate. This is an open debate and gives members of the Assembly the opportunity of covering a wide range of subjects. Because members in this Chamber are elected to a State Assembly, I intend to deal with the problems of the State. Unlike members on the other side who, led by the Premier, have become so preoccupied with attacking the Federal Labor Government that they are neglecting the people of this State, I want to raise issues that affect the people. The attitude of the Minister who has just concluded his speech is typical of that of Governments. Of the time allowed for speeches in this debate, he devoted only five minutes on one of the most important portfolios in the State.

Mr. Houston: And he knows that his portfolio is not coming up for discussion in the Estimates debate.

Mr. N. F. JONES: That is right.

Today I want to deal with the sell-out of this State by members of the Liberal-Country Party Government—or, should I say, members of the Liberal-multi-National Government. Since the last Federal election, when, I might add, the Australian people

returned the Australian Labor Party to the Federal Treasury benches, the Government of the State of Queensland—Ministers and members alike—has spent most of its time attacking the Federal Labor Government. Members opposite sit back and neglect the problems facing this State.

Prior to the recent Federal election, the Commonwealth Government placed two important questions before the people of Australia in a referendum—one on wage restraint and the other on price control. The Australian Government sought a "yes" vote to both of those questions. The State multi-National Government, led by the Premier, campaigned in a vigorous and dishonest manner against both questions. The Premier used the old tactic of claiming that permanent power would be given to Canberra. Now we find the Premier, in his usual hypocritical manner, claiming that it is up to Canberra to do something, as he puts it, across the board to halt inflation.

This modern-day Pontius Pilate sets the plot and has the power to change it, but instead washes his hands. He refuses to accept his responsibility to the people of this State—the housewife, the wage-earner, the pensioner, and the ordinary citizen. The Premier of this Government has allowed prices in this State to go unchecked; has refused to legislate to bring price control back to the State; has campaigned against allowing the Federal Government to take any action on high prices; and has refused to bring back the Fair Rents Court so that young couples, pensioners and low-income earners would be required to pay only a fair and reasonable rent.

I ask the Premier—although he is not in the Chamber—will he reintroduce price control and will he reintroduce the Fair Rents Court? If his answer is "no"—and it is quite obvious that it will be—will he apply the same sliding scale, based on capacity to pay, as he has announced that he intends to apply to his friends in the multi-national companies for royalties on the minerals they take from this State? Will he apply the same sliding scale to the housewives, the pensioners and the low-income earners so that the prices they have to pay to clothe, feed and generally look after the welfare of their families will be reasonable? No!

When housewives and pensioners, doing the family shopping, go to the supermarket each week, they find that the prices of groceries purchased the week before have risen by 10, 20 and 30 per cent or more. New labels are placed over old ones. The old label shows 60c and the new one shows 76c or more. The people who are shopping can lay the blame at the door of this State Liberal-National or multi-National Government—call it what you like.

Government members have abrogated their responsibility and have sold out the people in their own electorates—the low-income earners, the housewives and pensioners. Government members have made no approach to the Premier. I have not seen one of them stand and ask for the reintroduction of price control or of the Fair Rents Court to give the people a fair go.

Mr. Tooth interjected.

Mr. N. F. JONES: The Minister cannot talk. His portfolio is Health and he could spend only 5 minutes speaking on that subject. Because the Minister has let the health service run down, we find at our hospitals, waiting to get attended to by doctors, long queues of the people whom I am talking about. And he found the subject important enough to spend only 5 minutes on it! He should not interject. We know where he stands.

Mr. Tooth: How does price control operate in South Australia? That is my question.

Mr. N. F. JONES: There are members on the opposite side of the House, including Ministers, who condone overcharging in their own electorates. They sit back and allow housewives, pensioners and low-wage earners living in their electorates to be robbed.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Have you ever sold anything?

Mr. N. F. JONES: The honourable member who interjects is one of the guilty ones. He sits back and allows such people in his electorate to be robbed. He does not get to his feet and ask the Premier to do something about it. Because he supports big business and the supermarket chains, he allows low-wage earners to be robbed. He can share the blame, along with other members who sit on his side of the House. This National-Liberal Government condones high prices and overcharging.

This is a Government that allows deserted wives to pay rents of \$35 or more a week. It is a Government that thinks it is all right for young married couples and pensioners to pay rents of \$25 to \$40 a week for substandard dwellings with leaky roofs, front fences that are falling down, no bathrooms, and outside toilets. What about the low-income earners in this State? During this debate I have not heard one Government member make any attempt to bring about a lowering of prices and rents for low-income earners in his electorate. Always they encourage private enterprise to overcharge low-income earners in this city, in the provincial cities, and in country areas. Members of the Government sit there in silence.

This is a Government that accepts the fact that people in the low-income group live in substandard dwellings. It accepts a situation in which pensioners and young married couples on low incomes pay more

for their goods. It accepts the robbing of this State by multi-national companies. Honourable members opposite are the guilty ones who have abandoned their responsibilities to the people of Queensland. They are too busy trying to be the Federal Opposition to govern this State. What about the people of Queensland? One might well ask how many Government members have raised the matter of price control. I do not hear too many interjecting now. How many of them sought the introduction of legislation to ensure fair rents and prices? Let us hear them call out now. But there is silence. There is not a word coming from members on the opposite side, because not one has raised his voice in support of housewives, pensioners and low-wage earners.

What about all these people, especially those with large families, who have been hit by the Government's lack of concern for them? The Government has the necessary power at its disposal to legislate to save Queenslanders from blatant profiteering, yet it steadfastly refuses to use it. Why does it not act? The Government has failed to represent that section of the community most affected by overcharging. The Government accepts the robbing of the State by multi-national companies in the payment of royalties on minerals taken from the State. The Treasurer admitted on a television programme that the Labor Party was correct in its attitude to royalties, and that the State should have been receiving more for its minerals.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Name one of these robbers.

Mr. N. F. JONES: This State has been placed in a stronger negotiating position as a result of the firm stand taken by the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr. Connor), and the State Treasurer then started to stand up a bit more to the multi-national companies and demand a greater share in the State's mineral wealth by way of royalties. I believe the House should be reminded that not only the Australian Labor Party but the Grants Commission has believed for a long time that Queensland was not receiving its rightful return in royalties on the minerals taken from this State.

Honourable members should be reminded of what was stated clearly by the Grants Commission in one of its reports. The Commonwealth Treasury suggested that the value of the mining output might give some indication of capacity to raise mineral royalties. This would suggest that Queensland's capacity is above standard, and as the royalties collected per head of population in Queensland are below the average per capita for standard States, it would appear that Queensland makes a relatively low report in this field. Not the words of a Grants Commission acting under a Federal Labor

Government, but the words of a Grants Commission acting under a former Liberal-Country Party Federal Government!

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: What does the report say further on about railway revenue? Read the whole of it.

Mr. N. F. JONES: It is very good to see the honourable member for Chatsworth back in the Chamber. He is one of the great democrats within this Assembly, but I have not heard him raise his voice in support of a fairer deal for the low-income earner, the pensioner, people paying high rents or people being overcharged in his electorate.

Mr. W. D. Hewitt: I just asked you to read that document in full.

Mr. N. F. JONES: I repeat: not the words of a Grants Commission acting under a Federal Labor Government, but the words of a Grants Commission acting under a former Liberal-Country Party Government! It is certainly worth repeating.

It is quite obvious that not only members of the Opposition, members of the Australian Labor Party and the public but also the learned members of the Grants Commission are well aware of the inability of the Queensland Government to extract the correct amount of royalties to give a reasonable return to the people of Queensland.

So we find the Premier not accepting his responsibility to the people of this State and refusing to legislate to reintroduce price control and a Fair Rents Court. These responsibilities are clearly defined as State matters, and it is a long time since members of this Assembly heard a number of honourable members opposite speak on State matters. In my time in this Assembly, I think one could count on the fingers of one hand the number of times that any honourable member opposite has spoken on State matters.

The people of this State will be the judges at the next State election, and they are not the fools that the Government appears to take them for. Honourable members opposite are silent now. At the next election the electors will want a Government that will play its correct role and pay attention to State matters.

One of the many examples of the Government's neglect of the low-income earners, members of large families and aged persons is the growing sector of the community requiring cheap rental accommodation, and I am pleased that the Minister for Works and Housing is in the Chamber.

As I have said in earlier debates in this Chamber, one of the first steps taken by a Country-Liberal Government in this State was to remove the Fair Rents Court, thus allowing the private sector to charge unreasonable and unfair rents. Its second step was to cut down the number of rental homes being made available by the Government. It created a situation in Queensland

in which people who require cheap rental homes are forced to pay high rents for a long period of their life, with no real opportunity to gain cheap rental accommodation. The Government claims to be interested in home-ownership; but because of its action in allowing persons to pay high rents for substandard dwellings for a long period, it reduces any chance those persons have of ever saving enough money to purchase a dwelling of their own—not by accident, but by design.

At this stage, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suggest that we should look at some of the figures given to me by the Minister for Works and Housing in answer to questions. They show clearly that the Government and honourable members opposite have failed to represent the large number of people who live within their electorates and who require State rental accommodation. Applications held by the Queensland Housing Commission at 30 June totalled 6,357, being made up of 2,753 without priority and 3,604 with priority. In the last five years the commission has constructed 2,278 dwellings in the city and near-city areas for rental purposes. At this rate of progress, if the commission accepts no further applications for approximately 10 years—three elections—it would just meet the requirements of 4,000-odd applicants already seeking houses. What about those persons in the electorate of every honourable member who are lodging applications for State rental accommodation? They will have to wait 10 years at the rate of progress this Government is making.

If each of the 6,357 applications on hand means an average of three persons requiring accommodation—no doubt the average would be higher, but I will be conservative and say three—over 19,000 people are awaiting State rental accommodation. I do not think I have to say that this Government is completely unconcerned; the figures speak for themselves. At least 19,000 people are awaiting State rental accommodation! If we took all the electors out of three Country Party electorates held by the Government, they would equal the number of people requiring accommodation.

A large number of people are aware of the position. They realise that, because this Government has so many applications on hand, many of them will never be able to obtain State rental accommodation. They are aware of the Government's lack of ability to provide the accommodation required in the metropolitan area and in depressed country areas. It could reasonably be said that, if all the people requiring State rental accommodation lodged applications, the figure of 19,000 would swell to 21,000 or more. I am being very conservative when I say 21,000; in all probability the figure would be in the vicinity of 25,000.

The position of aged persons requiring units shows the same heartless attitude and lack of concern. To 30 June 1974 the

commission had on hand 1,508 applications, including 1,197 from single persons and 311 from married couples. That means that 1,819 aged persons are awaiting accommodation. The same situation prevails in respect of people applying for aged persons' homes.

Mr. Hodges: Why would that be?

Mr. N. F. JONES: It is quite obvious that they know that the Minister is not meeting the present requirements. Many of them are reluctant to put in applications and be questioned; they know there would be no chance of their ever gaining rental accommodation. I did not hear the Minister interjecting before when I was quoting his figures. Again these are his figures. The commission has constructed 150 units in Brisbane and near-Brisbane areas. Great! I should like to know what the near-Brisbane areas are. I bet that more units are constructed outside the metropolitan area than in it.

Mr. Hodges: We look after the whole of Queensland, not just Brisbane.

Mr. N. F. JONES: That is one statement the Minister will hang on for a while.

People in Brisbane will die of old age before units become available for them. That is the situation that the Minister and honourable members on that side have allowed to develop. I have not heard many of them raising their voices to help these people. All the time I have been in Parliament, the only ones who have been concerned and the only ones who have been making statements and making requests to the Minister about providing more accommodation have been the members of the A.L.P. on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. Hodges: We are waiting for the Federal Government to renew the agreement, which it has not done.

Mr. N. F. JONES: The Minister knows that that is not right. The figures I have referred to include applicants with priority and applicants without priority. It is an interesting exercise to review a number of cases. Let us look at some that do not have any priority according to the formula applied by this Government.

Case No. 1 is that of a family who do not have any of the priorities set by the Government and the priorities have been set only because the Government cannot meet the demand for State rental accommodation. It hopes to protect itself by applying the priority system. The family comprise a wife, who was deserted seven years ago, and nine children. She had 12 children, but three are now married and no longer live at home. The remaining nine still live with her. Under this Government's policy she is paying a rental of—wait for it—\$64 a fortnight!

Mr. Hodges: In your electorate?

Mr. N. F. JONES: I'm afraid she isn't. The Government has created a situation under which a landlord is able to charge that family a rental of \$32 a week. Their financial burden is not recognised, so what chance do they have of obtaining State rental accommodation? None whatever! Perhaps they would stand a chance if the landlord were to give them notice to quit or take out a court order against them. Perhaps then if a house were to become available they could be slipped into it.

I am in no way criticising the officers of the Housing Commission—they do their best with the facilities that are available to them—but I am laying the blame fairly and squarely at the feet of the Minister and the Government.

Case No. 2 is that of a family of nine who live with a relative in a Housing Commission home. Owing to overcrowding they applied for alternative accommodation. Their first application was lodged 10 years ago! I repeat 10 years ago! It's unbelievable.

Mr. Chinchin: How many children?

Mr. N. F. JONES: There are nine people in the dwelling.

Mr. Chinchin: With relatives?

Mr. N. F. JONES: No, the one family. Three years ago they lodged a second application. Early this month the Housing Commission wrote that it had other applications of higher priority and could not effect a transfer for them at this time.

Mr. Hughes: They might be in a big five-bedroom house, or something like that, and they might be able to afford to be in that type of accommodation.

Mr. N. F. JONES: They are in a Housing Commission home, and they applied for a transfer because they were living in overcrowded conditions. They were already overcrowded 10 years ago, and now there are nine persons living in the dwelling. As I say, recently the Housing Commission wrote and said that they could not allocate them another house because other applicants had higher priority. If there are other applicants with higher priority they must be much worse off than the cases that I am bringing forward today, and if that is so, the availability of State rental accommodation is a lot worse than the figures show.

I could go on and cite many more cases. I am sure other Opposition members know of similar cases in their electorates, and I am certain that Government members, too, would refer to similar cases in their electorates if they were honest.

To aggravate the problem, only a few houses are constructed by the Housing Commission on the north side of the Brisbane River. My reason for speaking about the north side is obvious; it contains the area that I represent. Of 2,278 houses constructed in Brisbane by the Housing Commission, only

282 were built on the north side. This means that the family to whom I referred—the family who first lodged an application 10 years ago and include children who have attended school on the north side for six or seven years—will have to wait until the older children either marry or leave home to obtain some relief from the overcrowded conditions in which they are presently forced to live.

To illustrate the type of problem that confronts us I shall quote a question that I asked the Premier this morning and his answer. I asked—

“(1) In relation to proposed or past construction by his Government of freeways, pre-schools, schools or other projects, how many houses, flats or units have been purchased by the Government?

(2) How many in the above categories, for each of the years 1969 to 1973 and for 1974 to date, have been (a) resold, (b) removed, (c) demolished, (d) relet and (e) unoccupied?”

In reply, the Premier said that the information sought would cost too much to collate and therefore he did not think he would ask his departmental officers to get it.

It should be clear to all honourable members that the real reason for not making the figures available is that in the past five years the Government constructed, within the metropolitan area, 2,278 houses for rental purposes. In view of the Premier's reluctance to make those figures available it would be reasonable to assume that in the past five years the Government has destroyed more than half the number of houses it has built for rental purposes. In other words, the Government has destroyed at least 1,000 houses, which means that its rental-construction programme is ineffectual. It is merely replacing the houses it destroys to make way for projects. We have to take into consideration also the number of houses knocked down to make way for the construction of multi-rise buildings by private enterprise. What happens to the people who occupied the 10 or 12 houses that were on each of those sites? What is the Government doing to show that it is really concerned with rental-housing problems in Queensland? What about you, Mr. Minister, suggesting that maybe they should write into their—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Lickiss): Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. N. F. JONES: Through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask the Minister to suggest to some of the private companies that they should write into their over-all costs the cost of removing or replacing the houses they tear down so that additional strain is not imposed on the Queensland Housing Commission by more people trying to get State rental accommodation and thus aggravating the position.

The Premier would not answer my question because he knows that, if he did, people would be able to offset the number of houses destroyed against the number constructed. When the number of houses built by the Government is compared with the number built by the private sector, the Government's neglect in this sphere becomes clear.

Let me cite figures compiled by the Commonwealth Statistician. In 1968-69 the private sector completed 12,548 houses in Queensland. In 1972-73 it completed 18,968. In 1972-73, the private sector constructed 6,000 more houses than it did in 1968-69. The Government claims that it is responsible and wants to provide State rental houses for people on low wages, yet in 1968-69 it constructed 1,720 rental homes and in 1972-73 1,728 rental homes—an increase of only eight. In 1968-69, the private sector and the Government combined constructed 14,268 houses. In 1972-73 the total number of houses constructed by the private sector and the Government was 20,696. The Government is not keeping pace with the number of applications it receives. It is not even trying to meet the needs of people on low incomes.

In view of the 6,000 applications on hand, the slight increase in the number of houses held by the Commission, and the increase in population in the State over the period, clearly the Government is not keeping pace with the demand. For that matter, its efforts are nothing like what they were a few years ago. It is not even maintaining its rate of activity (or inactivity) of a few years ago. The longer the Government remains in power the worse the housing shortage will become and the harder it will be for people on low incomes to get State rental accommodation.

We could look at the costs and compare them. However, as time is moving on, I want to deal with another subject today, and it is in the portfolio of the same Minister. It is unfortunate that the Minister for Works and Housing is also the Minister in charge of Police.

Dr. Scott-Young interjected.

Mr. N. F. JONES: That is one of the biggest landlords in the North speaking.

I suppose I could ask whether it is unfortunate for the Minister, unfortunate for the people of this State, or unfortunate for the Police Force. In this State we have had an increase in the crime rate. We have witnessed the police union criticising the Minister. We have had the union members carrying votes of no confidence in the Minister, with a record number of resignations from the Police Force. We have had the Police Commissioner making changes for the sake of change. We have had more changes of names in various sections of the Police Force than any 10 film stars in Hollywood.

We nearly destroyed one of the most effective parts of the Police Force—the juvenile aid section. We have had the suggestion of policemen riding pushbikes. The Minister will remember that one! We have had foot patrols removed and replaced by policemen in fast-moving motor cars. We have had a large number of policewomen inducted into the Force and pushed into the role of traffic wardens. We have had allegations against members of the Police Force.

We have had promises of investigations, but never any results. There was the Grange incident. The honourable member for Windsor has asked questions and I have asked questions. The investigation continues, but there are still no answers. I can well recall the Minister calling for a Royal Commission into the Whisky Au-Go-Go affair. He is very silent now. We have had denials from the Minister that the Police Department had been warned that this tragedy was impending. The Minister now claims that there is no need for a Royal Commission.

I could go on for hours listing details of mis-statements, changes and votes of no confidence, but I believe that the public and the policemen and policewomen want some positive action by this Minister or by the Government. Firstly, I believe there is a need to restore public confidence in the Police Force. The Government should appoint a separate Minister for Police. A Royal Commission should be appointed to investigate the role of the Police Force in this State. Police officers and policewomen should be interviewed and should be allowed to give evidence to such a commission without fear of any reprimand by members of the department or by the Government. Following the commission's investigation the Police Force should be completely restructured.

At the moment, too much emphasis is put on the increased crime clear-up rate. The Minister tends to overstress the importance of the figure, because every time a few more crimes are committed he is afraid of the political criticism that he will receive. More emphasis should be put on the prevention of crime.

During my recent visit to London I was fortunate enough to be able to discuss some of the problems of the Police Force in England. Several persons in authority assured me that they could not emphasise enough that one of the greatest deterrents to crime is the sight of the police uniform. Most of the experts believe that there should be more and more foot patrols. The policeman should be seen to be a part of the community instead of being in a fast-moving car that has a name on the back and insignia on the side. There should be a reassessment and re-establishment of suburban police stations. If the capital cost involved is too great, surely the Government should

be able to rent premises to set up small law-enforcement offices throughout the urban areas in every provincial city where there is a need for such establishments.

An example of the success of the policeman on the beat is shown clearly in a 1972 report that sets out the progress made in Washington D.C. in the war on law-breakers. That report sets an example, and perhaps a blueprint, for other crime-ridden cities. A U.S.A. world report dated 10 April 1972 stated that three years ago Washington D.C. was known as the crime capital of the country. Serious crimes had multiplied nearly six times in 11 years. In robberies, burglaries, murders and aggravated assaults the district of Columbia ranked among the top three cities of comparable size—with populations of 500,000 to 1,000,000—across the nation.

The President of the U.S.A. in 1969 described the crime rate as being of crisis proportions and demanded action in what he called a disgraceful situation. The words of the President could be applied to Queensland. We had a committee set up in this State to inquire into crime and punishment and, as I said of the move then, it appeared to me to be starting at the wrong end of the spectrum by accepting that crime was here to stay. Instead, the committee should have been set up to help the Police Force by making recommendations to make it more effective. We do know that the committee recommended an increase in numbers in the Police Force.

Let me return to the report I referred to a few moments ago. Following the statement by the President, action was taken and law investigations were given top priority. The Police Force was enlarged; additional prosecutors were employed and crime began to decline. The downturn came in 1969 and continued through the first few months of 1972, the year of the U.S. committee's report. F.B.I. crime-index reports show that Washington in 1971 had 13.3 per cent fewer serious crimes than in 1970 and 18.5 per cent fewer than in 1969. In February crime was at the lowest daily average in five years.

The effective action taken in Washington included strengthening the Police Force from 3,100 men to an authorised size of 5,100, with supplementary units such as the U.S. Park Police, and Washington is now believed to have more policemen per resident than any other city in the country.

Last week, and again this morning, I asked the Minister a question relative to the new police regions being set up. This morning he replied that it had not been decided how many men should be deployed in some of the new regions. Surely some research must have been done.

(Time expired.)

Mr. BIRD (Burdekin) (3.37 p.m.): I am pleased to have this opportunity to support the honourable member for Merthyr and

the honourable member for Balonne, who so ably moved and seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech of His Excellency, Sir Colin Hannah, the Governor of this wonderful State of Queensland. It was obvious from the forceful manner in which those two honourable members spoke that they have the interests of their constituents and the other people of Queensland at heart, and can therefore be assured of their seats in this House for many years to come.

I join with many honourable members on this side of the House in expressing the continued loyalty of myself and the residents of my electorate to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

I also take the opportunity to extend my thanks to His Excellency Sir Colin Hannah for the interest he has shown in the welfare of the people of Queensland during the past year. I have heard nothing but the greatest admiration expressed of him for the concern he showed for their well-being during the time of their struggles and duress following the disastrous floods in Brisbane as well as northern and western Queensland earlier this year. May he long be spared to continue his good work as Governor of the State of Queensland.

I am also pleased to have this opportunity to raise a few of the matters that are exercising the minds of my constituents and, indeed, all people of the State of Queensland at this time. I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to raise these matters at this stage. The past 20 months have seen tremendous changes in the way of life of our fellow Australians. They are changes that have been wrought by the policies of the present Federal Government since it took over the Treasury benches in Canberra.

For the first time in generations, it has brought fear into the hearts of the Australian people. It is fear that must be shared by all of us who are concerned for the future of this country; fear brought about by the continuing indecision of those in power in Canberra; fear for the future of members of our work-force, primary producers and, indeed, leaders of all our industries both primary and secondary; fear not only for our own future—

Mr. Aikens: The Whitlam Government treats primary producers like blackfellows' dogs.

Mr. BIRD: Yes. It has shown that by the raw deals it has handed out to primary producers since it became the Government.

It is fear not only for our own future but also for the future of our children and our children's children. I share this fear for the future of this country for it is obvious that those in government in Canberra are leading Australia along the same path as that trodden by other nations under so-called socialist regimes.

Many settlers who migrated to Australia from European countries and have revisited the lands of their birth in recent years have returned filled with dismay at the changes that have been wrought. They tell how in the days of their youth their homelands were rich in primary production. They tell how Governments elected since they departed from those lands for this country failed to appreciate the value of primary production to the wealth and stability of their homelands. They tell how the incomes of primary producers were reduced to subsistence level and even lower. They tell how the younger generation, born to the land, found that they were unable to eke out a living from primary production, and were forced to seek employment in the more lucrative and easier positions offering in the major cities. They tell how the older generation left behind on the land could no longer afford to keep it productive, and of how those lands fell into disuse. They tell of how Governments realised too late the true value of primary industries not only to the people who must be fed but also to the economy of their nations.

Mr. Aikens: They turned thriving country into a wilderness.

Mr. BIRD: That is the message that I am trying to get across.

They tell how, in an endeavour to rebuild the primary industries that they foolishly allowed to collapse, those same Governments are now offering incentives to persons willing to return to the land. They tell also of the difficulties that those same Governments are experiencing now in finding sufficient men and women prepared to leave the good, easy life in the cities for uncertain futures and hard work on the land.

Mr. Wright: We have had this trouble in Queensland for 20 years.

Mr. BIRD: I shall deal with that comment as I proceed.

I trust that every member of this House will see the reasons for my fear, for is not the present Federal Government making the same gross errors that were made by the countries of which I have been speaking? Is not this Federal Government in Canberra making every attempt to bring the primary producers of Australia to their knees, and to force them out of their industry? Could the Government be doing this because it is so naive as to believe, as some Opposition members in this House believe and have so stated, that all primary producers, whether they are big or small, receive huge incomes year in and year out and amass tremendous fortunes during their lifetimes? How many times have we heard this very suggestion coming from the Opposition benches in this House?

Are Opposition members not aware that the average primary producer in this country makes no more than a reasonable living at times when all things are in his favour? Are they not aware that he has to contend with

droughts, floods and bushfires, to say nothing of low prices even when seasons favour him? Are they not aware that taxation takes the cream off the primary producer's cake when good fortune does smile on him and allows him to make more than a small profit?

Mr. Aikens: Labor Investments Pty. Ltd. is not putting one cent into the country; all its money is going into city commercial enterprises.

Mr. BIRD: That is absolutely correct. I hope to enlarge on what the honourable member for Townsville South says as I proceed.

It is apparent from remarks made by Opposition members in this House, and members of the Federal Government, who favour the socialist doctrine, that they believe all primary producers are wealthy capitalists and that their income must be reduced to subsistence level. A perusal in "Hansard" of speeches made in this House by Opposition members will prove the correctness of that statement, as will a study of Federal "Hansard" and the actions of the Whitlam Government since it came to power in 1972.

It is well known that those who subscribe to the socialist doctrine also believe that all production, both primary and secondary, must be controlled entirely by the Government. They believe that production must be controlled at all levels by the Government so that the people of the nation share the profits—if there are any profits! Those who hold that belief must be naive, for history has recorded what has actually happened every time an attempt has been made to practise this doctrine. History, even in this young nation, proves that if individual initiative is destroyed and the management of industry is placed in the hands of departmental heads, production wanes and dies.

Proof of this can readily be seen in the fate suffered by the many and varied industries that earlier socialist Labor Governments in Australia fostered. I wonder how many of the members in the House today remember, or have taken the time to study, the failure of earlier attempts at nationalisation or socialisation of industries in this country. I wonder how many are aware of the fate of State-owned cattle stations, butcher shops, coal mines and smelters, sorghum production, fishing ventures, produce agencies, canneries, cold stores, hotels, timber and joinery works, shipbuilding yards, sawmills, trawlers and fish supplies, and sand, lime and brick-works. One could go on and on mentioning the losses that these ventures suffered.

Mr. Wright interjected.

Mr. BIRD: I remember the honourable member for Rockhampton rising in his place in this Chamber and saying that the only thing wrong was that Labor has introduced these things at the wrong time. I wonder how many members are aware of the losses sustained (in spite of attempts to cover up)

through the mismanagement and the misappropriation of funds by the managers in charge of these ventures.

Mr. Aikens: Will you tell us how many millions of dollars the Labor Government sank into Port Alma? Millions and millions of dollars went down the drain. Ask Jim Burrows about it!

Mr. BIRD: Unfortunately, I have not time to tell the House of the huge losses sustained in all the State enterprises, but I have figures relating to a few of them. If anyone is sufficiently interested, he can obtain the figures without very much difficulty.

For instance, I wonder how many people know that the State-owned cattle stations paid no taxes, no rates to the local authorities whose roads they used, and no special taxes such as those imposed to fight the dingo menace. They were free of all those. When socialist Labor Governments purchased these cattle stations, often at prices far higher than the ruling market price, they made many errors. We remember, of course, Mr. Speaker, the stories of how a person went along to his local Labor member and said, "Look, I will bet you £500 that I couldn't get £10,000 for my property." He lost his bet and had to pay £500, but he received the £10,000 that he asked for his property, which was a sorely inflated price.

Let us look at what happened when these properties were purchased. Labor Governments failed to take into account seasonal variations and hazards. They failed to appreciate the instability of market prices and the wide variations in those prices. They purchased stations on a book muster rather than an actual muster. They believed that a grazing industry spread over 30,000 square miles could be operated by Government clerks based in Brisbane. It is no wonder that losses in that industry alone amounted to well over £2,000,000—an amount which, taking into account the rate of inflation today, would represent a tremendous fortune. That was on one venture only.

Mr. Aikens: Will you tell us how much A.L.P. politicians received in graft from the S.P. shops?

Mr. BIRD: That will never be known. It will never be known how much A.L.P. politicians received in graft from these State-owned enterprises that were set up. Add to this the loss of taxes that would have been paid, amounting to £1,000,000 a year, and one begins to get some appreciation of the costs of these ventures.

I could go on for hours telling the House of the huge losses suffered by many other socialistic ventures in the past. However, it must suffice now to end with the losses on the Chillagoe-Mungana smelter and ore treatment works, which amounted to more than £1,500,000. I ask honourable members not to forget that that was £1,500,000 in

the days when £1 was really worth something. I advise disbelievers that the Report of the Royal Commission on Mungana and Chillagoe Mines, etc., 1930 may be found in the Parliamentary Papers, Session 1930, Volume 1. It is all there for those who are sufficiently interested to want to learn about it.

May I ask those who still believe that socialistic ventures will work, when the last balance sheet for Bourke's store in Melbourne was printed and what the profits and losses have been since the trade unions took over?

Mr. Wright: Are you opposed to the S.G.I.O. and T.A.A.?

Mr. BIRD: I am certainly very much in favour of private enterprise in direct competition with any organisations that may be State owned.

Mr. Wright: So you do oppose the S.G.I.O.?

Mr. BIRD: It has to be well and truly a profit-making concern before it could be made to work under Government control. I think we would all appreciate that.

Let us look at the railways throughout the nation. Nobody could honestly say that they are being run as efficiently as they could be. There is always the possibility that they could be better run under private enterprise.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. BIRD: Listen to the socialists on the other side.

My sentiments and the sentiments of the majority of deep-thinking Australians on this subject are echoed in an editorial which appeared in the "Bowen Independent" on 16 May 1974, just before the last Federal election. That newspaper is circulated in an area which I would suggest has seen more Government-run enterprises in past years than any other part of the State. That editorial stated—

"Labor's policies cannot by any stretch of the imagination be said to have fostered the farming and grazing industries, while its minerals policies seem based on the philosophy that it's better to leave them in the ground than have those greedy foreigners make a profit on them. Certainly there is a need to see that Australia gets a fair return for its minerals, but there's no sense in killing the goose that lays the golden egg. Even under present arrangements there are immense benefits. Where would Collinsville be today if the overseas capitalists had not taken over the State Mine after its closure in 1960? Would we have a port at Bowen if the same group had not established an export coal trade? Would we have a coke works if foreign capital had not established Mount Isa? Could local capital have developed Bowen Consolidated Mine? How

many Bowenites depend on British-owned Borthwicks meatworks for a crust? Where would Bowen's railwaymen be without the work created for their service by Mount Isa? Certainly not in Bowen! What would Townsville be without the products of Mount Isa? We could go on, but these examples alone must show that foreign investment is necessary to Australia, but with Australia getting a fair return for providing the basic product."

For those who would still say that we do not need foreign capital, and must not have it, and who would have gone along with their leaders in Canberra, I would say that the day of reckoning has come. The Federal Government has made a complete about-turn in respect of the percentage of all foreign capital coming into this country that it insisted should be lodged as security without bearing any interest. It started off at 33½ per cent; it came down to 25 per cent; when it was realised that the inflow of foreign capital essential for the development of Australia had completely stopped, it was reduced to 5 per cent. On the Government's present thinking probably it will be offering 5 per cent back to try to restore the flow of capital into this country.

I should like to mention the shocking deal that has been handed out to the river trusts throughout this State by the Federal Government, and the lack of response from that Government to the pleas from the river trusts for financial assistance. I refer in particular to my own Burdekin River Improvement Trust, and also one that is near and dear to my heart, the Haughton River Improvement Trust. With the floods earlier this year considerable damage was done to the banks of the Burdekin River. The estimated cost to repair that damage is \$529,303. The work involves two stages. The total cost of stage 1 is \$274,625, and of that amount the sum of \$176,565 has been made available by way of a grant from the Commonwealth and State Governments. I might say that this figure was arrived at only after I had visited Brisbane and discussed with the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and the Co-ordinator-General's Department the urgent need to provide to the Burdekin River Improvement Trust greater financial assistance than had been agreed to originally. I pointed out that it was beyond the capabilities of the trust to raise the necessary finance to carry out the work.

The disappointing aspect is that somewhere along the line the basis for providing financial assistance was altered. In the event of flood damage, the previous Federal Government contributed one-third of the finance required to repair the damage, the State Government contributed one-third and the particular river improvement trust contributed the remaining one-third. However, because most of the flood damage that occurred this year in Brisbane was done to existing works undertaken either by the

Brisbane City Council or by the authority responsible for the banks of the Brisbane River, the basis of supplying finance was altered to provide that the Commonwealth and State Governments jointly would meet the cost of repairs to what I will term the existing assets of a river trust. Obviously Brisbane came out of it to the good—and good luck to Brisbane.

However, this alteration to the basis of providing finance reacted to the detriment of the Burdekin River Improvement Trust and the Haughton River Improvement Trust, because only a small portion of the damage to the river-banks under their control was done to the existing assets of the trusts.

Originally the grant from the Commonwealth and State Governments for stage 1 totalled \$120,000 but, after I argued the case, the figure was reviewed and increased to \$176,565.

Stage 2 consists mainly of repair work to what is not considered to be trust assets and its cost amounts to \$254,678. To date the grant has been nil.

After my discussions with the Co-ordinator-General's Department it was agreed that departmental officers would investigate the damage that had been done to the river-banks and also the peculiar manner in which the flow of water in the Burdekin River changed dramatically during the recent flood and thereby caused extensive damage.

After I had visited Brisbane and was given wide publicity in my fight on behalf of the Burdekin River Improvement Trust, Dr. Patterson, grandstander that he is, came into the matter and said, "We will review this matter to determine whether or not we can make more finance available." After review the initial grant to stage 1 of \$120,000 was increased, as I say, to \$176,565. No financial assistance whatsoever has been forthcoming from the Federal Government for stage II, amounting to \$254,678. This means that, unless it gets further financial assistance, the Burdekin River Improvement Trust will have to meet \$352,738 of the estimated total cost of \$529,303.

The Haughton River Improvement Trust has been offered an infinitesimal amount towards the estimated cost of repairing damage to river banks on the Haughton River. The estimate is \$72,500; the amount of financial assistance offered is \$1,875. The trust will have to raise \$70,625 to effect repairs. I have referred to only two river trusts in Queensland. I wonder how many more have received the same shoddy deal from the Federal Government.

It is all very well to say that only the works carried out by the river improvements trusts will be repaired. Surely to goodness we are entitled to consider all the river banks as assets. If a river bank breaks somewhere, particularly in the delta area, tremendous losses will be suffered. We should remember the tremendous sum that the

Federal Government gets year after year from the Burdekin district by way of taxes and so on. Yet when the trusts ask for money to safeguard assets, they are virtually ignored.

Where is Dr. Patterson in our hour of need? The river trusts have tried to get some finality from him. It must be appreciated that they cannot effect repairs to river banks at any time of the year. They have learnt that if work is not completed by the end of September or the middle of October it might as well not be done. If improvements are not given an opportunity to consolidate before the next big flood, even worse damage may occur. Despite their request to Dr. Patterson—and they have been chasing him continually to find what financial assistance is to be given—the trusts are unable to get satisfaction.

I come now to another matter concerning the people of Queensland and, I suppose, people throughout Australia, particularly married women. I refer to the trend in the Federal Government to force married woman into the work-force. No-one can say that such a practice is not being adopted. It becomes more obvious every day. The Federal Government has offered to train women who wish to go back to work. It is shocking that Australian married women should be pressed into employment merely to satisfy a Federal Government which embraces a different system from that with which we have been acquainted over the years—a way of life that we have enjoyed over the years. What will happen to the family unit if all women are forced to seek employment merely because the Federal Government feels that, to survive, both partners in a family must go to work?

What will happen to the children when both parents are forced to work? They will be left to their own devices. School-children will return home to empty homes. Those a little younger are to be left in kindergartens and all sorts of other places until their parents finish work, collect them, and take them home. Surely to goodness this is not what the children want and not what the parents want. But this is a situation into which they are being forced.

It is all very well to say, "Let's find alternative care for the children." This is not what we want. We want the children to be with their parents. We want them at least to be with their mothers. We want them to be able to come home and find their mothers ready to look after them, feed them and care for them.

Mr. Wright: You are blaming the Federal Government for this, are you?

Mr. BIRD: Let's face it. Let's be honest about it. Isn't the Federal Government forcing them into it? Isn't it telling the people of Australia that it will train married women to go back into the work-force? Of

course it is. It does not stop at that. We hear the wife of the Prime Minister, Margaret Whitlam, suggesting a national dress for women. What is the Federal Government trying to do? Is it trying to bring the women of this country down to the same level as the coolies of China and the other Communist countries throughout Asia? Of course it is! This is what it wants for the women of this country. It is not good enough.

Let us stop now and return to some reason. Let us put the mothers back into their homes, where they belong. Allow them to look after the children. If the money received for them is not enough, let the Federal Government increase the child endowment. How long is it since the child endowment was increased? Let the Federal Government increase the child endowment so that Mum can stay at home. I certainly do not want to see the women of this country living like peasants. The next thing we know, they will be out building roads, digging ditches and doing the types of tasks we see performed by women in Asian countries. If that is what the Labor Government wants, then let it take all the responsibility for it.

I now turn to the present policies of the Federal Government and the results of those policies. Let us look at what is happening to the work-force. Honourable members opposite cannot deny that unemployment is rising. Even their own Prime Minister has admitted that, as a result of the reduction of tariffs on imported goods, our industries and the employees in those industries will be affected. The Federal Labor Government lifted tariffs so that cheap goods could flow into the country. It was said that the people of Australia would benefit from cheaper goods. How many people have been able to buy products at greatly reduced prices?

Mr. Wright: Whose fault is that?

Mr. BIRD: If it allowed goods in at cheaper prices, what has happened? Why is the saving not flowing on to the consumer?

Mr. Wright: Because the importers and retailers have not passed the savings on, and you know it. You back them to the hilt.

Mr. BIRD: I back nobody to the hilt who would profit at the expense of the people of this country.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Rockhampton and the honourable member for Toowoomba North will cease interjecting. The honourable member for Toowoomba North is not in his usual place in the Chamber.

Mr. BIRD: The Federal Government has found that the reduced tariffs are not working and that the people are not benefiting. It knows, of course, that as a result of its

policies people are being thrown out of work. Although unemployment has only just started, it is snowballing. Recently on television even the Prime Minister admitted that things will get worse before they get better. The Federal Government can see that its policies have not worked. That being so, why does it not show a little strength, admit that its policy is not working and reverse the decision.

Let us look at a few of the other goods being imported. Take bananas. I do not hear anything from the member for Mourilyan. He is not here; but he is never in the House, anyway.

Mr. Jensen: That's not a true statement.

Mr. BIRD: Where is he? We never see him. That member, who represents the banana-growers in the Tully area, has not been heard to condemn the importation of cheap bananas from overseas. Not one voice of protest has been raised by Labor members about the fact that overseas vegetables grown in human excreta are being brought in here. The people of Australia are expected to eat them. Of course, they are coming from an overseas country with low-cost labour.

Somebody is getting the rake-off. When I think of the man who backed the Federal Government when it came to power in 1972, I often wonder where the rake-off starts. He is the head of a big retail store in Australia who said, "I am backing the A.L.P." We know the profits that he can expect to get out of this. I wonder who is making the profits and where they are going as well as who set this up to make sure that the profits went in that direction. I would say there would be some lovely rake-offs.

Mr. Bromley: Who is it?

Mr. BIRD: The gentleman they spoke of as possibly the next Governor-General of Australia.

Mr. Armstrong interjected.

Mr. BIRD: As the honourable member said, it was Mr. Myer of Myer Stores. Don't tell me he is not getting a rake-off or that a rake-off is not coming back to the A.L.P. It must be.

I congratulate the Premier on his determination to prevent the Federal Government from further accelerating the rate of inflation in this State. We remember both the Prime Minister and the Treasurer saying to the States, "You are not getting any more money. If you want more money to run your States, impose a consumer tax and a few other taxes." It must be remembered that some of the other Premiers were quite happy to go along with that suggestion. In fact, I think one or two States have imposed consumer taxes. But the Queensland Premier said to the Federal Government, "No. You

are getting more from taxation." Within a few months, taxation will be double what it was when the A.L.P. came into power.

Mr. Alison: It doubled in 12 months.

Mr. BIRD: As the honourable member for Maryborough said, the take from taxation doubled in 12 months. The Prime Minister said, "If you want some more money, you raise it by imposing a consumer tax or some other form of taxation." If it had not been for the Queensland Premier and his determination, we would have had that tax imposed on us. He absolutely and flatly refused to do this, and I am sure that the people of Queensland appreciate his refusal as much as they appreciate his fortitude in standing up to the socialists in Canberra and their other demands.

I am very pleased that the Greenvale nickel project has been established in North Queensland. This means a great deal to North Queenslanders. I have visited the mine site on three occasions and watched with great interest the progress that has taken place. I have seen the attractive homes for mine employees and the other wonderful amenities provided at the companies' expense. I regret that this project is not wholly within my electorate. Unfortunately, only the railway line passes through my area. The mine site is on the other side of the Burdekin River and the nickel treatment works are at Yabulu, north of Townsville. I think they are in the electorate of the honourable member for Townsville.

I would certainly welcome the establishment of further projects of this type in Queensland, particularly North Queensland, by anybody with the fortitude and initiative to undertake such development. I have spoken to the workers at Greenvale. They are absolutely delighted with their living and working conditions. I hope that the project will extend well beyond the anticipated 20 years.

I was most surprised to hear the honourable member for Everton speaking about the high rents that elderly people and others are expected to pay. I share his concern, and there is nothing that I should like to see more than the provision of low-cost accommodation for all. I was amazed, however, that during his speech he did not refer to the high interest rates that have been forced upon young people throughout Australia who want to buy homes.

Mr. Newton: By your Government.

Mr. BIRD: The Opposition's shadow Minister for Works and Housing is so naive that he believes that high interest rates have been forced upon the people of Queensland by the State Government. How foolish can one get!

Mr. WRIGHT: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is telling an untruth, because it was this Government that removed

control over the maximum rate of interest that could be charged.

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

Mr. BIRD: I am amazed that the honourable member for Rockhampton could have that belief. Let him apply for a loan for any purpose, and he will find out the rate of interest that he would have to pay at the present time. And who is responsible for this situation? Only the Federal Government. If honourable members opposite have convinced themselves that the State Government is responsible for high interest rates, they have not convinced the people of Queensland. At the next Federal election, the people will show what they think.

(Time expired.)

Mr. YEWDAL (Rockhampton North) (4.17 p.m.): At the outset, I should like to make some comments on some of the rather strange statements that were made by the honourable member for Burdekin. Early in his contribution, he spoke about the current economic situation in Australia and said that the Federal Government was responsible for a number of problems in the community. He went on to speak about the man on the land. If he had taken the trouble to refer to the relevant figures, he would have seen just how many people walked off small farms in the 17 years of administration of the coalition Government in Queensland and the 22 years of government by its colleagues at the Federal level. Those figures are irrefutable, and the honourable member could ascertain them if he cared to do a little research.

He made another statement a little later concerning the transport system in Queensland, and he made it clear that in his opinion it was not operating efficiently. His criticism was a definite reflection on the management of the railways in all parts of Queensland, including his electorate. I suggest that is should be recorded that the honourable member for Burdekin made such a comment.

The most ridiculous suggestion he made today was that married women should be removed from industry. Quite frankly, if his wishes were followed, this country would come to a standstill. In the same 17 years of coalition Government in this State and the 22 years of coalition Government in the Federal sphere a situation arose that made it essential for married women to enter the work-force in order to provide a reasonable living for their families. Women returned to work to pay the high rents demanded, and meet the increased cost of education, clothing for their children and so on. Why have families been subjected to such a high cost structure? It is a result of the free-enterprise system that the State and Federal coalition Governments fostered for so many years.

I believe that much of the contribution of the honourable member for Burdekin was poppycock. He spent two or three minutes of his speech on some difficulty in the river system in the North, and he later agreed with some of the points raised by the honourable member for Everton. Apart from that, all that he did was continue to empty big buckets.

During the course of the past twenty months or so, one could quite easily say that in retrospect we have seen one of the most destructive attempts to discredit a Federal Government ever imposed upon the community of Queensland. We have in that period of time seen our Premier crusading all over the State in what we all are now being told is a ready-to-trade aeroplane, and spending most of his time criticising the Federal Government for not doing things that his Government and their Federal counterparts have not attempted in the last couple of decades.

The Premier and most of his Ministers have very generously supplied themselves with staff and facilities and have utilised them to the limit in an attempt to create the impression that the Federal Government is to blame for a host of inherited ills within our society.

We have seen what I think can only be described as a revolutionary change by the Australian Government in the field of education, whereby it has more than doubled the allocation of funds for education in this country. It has abolished fees for colleges of advanced education and universities. Yet the Premier and his colleagues will not give any credit to a Government that has for the first time taken a great step forward in education.

In addition, in the short time that it has been in office, the Australian Government has increased pension payments and at last given senior citizens a reasonable standard of living, after they had been held on the breadline for 23 years by Liberal-Country Party coalition Governments in the Federal House. To my knowledge, not once has the Premier said that any legislative action by the Australian Government has been of benefit to the community. However, when making their contributions to the debate, many of my colleagues have ventilated the subject of the Premier's attitude, so I will move on to other matters.

One has heard cries of "Crisis, calamity, disaster" from all anti-working-class parties and their representatives. But what examples does one find if one looks at Press articles? I shall quote briefly from some of them. The "Telegraph" of Thursday, 22 August, reports that Utah Development Company boosted group profits to \$25,167,000 for

the nine months to 31 July. Under the heading "Mobil returns to record profit levels", another article says—

"Mobil Oil Australia Ltd. rounded off a buoyant year for the major oil companies yesterday by reporting an 8.5 per cent increase in net earnings for 1973."

These are irrefutable facts. Another article says, "Lend Lease earnings top \$10.5m." All these are Press releases in the July-August period. One finds also that Alcoa in Australia is to spend \$80,000,000 on a face-lift for its plant. Another article is headed, "Edwards Dunlop leaps 30 per cent." Others report that the net profit of Peko-Wallsend Ltd. jumped by 63.2 per cent, and that Commercial and General Acceptance Ltd. earned more than \$8,000,000, despite the credit squeeze. I could go on and on giving further examples. This is at a time when one hears "Crisis in the community" being bellowed out by Government members in this Chamber in an attempt to overcome the situation that they have not a Federal Government at their disposal and to use the present Australian Government as a vehicle for their criticism.

On the other side of the ledger, one finds that the Federal Parliamentary Prices Committee is to carry out an inquiry into the costs of goods sold in supermarkets and retail stores throughout Australia. This follows allegations that in a number of areas, particularly in service industries, exorbitant costs are being placed on consumers and householders. Clearly something should be done about it. One finds glaring examples of profiteering that neither the Queensland Government nor former Federal Liberal-Country Party Governments were prepared to do anything about. In the Press of 23 June this year this report appeared—

"Some retailers are marking up the price of cheap imported clothing by 1000 per cent and more, an industry spokesman said yesterday."

"In one case, a retailer was buying shirts made in Hong Kong for \$1.20 but was charging the public \$14."

In my opinion, that is one area in which the Government of this State should be taking action.

I believe that throughout Australia, and because of the Government's attitude particularly in Queensland, there is a need for quality control—in other words, goods being supplied to the community should be controlled and in some way identified as to quality. In Great Britain, a standards mark is used. It protects both consumers and ethical manufacturers and retailers, and it makes it very difficult for shoddy goods to be accepted in Britain. A standards mark at least lets the consumer know what the particular commodity is, and if he buys a product that does not bear such a mark, he does so at his own risk. That certainly

does not apply in Queensland and in many other parts of Australia today. Consumers buy goods that are necessary and essential but have no indication of their quality.

"Choice" magazine has done a great deal to protect Australian consumers. It has produced many articles covering the description of essential goods and the tests carried out on them. The State Government could easily set up facilities for the testing of goods on the same basis as testing is carried out by magazines such as "Choice". In that way it could present to the buying public relevant facts and details about the various consumer goods that come on the market.

In a number of fields the Government sees fit to lay down standards for testing. In the food field it has done this with milk. It is prepared to lay down certain standards for the issue of roadworthiness certificates for motor vehicles. These actions by the Government are in the interests of the consumer. Although I do not think it has gone far enough with a number of these things, nevertheless they represent a step in the right direction.

The Government should extend the scope of the Consumer Affairs Bureau to include the standard checking of a number of goods offered to the public. The weights and measures system in the State has been applied fairly successfully. If what I am suggesting was adopted, there would be less misrepresentation.

The Federal Government has said that it is going to outlaw false advertising in a number of areas. The State Government should take the same line and for the protection of the consumer attack this very vital problem.

According to the Press a recent Queensland University survey indicated that almost half of Brisbane's low-income householders were unaware of the existence of the Consumer Affairs Council. Probably the same percentage would be unaware of the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I have frequently been in contact with the Consumer Affairs Bureau, as would most of my colleagues. It employs a very small but courteous staff. Almost inevitably those with complaints find themselves at a dead end when they try to achieve satisfaction after purchasing a faulty product or receiving a bad deal from an unscrupulous seller. When we get down to the crunch or the "nitty gritty" of the situation, we find that the Consumer Affairs Bureau sends back a polite letter saying, "I could only suggest to you that you advise your constituent to seek legal advice." Usually the goods about which people are trying to seek satisfaction are worth no more than \$100. It would be foolish for a person to engage legal assistance in an endeavour to recoup less than \$100.

It was reported in the Press—and I do not think the figures were refuted—that bad management and the production of sub-standard goods in Australian factories costs consumers \$800,000,000 in one year. That is a very alarming statement.

I referred earlier to the mark-up of clothing. It was reported in "The Courier-Mail" of 29 August that retailers in Melbourne marked up the price of imported goods by at least 200 per cent. That is taken to be the norm. Everyone seems to think that it is the entitlement of retailers. A spokesman for one retailer suggested that a fair mark-up in this field would be about 50 per cent.

These days one hears a constant stream of attack on the trade unions because of their large wage claims, but do the Premier and his followers ever say anything about the continuing disregard by manufacturers and retailers for consumers when they mark up goods in this way, sometimes to the extent of 1000 per cent? The Premier has the power to control prices. He, of course, argues that price control will not solve the present problem, and at the same time he condones blatant profiteering on a very broad scale. The concern that has been expressed at the current high cost of goods and services is apparent in the news items that I have quoted.

For some years my colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton and I have provided a voluntary service to consumers not only in Rockhampton and Central Queensland but throughout the State as well. We are providing this service because it is not given by anyone else, certainly not by any Government instrumentalities. And, after all, it is the State Government that should accept the responsibility of laying down the correct standards.

We receive frequent inquiries from persons who have been the victims of fly-by-night operators, such as firms that provide home-cladding, who move through the community doing substandard work and then move to another area, leaving behind them a host of dissatisfied customers. When they appeal for assistance to the Consumer Affairs Bureau they are met with a poor response, so they approach us as representatives of the people and we in turn take the matter up directly with the firms concerned.

I believe that members of firms and individuals who go into liquidation because of unethical business practices should be thoroughly investigated before they are allowed to set up business again and prey once more on the general public. I know of instances in which the same villain rears his head again and again in either the sale of goods or the provision of services.

The Premier and his Government should show greater concern for home-buyers and exercise stricter control over the sale of land. For too long land speculators have been allowed to buy large tracts of land and

hold it until building sites are at a premium so that they can fleece young couples by charging exorbitant prices. In the majority of instances the first home built by a young couple is the one that they live in all their lives.

The scheme that was introduced recently in Townsville and Ipswich, and, to a lesser degree, in Brisbane, is at least a step in the right direction towards restraining land prices. It could, however, be tidied up to allow home-builders to purchase land at reasonable cost. These days in the provincial cities the cost of land ranges from \$4,000 to \$10,000 a block, and in most cases that sum represents the entire savings of a young couple. And of course after they purchase their block of land they are faced with meeting the cost of the construction of their home.

I strongly urge local authorities to resume land in their areas and make it available as home sites for young couples. I will be taking up this matter with my colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton with a view to convincing the Rockhampton City Council that it should move into areas surrounding the city and, with Federal Government assistance, resume land for such a purpose.

The problem of unavailability of land must be tied to the over-all housing problem in the State. In Rockhampton there are presently approximately 120 applications for rental accommodation and a further 20 applications for pensioner units. On this matter I can only speak of the situation in my electorate, and in it I should like to see the Housing Commission's building programme proceed at a faster pace. It is not much consolation to people seeking accommodation to be told that Commonwealth Government action is the cause of the delay. It is not. Let the Minister in charge of housing get on with the job of providing housing to counteract the dictatorial attitude of landlords with their ever-spiralling charges.

On several occasions I have heard the Minister for Works and Housing say that the Commonwealth Housing Agreement is the cause of the trouble, and that he needs more money. I do not agree with him, but even if that were correct he should try to improve the housing position in Queensland. Many families in Queensland have become so frustrated and disappointed in not being able to obtain Housing Commission accommodation that they have allowed their applications to lapse and have continued to put up with substandard accommodation for which they pay top rents. That is a fact; I have checked it with a number of people. Earlier today one of my colleagues said that some people have had applications lodged with the Housing Commission for 10 years. They become frustrated with substandard accommodation and become so disappointed that they finish in a rut, and that is where they stay.

Mr. R. Jones: Isn't it a fact that many people do not apply to the Housing Commission because of this frustration?

Mr. YEWDAL: I agree with that; it is a different way of putting it.

Mr. Hodges: Wouldn't you say that industrial strife has a bearing, too?

Mr. YEWDAL: The Minister has merely thought that up so that he could put his spoke in. I do not accept it. There are other aspects of our housing problem in the State. A number of problems may be caused by the material-supply position. The rate of construction of houses by the Housing Commission should be accelerated, because young people are finding it increasingly difficult to raise money to buy allotments and build a house. I say without fear of contradiction that the Housing Commission scheme is the best in the State, and that is why the number of houses built under it should be increased.

Mr. Wright: It is always strange how big business can borrow money from the State at cheap interest rates to build big hotels and motels.

Mr. YEWDAL: The honourable member just beat me to saying that.

In the housing area the co-operation of the Treasurer, with some finance from the S.G.I.O., could very easily overcome the backlog in housing. If it is good enough for the S.G.I.O. to lend money to private enterprise to build seven-storey hotels, it is good enough for it to provide money for housing for needy families. I also believe that land should be taken up by the Housing Commission so that it can provide allotments in the long term for people in the community.

My suggestion of land acquisition by the Housing Commission may seem contrary to the argument I advanced earlier about local authorities acquiring land. It is not. Because of the ever-increasing demand for accommodation, both local authorities and the Housing Commission would be well advised to take this action.

Of major importance in my electorate is the need to provide, as quickly as possible, much-needed facilities for young parents. These facilities would include further pre-school facilities and child-guidance and child-minding centres. If necessary, these centres should be incorporated in a community health centre. When for a host of reasons, larger numbers of young married women are moving into the work-force, when we are constantly being told that education is vital and that the younger the children are educated the better, and when pressures are increasing from day to day thanks to our modern way of life, we need all these facilities and we need them as quickly as possible.

While it can be said that some facilities exist in Rockhampton, I believe that North Rockhampton, having long since reached its

majority, needs facilities of its own. The rather rapid growth in the area and the present transportation problems in traversing the Fitzroy River make it essential that they be provided there. The new secondary and primary schools that are in the process of construction are very much appreciated. However, those additional schools will cater only for that level of education.

The Minister for Main Roads, in conjunction with other relevant authorities, should urgently consider the accessibility to the city of Rockhampton by people from North Rockhampton, who must cross the Fitzroy River. Daily we are finding an increasing bank-up of traffic. The number of vehicles on the road is increasing rapidly. Many more people are using motor vehicles. The community of North Rockhampton, in order to use the facilities available in the city, must traverse the river. Although Rockhampton, with a population of 50,000, is a relatively small city when compared with others, some people are delayed for up to 40 or 45 minutes in a trip of 2 or 2½ miles to the city.

I realise that plans have been laid down as a result of a transportation study and that some preliminary work has been carried out on a road transport system. Incorporated in that scheme is the construction of a new bridge across the Fitzroy River near St. John's Hospital in Victoria Parade. I earnestly ask the Minister for Main Roads to study this programme, because it is in the interests not only of North Rockhampton citizens, but also of the travelling public in general to have a new bridge constructed as soon as possible.

Mr. MILLER (Ithaca) (4.42 p.m.): The honourable member who has just resumed his seat made one or two remarks that I would like to refer to. I too am interested in price control. He referred to price control as well as to the importation of cheap goods from overseas.

The honourable member for Rockhampton North highlighted the inadequacy of the Prices Justification Tribunal when he referred to the huge profit earned by one of the major oil companies. I point out to him that that oil company could not increase its prices until it had been before the Prices Justification Tribunal and proved that an increase was warranted. Since the tribunal came into being, we have witnessed increases for all oil companies. On the one hand, the honourable member spoke about the need for price control, but on the other hand we see these industries with a turnover in excess of \$2,000,000 appearing before the Prices Justification Tribunal (which is nothing more or less than a price control board) and repeatedly succeeding in their applications for increases.

Mr. Wright: Not what they asked for.

Mr. MILLER: These companies are no different from the unions. If they want a 5 per cent increase, they ask for 7.5 per cent,

and the tribunal will give them 5 per cent. We all know that this happens when the unions claim increased wages, and it happens with the employers, too. They are awarded exactly what they want, because in the first place they have increased the amount of their claim. The only company I know of that has been refused an increase by the Prices Justification Tribunal is a cigarette company.

I ask: how many times has the car industry received an increase since the establishment of the Prices Justification Tribunal? Before December 1972 Mr. Whitlam informed the people of Australia that our motor vehicles were too expensive. How many increases in the price of motor vehicles have taken place since the tribunal was set up? Not once has the tribunal knocked back an application by the car industry for an increase in prices.

Let us have a look at the importation of cheap goods, a subject referred to by the honourable member for Rockhampton North. One of the biggest offenders in this field is a supporter of the Labor Party—Sir Kenneth Myer, with his companies. I make it clear that we have seen no action by the tribunal—and certainly the turnover of the Myer companies greatly exceeds \$2,000,000, so they can be called before the tribunal—to ascertain why these cheap imported goods are not being sold at a cheaper rate. I wonder why. This highlights the inadequacy of price control. It will never work. During the past 12 months, the Labor Government has proved it again. It was proved in 1952 in both Queensland and Australia and again in 1972. Price control will never work, and the Prices Justification Tribunal has highlighted the fact once again.

Mr. Chinchin interjected.

Mr. MILLER: As the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt says, a lot of jobs for the boys have been created. Unfortunately, I cannot give the precise number of public servants employed by the Prices Justification Tribunal in 1972 to look at prices and to try to keep them under control. But it has been a complete waste of time.

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I again associate the electors of Ithaca with the message of loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and express our thanks to Her Majesty's representative, Sir Colin Hannah, for his sincerity and active role in this State.

Mr. Wright: What does the Governor do?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLER: I am surprised that the honourable member for Rockhampton, who is supposed to represent approximately 13,000 people and who has been a member of this Parliament for some six years, would ask what is the role of the Governor of Queensland. If I have time, I will be only too pleased to inform him. For the moment I will concentrate on the speech I have prepared. If I do not have enough time left

to inform the honourable member, I hope he will go to the Parliamentary Library and inform himself of the role of the Governor.

Like his predecessors, Sir Colin Hannah has endeavoured to see, at first hand, the problems confronting the people of this State, whether they live in Cape York or in the capital city. The flooding that occurred in Queensland in January of this year will go down in history as among the worst we have ever experienced. We should record, for all time, the tremendous work done by the Queensland State Emergency Service, the police, the ambulance, the army of volunteers who came to the rescue of those people who were less fortunate than themselves, the Federal Government, the State Government, local government and last but certainly not least the Governor of this State.

The volunteers who answered my radio call for assistance in my area came from every quarter of Brisbane. It would be impossible to thank adequately the hundreds of people who assisted in cleaning up houses and the handful of hard-working people who maintained the kitchens so that food was available to the grief-stricken property-owners and the army of volunteers. On behalf of the people of Ithaca who were flooded and on my own behalf I record sincere thanks to those volunteers.

In his address at the opening of the third session of the Fortieth Parliament, His Excellency referred to the record production of the mining industries. Due recognition should be paid to their importance and the development of our State because of them. They have enabled Queensland to have a much greater degree of decentralisation. They have been responsible for the creation or enlargement of many service organisations and the employment of thousands of people with excellent conditions and wages.

I record my full support for the action taken by the Treasurer in repealing the previous decision of a set royalty on minerals in favour of a percentage of the actual value of the minerals extracted.

I have always believed that incentives are necessary to encourage industries to Australia, especially high-cost industries such as mining which have to outlay huge sums before beginning production. A low royalty in the initial stage proved to be the incentive necessary to entice investors into the mining industry in Queensland. It must not be forgotten that, unlike the position in some States, for example New South Wales, in which coal deposits are less than 50 miles from a port, minerals in Queensland have to be transported vast distances before they reach a port.

However, now that the mining companies are enjoying increasing business and expanding profits, brought about in no small measure by the crisis that has developed from the actions of some oil-producing countries, I agree completely that Queensland as a whole should benefit, just as the

mining companies are benefiting. It is more important that this State benefit from increased royalties than that the Commonwealth Government benefit from increased taxation on mining companies. Nobody in this House, with the possible exception of a few avowed socialists in the Opposition, would disagree that far too many conditions are placed upon the use of money received from the Federal Government.

Does the Federal Government really need to increase taxation? We all recall what Mr. Whitlam said in his policy speech in 1972, just prior to winning office. I quote from page 10 of that speech—

“The huge and automatic increase in Commonwealth revenue ensures that rates of taxation need not be increased at any level to implement a Labor Government’s programme. The rates for which the wealthier sections of the community, including companies, are liable are already high.”

I think that that expresses in straight terms the thoughts of the Prime Minister in 1972.

Of course, in 1972 he was referring to the 4.5 per cent inflation rate that Australia faced under a Liberal-Country Party Government. Today, the inflation rate is quoted officially as 15 per cent, and some observers believe that it could be as high as 20 per cent. If Mr. Whitlam believed in 1972 that the “huge and automatic increase” in taxation brought about by a 4.5 per cent rate of inflation was sufficient to implement Labor’s programme, he certainly does not now require increased taxes from the mining companies in question, nor can he excuse his Government for its failure to reduce the taxation scales for the workers of this country.

What is the situation today? If the average wage increases by only 20 per cent this year, a wage-earner with an average weekly income will pay 43 per cent more tax at current rates. Total income tax collected by the Commonwealth Government has increased from \$4,089 million in 1972-73 to \$5,480 million in 1973-74, and it could reach as high as \$8,000 million in 1974-75. Surely the mining companies, some of which are not happy about having to pay increased royalties to the State, must see that it would be more beneficial to pay increased royalties to the State than increased tax to the Commonwealth.

His Excellency also referred in his Opening Speech to the increasing number of industrial estates that have been established on some 4,320 ha throughout Queensland. The development of these estates by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development must have the full support of every member in this House, as, through its policy of opening up industrial estates in many coastal towns and certain country towns, the department is endeavouring to decentralise industry as much as possible in this State.

However, I am concerned, as every thinking person must be concerned, about the future of industry in Australia. I realise that only today, when speaking in Toowoomba, Sir David Muir referred to the increased production in Queensland and the success that he is sure will accrue to industries in Queensland in the coming year. Nevertheless, I am still concerned because I have in mind competition from overseas goods that are flooding into Australia and to which the honourable member opposite who preceded me in the debate referred.

These goods are flooding into Australia because of the decision of the Labor Government to reduce tariff restrictions. We must ask ourselves what we would do if we were in the position of many of our leaders of industry. Would we consider opening a factory in one of the industrial estates that are supplied by the Queensland Government with the incentive of low rental or lease? Or would we establish a new industry, perhaps, in Malacca, Kuala Lumpur or Penang? While Queensland offers low rentals as an incentive, these other places are offering industry incentives such as an abundance of labour, low-cost industrial estates, low-cost factories and low-cost production in return for investing in a low-wage country.

Mr. Cameron has been quoted in the Press recently as saying that unemployment will continue to grow for the next 12 months. In his policy speech in November 1972, Mr. Whitlam said—

"A great and growing cause of industrial unrest is the sense of insecurity arising from the great technological changes—in white collar employment as much as industrial development. The economic mismanagement of the McMahon interregnum has highlighted the structural imbalance of industry which is creating a hard-core pool of skilled but unwanted employees."

I point out to the Prime Minister that there is great and growing industrial unrest in Australia today—not from the great technological changes as suggested by him but from the actions of his own Government. Any Government that would impose a 25 per cent tariff reduction across the board while Australian industries are facing continually increasing costs of wages and materials must expect unemployment to arise and growing industrial unrest to develop throughout the country.

Again I turn to Mr. Whitlam's policy speech to highlight the change that has taken place since 1972—a short two years that to many people in Australia appears to be a lifetime. On page 35 of his policy speech, Mr. Whitlam said—

"There is no greater social problem facing Australia than the good use of leisure. It is the problem of all modern and wealthy communities."

I point out that, unless the Labor Government reverses its decision in its 25 per cent tariff reduction, workers and industry leaders alike will have a far greater social problem in 1975 than when Mr. Whitlam took office in 1972.

I believe we are indebted to Mr. Whitlam for placing on record the Labor Party's belief that in 1972 there was no greater social problem than the good use of leisure. But the deterioration we now see is the result of the Labor Party's industrial relations policy, and any setback in industrial development in this State must be laid squarely at the feet of the present Prime Minister and his Government.

While this State Government is doing everything possible to encourage the establishment of new industries and the enlargement of existing ones, the Federal Government appears to be doing all in its power to ensure that the workers in places like Malacca, Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong are fully employed at the expense of the Australian worker.

The Australian Labor Party is not unique in its approach to creating unemployment. The headlines of the "London Times" of 16 June 1974 read "Labour blocks £20m Chile deal." I intend to quote that article because it is interesting to read that the predicament the Australian Labor Party is putting the people of Australia in at the moment is the very predicament that the Labour Party in Britain is endeavouring to foist onto people in that country. The "London Times" said—

"The British engineering industry has lost its chance of export orders worth \$50m because of the Government's tightening up on export credits to the present Right-Wing regime in Chile.

The deal in question concerns a contract to build a copper smelter and refinery in Chile. British Smelter Constructions, a company jointly owned by Selection Trust and George Wimpey, had arranged a deal with the Allende Government last year for a 200,000-ton-per-year smelter costing \$150m.

Despite the change of Government in Chile BSC has agreed with the new Government terms on which it would go ahead with at least the first part of the project. Now that the British Government has refused to sanction the proposal BSC has switched the order to a subsidiary company on the Continent and it is expected that the orders for the mechanical and electrical plant involved will now go to two European countries instead of Britain."

So we see that the Labor Party in Australia is not unique. I wonder whether it is part of an over-all programme of the Labor Party to introduce its socialistic programme. Is it endeavouring to make sure that industry cannot work at a profit? Does it want to take over industry? One must ask these

questions. Today many people are asking them. To what lengths will the Labor Party go to introduce its socialistic platform? We particularly ask these questions when we remember that the Federal Government today is considering entering into the Mainline company. An interesting situation could develop if the Labor Government takes over Mainline through the loans that it intends to give that company.

Mr. Porter: On what terms will the Federal Government pour this money into Mainline?

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member asks a very good question. We can rest assured that the Federal Government will want to control the industry. I wonder whether that company will compete against other companies for Government work, or whether it will be given Government work without the need to compete. I wonder whether the taxpayers of Australia will be subsidising the wage-earners of Mainline, and for how long?

In his Opening Speech His Excellency the Governor referred to the Department of Industrial Affairs continuing to foster Government-industry-union co-operation at top level, with regular meetings of the reconstructed Industrial Affairs Advisory Committee. Today I give credit to the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs and his department for their efforts in bringing about greater industrial understanding between employers and the unions. There is a far greater understanding now between employers and unions than ever before. Much credit is due to the present Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs.

Mr. Burns: Are you going to give credit to the unions, too?

Mr. MILLER: My word. I will come to that in a moment.

The Department of Industrial Affairs has one of the most frustrating roles of any Government department. The very nature of industry, with workers selling their labour and industry buying it, creates many problems. Quite often these problems grow out of all proportion through the inability of the two sides to get together and sort them out. It is this subject that I want to dwell on this afternoon.

Before doing so, however, I pay a tribute to the master builders, the trade unions, the Apprenticeship Office and the Director of Technical Education for having introduced into Queensland a special apprenticeship scheme that will help overcome the shortage of bricklayers. I hope that this will be only the first step to be taken in this area, because ahead of us lies the task of overcoming a serious shortage of tradesmen in the building industry. With this scheme it has been proved that apprentices can be trained in full-time college courses with very

little on-site instruction, and I pay a tribute to the trade unions for having allowed this scheme to be introduced. I know that previously they were strongly opposed to any reduction in the number of years of apprenticeship courses.

Mr. R. Jones: So were the employers.

Mr. MILLER: I am presently giving credit to the trade unions. They have agreed to reduce the apprenticeship course from four years to three years, and the employers have agreed to pay second-year wages to apprentices who commence on-site work after the 11-week intensive college course. This sort of thing could not have occurred six months ago, and I believe it shows what can come about when trade unions, employers and Governments get together. I realise that at the Federal level this is not possible, because there the trade unions are opposed to any reduction in the length of an apprenticeship course.

The group of apprentices who undertook the special course have completed their ordinary seven-week course as well as their four weeks in special training to equip them for their entry into the building industry. In this first special training scheme 56 apprentices were indentured to the Queensland Master Builders' Association. I think that the financial contributions made by the master builders, the Builders Registration Board, the Clay Products Association and the major concrete masonry companies should be recorded in "Hansard". Their efforts have ensured the success of the scheme and they provide one example of the way industry has contributed financially towards overcoming the shortage of apprentices. From this the people of Queensland will benefit.

Mr. Burns: Industry will also benefit.

Mr. MILLER: Industry will benefit, and, as I say, the people will benefit. All of us know that, with a shortage of tradesmen, building costs soar and the people are forced to pay exorbitant prices.

Mr. Burns: Many bosses have refused to employ the number of apprentices that they should have had.

Mr. MILLER: The honourable member's comment is quite true. In the past a large number of employers were not prepared to play their part, and for that very reason later in my speech I shall put forward certain recommendations to the Government.

A greater number of employers than at present should engage apprentices. I know that some apprentices look upon an indenture as a safe job for four years, and some small employers are concerned that they may not be able to keep the apprentices fully employed during their indentures. This may happen as the result of a recession in the building industry. However, I hope that in the very near future the Government will conduct a full inquiry into the building industry and that an outcome of such an

investigation will be an increase in the number of tradesmen, through the normal apprenticeship scheme and a new scheme similar to the one introduced in Western Australia.

I do not think we can train enough apprentices under our apprenticeship scheme. It seems that the Western Australian Government did not believe that the building industry could train enough apprentices, because it held an inquiry, completed in March this year, into all aspects of the building industry.

It can be said that unions, through the apprenticeship scheme, can control the numerical strength in each trade. In days gone by unions used this method to have, to some degree, a closed workshop. They did not want to have too many tradesmen, so creating a threat to employment. That argument does not apply as much today, as it did in the past. However, it could always be used at any time.

Mr. Davis: Have you any concrete evidence of that?

Mr. MILLER: It would be very hard to give concrete evidence of a statement like that.

Unions can claim rightfully that a certain number of journeymen are required to train an apprentice and therefore employers who are prepared to take on more apprentices than they are permitted to indenture have not been able to do so. It has been general policy in the building industry for unions to object to too many apprentices being taken on by an employer who has not the required number of journeymen working for him. That might be an answer to the honourable member for Brisbane. Unions have been very demanding in this field. The scheme I envisage is similar to that introduced in Western Australia.

Why should any young man have to depend on the whim of an employer to decide whether he can take on a career he wishes to follow? In a democracy any boy or girl wishing to learn a trade should be allowed to do so. Young people should not have to depend on finding an employer to sign indenture papers. Many young people change their minds in later life. A 16-year-old lad might not want to learn a trade, but, after knocking around the world for two, three or more years, he might think he had been very foolish and seek a trade in which to fulfil his ambitions. Why shouldn't he, at the age of 25, be apprenticed in a trade? Under the present system he would have to receive the first-year apprenticeship wage. That is hardly an incentive to anybody at 25 years of age to learn a trade.

To a very large degree in Queensland we have depended on migrants from England to make up the difference between the number of tradesmen that the apprenticeship system turns out and the number of tradesmen required to maintain our workforce. I do not think that will occur in the

future. Since Great Britain's entry to the European Common Market, English workmen can work in Europe as guest workers. At present there are 5,000,000 guest workers in Germany. They stay there for six months. It is not very likely that Australia—and particularly, Queensland—can depend on Great Britain to maintain the flow of tradesmen we require. It is up to us to fulfil our obligations and ensure that the number of young men wanting to be trained as apprentices can be trained.

The terms of reference of the inquiry into the building industry in Western Australia are most desirable. I hope that in Queensland we will consider the holding of a similar inquiry. However, before I read the terms of reference, I point out that we have already overcome the problem referred to in paragraph (a), which reads—

“the present practices relating to the payment of building sub-contractors and as to whether those practices are giving rise to any, and, if so, what problems, and the measures that ought to be taken to afford relief against those problems, if any;”

I repeat that we in Queensland have already resolved that problem. The other terms of reference are—

“(b) the incidence of insolvency or bankruptcy in the businesses of building contractor and building sub-contractor and the measures to be taken against any such incidence;

“(c) whether, and, if so, the extent to which, the insolvency or bankruptcy of building contractors is occasioning loss to building sub-contractors;

“(d) whether building owners and building sub-contractors are sufficiently protected against loss occasioned by the insolvency or bankruptcy of building contractors and, if not, the means by which such protection or better protection might be afforded;

“(e) whether a shortage of any particular class of tradesman exists in the building industry and, if so—

(i) the reason for such shortage;

(ii) whether present training schemes for tradesmen are adequate;

(iii) whether any other, and, if so, what schemes for the training of tradesmen should be put into effect; and

(iv) what, if any, other steps should be taken to remedy any existing shortage of tradesmen;

“(f) whether any other, and, if so, what steps might reasonably be taken to bring greater efficiency and stability into the building industry.”

I believe that we could well consider such an inquiry. The inquirer (Mr. Charles Smith, Q.C.) had this to say in summing up—

“I have not investigated in depth the possibility of shortening the period of indenture for particular trades or of fragmentation of trades, although I do wish

to emphasise the importance of keeping such matters under review and suggest means for so doing."

Perhaps we should be looking at that very point ourselves. Is it still necessary in 1974 to have a four-year apprenticeship for all tradesmen? At the present time in Western Australia the local branch of the Building Workers' Industrial Union has agreed with the Governments and the employers to young men going to college for 16 weeks, working with an employer bricklayer for 12 months, and then sitting for the fourth-year examination. If they pass that examination, they are regarded as fully qualified tradesmen entitled to the full tradesman's wage. I realise that this openly competes with the apprenticeship scheme.

Mr. Hughes: What would be their standard of workmanship?

Mr. MILLER: That is a very interesting point. When apprentices who have been trained for 10 weeks at the South Brisbane Technical College were given on-site work, working alongside tradesmen of many years' standing, it is on record that representatives of the Master Builders' Association were surprised at the standard of workmanship.

Mr. Burns: Were they doing a tradesman's job?

Mr. MILLER: They were doing a tradesman's job alongside journeymen of many years' standing.

Mr. Burns: At what rates of pay? How much were they paid?

Mr. MILLER: These young lads are being paid second-year rates, although they are first-year apprentices.

Mr. Burns: There is great danger in allowing an apprentice, after 10 weeks' training, to do a tradesman's work.

Mr. MILLER: Most apprentices do tradesmen's work. Let us face it: an apprentice, within a week of commencing training, is doing a tradesman's work in one way or another. The point is that those lads, some of whom came from other employment, are now able to perform the type of work they desire.

In Western Australia most of the lads qualified for redundant employment assistance provided by the Commonwealth Government. Some of them had employment and, because they wanted to become tradesmen, the Commonwealth Government agreed with the Western Australian Government to pay these young lads while they were training at college. After 12 months of training they became fully qualified tradesmen.

This Western Australian scheme will help overcome the shortages that have existed there in recent years. Between 300 and 350 tradesmen are required in Western Australia each year to make up the fall-out in that

industry, yet Western Australia can train only 35 or 37 apprentices a year. This problem must exist in other States, too. It would be advisable for Queensland to conduct an inquiry into the industry here to see whether we need to have a second method of training young people in the building industry, or for that matter any other industry.

I shall now speak on absenteeism in industry today. I regret that I do not have more time available, because too many industry leaders and Liberals are opposed to worker participation. This must be looked into.

(Time expired.)

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane) (5.22 p.m.): For the past 40 minutes, we have listened to the Liberal Party expert on industrial matters.

Mr. Aikens: At least he is a qualified tradesman.

Mr. DAVIS: A qualified tradesman after one day's apprenticeship and he is now a master tradesman.

The Address-in-Reply debate gives an honourable member the opportunity to speak on a wide variety of subjects and to pledge loyalty to the constitutional form of Government, which I do on behalf of my electors.

Since the A.L.P. was elected in 1972 and re-elected in 1974, it has introduced many fine reforms to the Australian way of life. Its most important decision was to end conscription. We all recall that many members of the Liberal-Country Party Government and their supporters were keen to uphold conscription, which resulted in many Australian men losing their lives in an unwinnable and unholy war in Vietnam. One great Australian Liberal Prime Minister, the late Harold Holt, used to say to the American President, "We will go all the way with L.B.J.," so that Australia had to go all the way with other countries and many of our men lost their lives.

Mr. Aikens: You go all the way with Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai.

Mr. DAVIS: My predecessor, the late Johnno Mann, said to me, "When you get into Parliament, you will meet one person from Townsville who has a big, loud mouth. All you have to do to shut him up is call him a scab."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Sir Gordon Chalk: That is a bit uncomplimentary to a member.

Mr. DAVIS: That is what Johnno Mann told me anyway.

This afternoon the Minister for Health who, I imagine, is the last of the Queen's men, delivered a diatribe on the monarchy. It is about time Australians decided where they stand. If the Minister claims to be a third-generation Australian, I point out

that my family can go back five or six generations. I do not owe allegiance to any other country. I do not owe allegiance to England. I owe allegiance to Australia, and that is where the allegiance of all members of the Australian Labor Party lies.

Another sound decision of the Federal Labor Government was the wiping of imperial honours. That surely was a decision that the Australian people whole-heartedly endorsed. Imperial honours were a leftover from the Victorian era. Of course, the State National and Liberal Parties are continuing their line of thought; they want to see a continuation of this leftover from the days of the British raj. In most cases, their knighthoods are hand-outs to Tories and their political hacks. We have seen examples of that attitude in this House on a number of occasions.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Would that apply to the honourable member for Surfers Paradise?

Mr. DAVIS: He bought his knighthood for \$40,000. I have been reliably informed that he gave \$40,000 to the National Party before the last Federal election. I am sure he will agree with that statement. He will not deny it.

Sir BRUCE SMALL: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Brisbane is making statements that have no substance or truth whatever. He said that I made a contribution of \$40,000 to the National Party. That is an absolute lie, and I ask that he withdraw it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member for Brisbane to accept the denial of the honourable member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr. DAVIS: I withdraw the statement, but I take exception to the fact—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to withdraw without qualification.

Mr. DAVIS: Very well, I will withdraw that remark.

Mr. AIKENS: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member for Surfers Paradise cannot expect anything from a sewer but filth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DAVIS: It seems to me that the last knighthoods conferred by this Government were political hand-outs. What otherwise would be the criterion for awarding them? During the last Budget debate, I dealt with the Weedmans issue. I showed what was going on at Weedmans, and the subsequent court case proved that what I said was correct. In many cases, knighthoods are political hand-outs that open doors to

membership of boards. Those with knighthoods are no doubt supposed to give respectability to boards, and they receive the lark of a couple of thousand dollars as the minimum fee for sitting on a board.

I now wish to deal with flooding. Without rehashing what occurred this year, I say that the residents of the Northey Street area are concerned about what may happen in the future. They recall vividly what happened in the floods of 1972 and 1967, when the Premier completely washed his hands of this area. He would not give those who live there even one cent as a hand-out. Since then, nothing has been done. A report has been handed down by Sir Gordon Chalk, one of our noble knights, and it has started to gather cobwebs. Not one solitary action has been taken except the reading of that report. We are still waiting for something to be done in this area.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I can't understand you. What are you talking about?

Mr. DAVIS: I called the Treasurer a noble knight.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You're talking in the middle of the night; I know that. You're absolutely in the dark.

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

SUPPLY

VOTE OF CREDIT—\$595,000,000

Mr. SPEAKER read a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services for the year ending 30 June 1975—

"From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account), the sum of \$250,000,000;

From the Trust and Special Funds, the sum of \$305,000,000; and

From the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account, the sum of \$40,000,000."

COMMITTEE

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

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (5.32 p.m.): I move—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1974-75, a further sum not exceeding \$595,000,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State."

As is customary, it is necessary in the opening days of this session to introduce a Bill to provide further supply until such time as the Budget has been presented, debated and approved by Parliament.

In the last Appropriation Act passed by the House in November of last year, supply for 1974-75 to the extent of \$285,000,000 was granted—\$135,000,000 for Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$135,000,000 for the Trust and Special Funds, and \$15,000,000 for the Loan Fund. The purpose of the Bill now before the House is to provide a further sum of \$595,000,000 of which \$250,000,000 is required for Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$305,000,000 for the Trust and Special Funds, and \$40 million for the Loan Fund.

The total supply which will now be available for 1974-75 pending the approval of the Budget is \$880,000,000—\$385,000,000 for Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$440,000,000 for the Trust and Special Funds, and \$55,000,000 for the Loan Fund. In total this represents an increase of \$285,000,000 on the supply available for the corresponding period last year. This increase is necessary to cover the heavy impact of award increases granted in the past twelve months, and escalation in costs generally and an expansion of services, particularly in the education, health and social welfare sectors.

Honourable members will be aware that, in the past, I have taken the opportunity when introducing the Appropriation Bill to look briefly at certain features of the State's economy, and to make some pertinent comments as to the manner in which the well-being of the State is being affected. I propose to continue that policy this afternoon.

Despite inflation, the basic economy of Queensland has continued to grow in a strong and vigorous manner. Our output is still expanding in real terms, and returns to industry are growing. The policies pursued by this Government over recent years have enabled this State to reach a position of considerable financial strength, in spite of increasing pressure from higher costs, and I am sure the fruits of these policies will continue to be reaped in the future, provided we are given an appropriate economic climate by the Commonwealth Government in which industry can continue to operate to the best advantage of all Queenslanders.

The population of Queensland continues to grow strongly. In 1973 it increased by 47,900, which represented an annual growth rate of 2.52 per cent—almost twice the rate of growth of 1.35 per cent for all of Australia, and more than double the rate of any other State except Western Australia, where the growth was 1.75 per cent. At this rate, Queensland's population will pass the 2,000,000 mark by early 1975. While it is pleasing to see the confidence of people in Queensland, population growth does place great strains on the State's resources if we are to provide essential services to meet the people's needs and expectations, particularly when they are coupled with cost increases and shortages of many essential goods.

Still the inherent strength of the economy in Queensland has enabled absorption of higher than average increases in the work-force. In the last 12 months for which statistics are available, our work-force grew by 6.2 per cent, compared with 4.9 per cent for Australia as a whole, and the State has been fortunate to maintain a fairly low rate of unemployment compared with that of the other States. In the same period, the proportion of females in the work-force increased from 32.5 per cent to 33.4 per cent. In numbers the female work-force has gone up by 9.8 per cent to 210,700.

The value of production of Queensland industry has also risen strongly. In the past year, the gross value of primary production increased by 10.7 per cent to \$1,104 million despite lower export prices for wool, meat and sugar. Once again the value of mineral output increased substantially, rising by 77 per cent to over \$515,000,000 in 1973. I cannot stress strongly enough the contribution that has been made by the mining sector to the prosperity of the State. I can only hope that Commonwealth policies expounded by the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy do not nullify the benefits we have a right to expect. I have already indicated that increased royalties this coming year will enable the State to keep rises in taxes and charges to an absolute minimum. This, of course, represents only the direct and obvious effects. The greatest benefits flow from the employment opportunities created by these ventures and the demands created by them upon other local industry. Such demands raise the level of rewards for labour and other productive resources flowing to residents of the State.

Throughout Central Queensland we can see what has been achieved as a result of the development of our mineral resources. A couple of days ago the Leader of the Opposition made some scathing comments about Central Queensland. The development that has taken place there is astronomical. For instance, ten new townships have been developed. As the Premier said, on his flights to and from Townsville the Leader of the Opposition must have flown over them without taking any notice.

Mr. Aikens: How much money has this Government poured into Port Alma?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Over the years this Government has helped Port Alma, and we will help it again if necessary.

Once again, overseas exports from Queensland industry have made a significant contribution to the country's overseas trade, and exports of \$1,261 million in the 11 months to May 1974 (the last figures available) indicated that the record level of \$1,305 million attained in 1972-73 would be surpassed.

I have unbounded confidence in the basic soundness of the economy in Queensland and I have endeavoured to point out some

features which I think illustrate this. However, I cannot give an adequate picture of the Queensland economy without passing some comments on aspects of the national economy which continue to give great concern.

When I spoke in this House at this time last year, I pointed out that the Consumer Price Index for Brisbane had risen by 8.33 per cent in 1972-73 and remarked on the necessity for prompt action to halt the rising trend of prices. Since then, as honourable members will be well aware, the Consumer Price Index for 1973-74 has increased by 14.34 per cent. The rise for the June quarter alone was 4.1 per cent. There is still no sign of the problem abating and there is still no sign of any comprehensive plan by the Commonwealth Government to rid this country of inflation or to reduce its rate, despite the pleas and offers of assistance by all State Governments irrespective of their political philosophy.

Recently I sat in at a conference headed by the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer (Mr. Crean) and attended by all State Premiers as well as a number of State Treasurers. An offer was made to the Prime Minister by all States present to arrive at a sound basis on which Australia could grapple with this problem. What did we get? First of all we asked for \$150,000,000 from the big fat purse of \$2,000 million that the Commonwealth Government had not anticipated it would collect last year from taxation. The sum of \$150,000,000 was all that the Dunstan plan and the Hamer plan asked of the Commonwealth.

We asked also for loan raising to be lifted from 10 per cent to 20 per cent to enable certain local authorities to carry out various work, but both the Prime Minister and Mr. Crean indicated that no additional funds would be made available for the States. Consequently, Government after Government throughout Australia will have to increase taxation in order to raise sufficient funds to enable them to carry on. Additional rail freights will be passed on to the consumers, as has happened in three Australian States since then. That will mean a rise in the cost of living and, consequently, an acceleration in inflationary trend; but the Commonwealth Government will receive more and more out of the pay envelopes of those who are earning their daily bread.

It was put to the Commonwealth that money be made available so that these things would not happen, but we received a blunt "no". We also asked for an increase in loan funds if we could not get additional money by way of grant; but again the States were turned down. Despite the pleas and offers of assistance of all the State Governments in Australia, the Federal Government turned us down and forced this country into faster inflationary trends.

Increases in prices affect everyone—the housewives, the businessmen and Governments. I have never believed price control

to be the answer and this is borne out by the fact that in South Australia—the only State where price control operates—the Consumer Price Index rose by 15.27 per cent in 1973-74, the highest rise of all the States of Australia. Price rises are still inevitable if the present trend in wage and salary levels is continued. The economy cannot stand the level of increase that has prevailed in recent times. Apart from the hurtful effects of inflation on large numbers of individuals in Australia, our balance-of-payments situation is deteriorating quickly and this will obviously become a major problem if the trend is not reversed soon. In recent months, the Commonwealth Government, to some extent, pulled its head out of the sand and recognised that action must be taken to dampen the level of demand for goods and services.

We know what was said prior to 18 May by the Prime Minister when he spoke in King George Square in Brisbane. He told us that he had a plan to slow down the inflationary trend, yet it has continued and continued, and we can see no effort being made by the Commonwealth Prime Minister, the Treasurer (Mr. Crean), or Mr. Cameron to halt it. The inflationary trend is continuing. In July the Commonwealth recognised that something had to be done to dampen down the level for goods and services; but the action taken came far too late and had to be extremely severe. It was because of the lateness of that action that the severity of it has been felt by so many people. The nation's monetary position is now shot to pieces with money scarce and interest rates higher than at any time in the records of this country.

In the last few weeks I have had the experience of banking concerns in Australia approaching Governments trying to raise money so that they could meet their commitments, and paying up to 20 per cent in interest. In my youth I always believed that a bank was a place where people went to get loans, and where money was available for those who had security and were able to pay a fair interest rate for the use of those funds. However, with the banks seeking money in order that they might meet their own obligations, we have reached the stage when some of the major responsibilities must be faced, as I said, because our nation's monetary position has been shot to pieces, with money scarce and the level of interest rates at a record high.

The prospect of massive unemployment, too, is staring us in the face. No-one on either side of the Chamber can deny what has been said in a number of places by the Prime Minister and those who support him that unemployment is staring us in the face. The nation's economy, which requires constant fine tuning, has been fouled up by the heavy hands of amateurs in Canberra. I do not believe that they can be called anything but amateurs. No matter what ministry one deals with, the advice of top public servants

is being rejected by those who believe they know better or turned down by meetings of caucus in Canberra. These men have given a lifetime in the Public Service. It is not a matter of accepting the advice, as it were, of a public servant. On the contrary, it is a matter of there being made available the knowledge that enables the Government, through its Ministers, to administer the affairs of the Commonwealth or the State.

Where would I be in my position as Treasurer of this State if I did not have available to me the knowledge that has been acquired by many top public servants over the years—men who have had experience in the keeping of this State's accounts? It is the responsibility of Government to apply its policy. It is a responsibility of Government—and particularly the responsibility of Ministers—to ensure that all the available information is considered.

From my experience in Canberra over recent weeks, it is not a matter of what the departmental heads may submit to a Minister. It is a matter of what the caucus of the A.L.P. and the Left-wing group led by Dr. Cairns is prepared to force onto the people of Australia.

The general prosperity of this or any other State or the Commonwealth depends on a number of factors. From Queensland's point of view, it depends firstly on full employment. Our real problem is presented by the number of people out of work each working day. Fortunately, as I said, Queensland can take some pride in the fact that its unemployment rate is one of the lowest in Australia. But that is no consolation to those who are directly affected by the present state of the economy, nor does it lessen the State Government's desire to do what it can to return to virtually full employment.

Again, prosperity depends on the continuous development of the State's resources. That requires large injections of capital, and in the past year a major project planned for this State was cancelled because of the Commonwealth Government's policy towards overseas capital coming into this country. During my recent visit to the United States I conferred with a number of bankers and insurance heads and, when the expansion of certain industries in this State was being debated, I was asked to explain the reason for the 33½ per cent that was required to be placed as a deposit reserve. It was impossible to give an explanation other than that it was the policy of the Federal Government of the day. However, having had that conference and having believed there was no possibility of overcoming the problem, I received a telegram the following morning from the Under Treasurer indicating a reduction to 25 per cent. This was good news so I again convened a conference and once more we went over the ground that we had gone over the previous day. We believed that, whereas it was impossible for

the previous day, there was then a ray of hope to obtain additional money for expansion in this State. That is where the issue was left. Correspondence continued.

When I returned to Australia from Britain, practically the first thing that greeted me was a reduction in the deposit to five per cent. How in the name of fortune can anybody expect a country to be managed and negotiations to be conducted with overseas money-lenders if, over a period of a few weeks, such a dramatic change in the overseas investment policy in Australia can take place? It is one of the things that indicates to overseas investors that this country has lost the stability it had before the Labor Government came into power in 1972.

While the reduction in the variable deposit requirement, firstly from 33½ per cent to 25 per cent and then down to 5 per cent, will be welcomed by potential investors, it cannot undo the harm that has already been done. There will be a continuing need for overseas capital to develop this country and the Commonwealth has a duty to ensure that this development is not impeded by firm policies of this nature which take no account of whether or not a particular project would normally be funded with overseas money.

Finally, prosperity depends on a sound economic environment—a climate that enhances confidence in the future. The Commonwealth Government in its role as manager of the nation's economy is primarily responsible for setting this stage. We, as a State, can do much, but the Commonwealth Government has the responsibility for setting the stage.

The State Government also has an important role to play and this Government is proud of its record in this regard. Sound policies of development and good management have enabled this State to achieve its prosperity, sometimes in the face of severe adversity of drought or flood or economic recession or inflation. We came through because of our policy. We have been able to maintain our services to the people without resorting to heavy increases in taxation and charges, in spite of cost rises and cost pressures. The potential for Queensland's future growth is inherent and I believe its foundations are solid. Our future in Queensland is bright, provided reasonable economic leadership can be restored in Canberra and provided the whole country does not sink into a socialist morass.

From my experience of almost nine years' association with the Treasury, I know that this is the most difficult period Queensland and Australia have faced. I know the problems that confront us but, given rational central Government and sound management by that Government of our national economy generally, I am certain that the State will continue to prosper, that we will be able to carry out our plans and that Queensland will be the better for them.

As I have indicated, we have seen the growth in employment and the part our mining industry has played in providing national wealth. These are the things that have provided extra jobs. Whether it be the butcher, the baker, or the drapery store that springs up in a new township, it provides extra employment and puts extra money into circulation. If minerals are not exported, the money for them does not come into the country. This is the type of development that has made Queensland what it is to-day, and has enabled this State to overcome many of the problems that have been posed by droughts and floods. I feel that we can withstand these pressures, provided there is a rational central Government in Canberra.

I commend the motion to the Committee.

[Sitting suspended from 6.1 to 7.15 p.m.]

Mr. TUCKER (Townsville West—Leader of the Opposition) (7.15 p.m.): We have, of course, grown accustomed to the performances of the Treasurer in this Chamber, but this afternoon I think he took the cake for all time. I was smiling to myself when he spoke about co-operation, especially where he said that he was with the Premier in Canberra pledging co-operation with the Prime Minister but that the Prime Minister was not co-operating with him. I cast my mind back to the time not long ago when a referendum was held throughout Australia. If the behaviour of the Premier and the Treasurer at that time was an example of the type of co-operation that can be expected from them, we are not going to get very far with the Federal Government, because both the Premier and the Treasurer did their very best to ensure the defeat of the prices referendum. That is a point to remember in the light of the Treasurer's statements this afternoon. I know that he would make a good attempt to sell a refrigerator to an Eskimo, and in Treasury matters he paints his own picture. It behoves me and my colleagues to show the other side of the picture, and that is what I am going to do in the short time allotted to me under Standing Orders tonight.

It was my hope that the Treasurer would use the introduction of this Bill to show at least some concern on behalf of the State Government for the deteriorating employment situation in Queensland and foreshadow a scheme to fund capital works and State development projects with State-raised revenue. I make that very clear.

I realise that in normal times the passage of this Appropriation Bill is little more than a formality; but these are not normal times. Last year, when the Treasurer brought down his 1973-74 Budget, he anticipated a deficit of, I think, approximately \$360,000. But a week ago he predicted that Queensland would face a record deficit Budget of approximately \$78,000,000.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No. I said I was \$78,000,000 down.

Mr. TUCKER: He was within a breath of bringing down his next Budget when he made the statement that he was in deficit to the extent of \$78,000,000. Twist it as he may, that statement was made by him.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I said I was \$78,000,000 short.

Mr. TUCKER: In effect, he was about \$77,600,000 out in his Estimates.

Sir Gordon Chalk: How simple can you get!

Mr. TUCKER: The Treasurer says, "How simple can you get!" But those are the figures that he quoted, and he cannot get around them.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I wouldn't attempt to get around them.

Mr. TUCKER: To put it another way, the Treasurer underestimated his Budget by 21,666 per cent. That is how far out he was. He talks about being the greatest Treasurer Queensland has ever had, yet that is how far out he was in his budgeting at that stage.

The Government has allowed the State to face this record deficit without offering one positive measure to retrieve the situation. Its only response to an ever-deteriorating situation is to say blithely, "Blame Canberra." As I have said before, every time there is any argument over anything, it is a case of, "Blame Canberra." I will speak shortly of Queensland's relations with the Australian Government in Canberra, which the Treasurer and his colleague, the Premier, have spurned and castigated. We saw another example of that today.

But first I must remind the Treasurer that soon he and the Government that he represents must face the judgment of the people whose interests they claim to have at heart. That is their claim; I do not believe it. If in fact the Treasurer has the interests of the people at heart, he missed a golden opportunity in opening this debate to foreshadow some of the initiatives he must take on behalf of Queensland and Queenslanders. Instead of doing that, as usual he spent much of his time denigrating and castigating the Federal Government. Surely that is indicative of the record of neglect and indifference on which the Government will have to go to the people.

Queensland has a number of avenues open to it to raise the necessary money to continue its public works programme without pressuring—I emphasise the word "pressuring"—the Australian Government to provide increased money when it is trying to battle with inflation. As the Treasurer knows, by using State-raised revenue for capital works, jobs in Queensland could be secured. I believe that this State could raise at least an additional \$50,000,000 from traditional sources without imposing any additional taxation burden on wage and salary earners. On several occasions I have outlined how this

could be done; but because the suggestion has come from the Opposition, my pleas have been ignored.

Obviously, the State Government is happy to allow unemployment to grow in this State at the rate of 33·4 per cent, which it did between June and July this year. I believe that August figures, to be released soon, will show that Queensland's employment situation has become even worse. This is no time to blame Canberra. It is a time for leadership, which we will never get from the Government; it is a time for initiatives, which we will never get from the Government; and it is an opportunity for the Government to prove that it really does have the interest of Queenslanders at heart, which, of course, it does not. It has a wonderful opportunity to show that it is interested in people, in jobs, and in security of employment. I listened in vain for something along those lines from the Treasurer.

Instead, the Government wastes time and thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money in attempting to belittle the Australian Government by a ridiculous censure motion that occupied this Assembly for almost a full day. The Government wants to bite the hand that feeds it—the hand of the Australian Government.

However, on the very day on which the Treasurer was on his feet in this Chamber supporting the Premier's puerile motion—I will put it that way—the Grants Commission in Canberra was handing out \$8,900,000 to local authorities in Queensland.

Mr. Houghton: How much did it give the Gold Coast?

Mr. TUCKER: I suppose the Treasurer did not put up a good enough case for the Gold Coast. Local authorities were given \$8,900,000, and the honourable member cannot go past that fact. The Federal Cabinet ratified a Grants Commission report which recommended that these funds be given to councils to supplement their revenues, and the \$8,900,000 was part of the greatest single programme of assistance in the history of Australian federalism.

An interesting point to note is that, because the referendum proposal that would have allowed the Australian Government to deal directly with local authorities was defeated—and that was one of the proposals that the Premier and the Treasurer worked hard to defeat—the Government of Queensland was consulted so that local authority applications could go before the Grants Commission. So whoever interjected a moment ago and asked how much the Gold Coast was given now has an answer to his question. The Gold Coast City Council could not go directly to the Federal Government; it had to go to the Treasurer. I suppose the Treasurer put it down at the bottom of the list. The local authorities had to go through the Treasurer because they could not go direct to the Federal Government. If the

honourable member wants to know the answer, let him ask the Treasurer about it. Possibly he did not support the case. The person the local authorities had to deal with was the Treasurer. Yet on his feet in this Chamber the Treasurer did not see fit even to mention that the very Government he was criticising and abusing was in the process of providing assistance to Queensland local authorities.

A few days later we heard the Treasurer attempting to gain kudos for himself by claiming that an extra \$24,750,000 the Australian Government had approved through the Grants Commission was the result of his efforts and those of this whingeing Government. Did you ever hear anything so ridiculous, Mr. Lickiss? In effect, this grant was a reflection of the economic mismanagement of the State. The special grant to Queensland was an assessment by the Grants Commission of the assistance required to make it possible for Queensland to function at a standard not appreciably below that of the other States.

The Treasurer talks about being a good Treasurer! That \$24,500,000 was given to Queensland by the Australian Government. But for that benevolent Australian Government the Treasurer at the moment would be wondering how the devil he could go anywhere near balancing his Budget.

The grants were determined by the Grants Commission on the basis of a thorough examination of the States finances, and not from any special pleading by the Queensland Government. The Australian Government ratified the grants on the same basis.

I have previously mentioned in this Chamber that in the year just ended, the Australian Government, which this State Government condemns, made a total payment to Queensland of \$382 per head of population, which compares favourably with an average payment to all States of \$345 per head.

I should now like to outline specifically some of the assistance which has pulled this State Government out of its financial mire. I refer first to education. Payments to Queensland for all primary and secondary schools increased from \$11,000,000 in 1972-73 to \$27,000,000 in 1973-74, an increase of 145 per cent. Tertiary education payments to Queensland increased from \$20,000,000 in 1972-73 to \$53,000,000 in 1973-74, an increase of 165 per cent. Capital assistance for technical education in Queensland rose from \$1,900,000 in 1972-73 to \$4,000,000 in 1973-74, an increase of over 110 per cent.

Mr. Inch interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Mt. Isa can make his speech later. I hope he will give his leader a chance at this stage.

Mr. TUCKER: In addition, the Australian Government reimbursed Queensland to the extent of \$700,000 in 1973-74 following the abolition of fees in institutes of technical education.

For pre-school and child care Queensland received \$1,300,000 in the financial year just ended. Yet the State Government says that it has not been assisted and that it has not got anything from the Federal Government. All that sort of talk is bunkum.

In the field of Aboriginal advancement—one so neglected by the Queensland Government—payments to Queensland in addition to direct spending by the Australian Government totalled \$10,000,000 in 1973-74, an increase of \$2,300,000, or nearly 30 per cent, on the payments in 1972-73. Why are Government members so quiet now?

We well know of the wide range of flood relief and restoration measures implemented in Queensland with the generous help of the Australian Government. Queensland asked Canberra to pick up the tab after it had committed itself for only \$2,000,000 for flood relief. The Australian Government's share is expected to exceed \$82,000,000.

Who on the Government side would dare claim that the Australian Government has not acted benevolently towards Queensland? The Queensland Government has accused the Australian Government of indifference, a lack of sympathy and a lack of understanding. The members of the Queensland Government should hang their heads in shame.

Next I deal with roads, an area in which Queensland did very well last year. In fact it received \$59,800,000 under the Commonwealth aid roads arrangements. In addition to this money, the Australian Government announced its intention to spend \$24,000,000 in Queensland on northern beef-export roads over the next three years. It's no wonder that the State Government has neglected North Queensland and made a farce of any mention of decentralisation; its Cabinet can honour the North with only one Minister, and he is at Proserpine. The Government claims it is worried about North Queensland. Far from it. The only Government that shows concern for the people of the North is the Australian Government.

Housing advances totalling \$17,400,000 came to Queensland in 1973-74 under the Australian Government's new housing agreement with the States. This was an increase of 20 per cent over the corresponding allocation for 1972-73.

To eliminate the backlog of unsewered premises the last Federal Budget provided for a first contribution to Queensland of \$3,100,000, and since then the Australian Government has offered Queensland an additional \$1,000,000.

Development projects for which the Australian Government is providing assistance to Queensland include several major ventures.

Assistance in the financial year to 30 June was as follows: \$30,000,000 to the Gladstone Power Station, \$3,200,000 to the Bundaberg irrigation scheme, \$600,000 to the Fairbairn Dam, \$600,000 to the Eton irrigation scheme, and \$2,000,000 to the Lake Julius Dam.

The Australian Government is providing more than \$16,000,000 to meet the growing urban and irrigation needs of Townsville, Mt. Isa, Bundaberg, Mackay and Baralaba.

As to urban public transport, the State Government is happy to announce a transport scheme—two-thirds of which is financed by the Australian Government—to honour in part an election promise it made before the present Australian Government came to office. In addition the Australian Government is giving Queensland \$12,300,000 by way of non-repayable grants over the next five years. Of this money, \$5,580,000 will be spent on the cross-river rail link to Roma Street station, \$5,340,000 on the electrification of the suburban railway line from Darra to Ferny Grove and \$1,410,000 on additional trackage from Roma Street station to Northgate.

In the field of tourism and recreation, grants to Queensland for assistance with 70 specific projects total \$640,000, which is slightly more than the previous coalition Government's last Budget allocation for a national fitness campaign for the whole of Australia.

As to national estates—the National Trust in Queensland was allocated more than \$70,000 last financial year to help it acquire and restore aspects of our national heritage that might otherwise be destroyed.

In legal aid, the Queensland Government received \$300,000 in an emergency grant to provide additional assistance through the Queensland Legal Aid Committee.

The Australian Government has also granted to Queensland the sum of \$400,000 to speed up the establishment of an alcoholism out-patient assessment and treatment clinic.

I could go on and on. I could mention the \$919,532 that the Australian Government has provided for the construction in Brisbane of two training clinics for dental therapists; I could mention the new deal for pensioners under the Australian Labor Government; I could mention the sympathetic assistance shown recently towards the wool industry—to which this State owes a significant debt. I believe, however, that the few examples I have given are sufficient for all to see that these attacks on a generous Australian Government are but pitiful attempts to cover up the lack of imagination and initiative that the Treasurer has demonstrated so ably this afternoon. The Treasurer and the Government should hang their heads in shame. I say that the Australian Government has assisted Queensland in every way much more than it has assisted any other State.

(Time expired.)

Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (7.35 p.m.): I suppose that a Leader of the Opposition has to say something in the discussion on an Appropriation Bill to indicate that he is opposing the Government.

Mr. Wright: Here we go.

Mr. PORTER: Here, indeed, we do go.

It is very difficult to sit back and listen to the tirade of abuse and unadulterated rubbish that we get from the Opposition whenever it attempts to deal with an economic or financial matter. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that we offered Canberra no co-operation. The trouble with him, of course, is that he simply does not understand the meaning of words, or maybe he follows the Communist technique of using a word and trying to give it a completely opposite meaning to the one which it has for most people.

When he talks about our lack of co-operation, he really means our refusal to submit. He is talking about our refusal to accept whatever Canberra wants us to do. He keeps talking about what the Australian Government gives us—so much money for this and so much for that—but never once mentions that it is using the system of tied grants to do by fiscal and monetary measures what it is completely unable to do through the ballot-box. It cannot get the people of Australia to back it so it is endeavouring, by monetary measures, to do those things which will sweep away the present federal system and the privileges and freedom that people enjoy.

He said that we bite the hand that feeds us. What he means, of course, is that we attempt to bite the foot that kicks our teeth in. That is what it amounts to. The hand that feeds us! Doesn't he understand that the Federal Government collects money from taxpayers in Queensland and that what we are getting back is our taxpayers' money which, as the Constitution of Australia lays it down, plainly is our entitlement? It is our money.

Mr. Bousen: Nonsense!

Mr. PORTER: Doesn't the honourable member believe that? If the Opposition proclaims that on the hustings at the next election, I wonder how many seats it will finish up with. I invite it to do so. According to the Constitution that money belongs to this State.

The High Court holds that the Federal Government has a prior right to collect taxation. But no constitutional change, no electoral decision, no expression of the will of the people says that the money that the Commonwealth collects is its money and therefore it has the right to hand out that money under whatever conditions it deems fit to attach to it. The practice of making tied grants, which, unfortunately, developed in the time of the Liberal Government, and has now run riot with this Government, is

pernicious and is definitely dangerous and inimical to the federal system. It is quite clear that the Leader of the Opposition simply refuses to accept the results of the ballot-boxes in Queensland, which, on every occasion—

Mr. Wright interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the honourable member for Rockhampton that he reflected on the Chair. If I have occasion to speak to him again, I will deal with him under the provisions of Standing Order 123A.

Mr. WRIGHT: I rise to a point of order. A remark was made about a conversation at the back of the Chamber. I passed the remark that I hoped the same rule will apply to Liberal members.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw that statement. It is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. WRIGHT: I withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: I now warn the honourable member under Standing Order 123A for being disorderly.

Mr. PORTER: It is quite clear that the Leader of the Opposition and those who sit behind him making inane noises of approval on these matters simply refuse to accept the decisions of the ballot-boxes. They will not accept that the sovereign will of the electors should prevail. The fact is, of course, that every election, every test and every referendum indicates that the people do not want what he suggests, that is, big-brother Canberra, with the State Governments giving up all their authority, all their areas of administration and all their powers to the central Government in Canberra.

He then says that this is no time to be blaming Canberra; that this is a time to get together. No time to be blaming Canberra! One might well ask who caused this trouble. Up to December 1972, economically we had a clear, blue sky.

Mr. Bousen: Blue skies!

Mr. PORTER: Let me quote the figures. If any honourable member wants to show them to be incorrect or quote figures which contradict them, let him do so. In the decade up to 1972, inflation had been running at an average annual increase of 2.2 per cent. In the final quarter of that year it had risen to 4.6 per cent, which undoubtedly was too much. However, since then it has risen to an official 14.4 per cent and an unofficial 20 per cent plus, as I have no doubt the next quarter's figures will show. We have inflation which now gives us the third-highest rate in the world. We rank behind Japan and Italy but ahead of every other country in the world, including the

United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, France, West Germany and the rest.

Mr. R. Jones: That's not true.

Mr. PORTER: The Leader of the Opposition bumbled something about it not being correct. The figures come direct from the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. If he is prepared to say that they are not correct, then he takes on a very effective department. Since he has said that they are incorrect, I will read them to him, giving him the opportunity to read something else later on that will prove me wrong.

For the 12 months ending March 1974—and these are the very latest figures available—on the international inflation scale Japan was 24 per cent; Italy, 20 per cent; Australia, 13.6 per cent; the United Kingdom, with all its troubles, 13.5 per cent; New Zealand, 10.3 per cent; Canada, 10.4 per cent; the United States, 10.2 per cent; France, 12.2 per cent; and West Germany, 7.2 per cent. That is the situation in this country after 18 months of the Whitlam Government.

Mr. R. Jones: Read the lot. You've left a lot out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Cairns that persistent interjections will not be tolerated by the Chair.

Mr. PORTER: I also mention that presently unemployment is running at 100,000.

Mr. Bousen: It is never as high as when your party was in Government.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PORTER: Mr. Hawke is hardly on our side of the political fence, but in "The Australian" of 13 August he warned that we will soon be facing a position where 200,000 will be jobless. Many other people have estimated that the figure will be higher than that. Some have estimated that by the end of this year inflation will be running at 25 per cent at least and that by the end of June next year it will be in the vicinity of 35 or 40 per cent.

Mr. Bousen: That is only wishful thinking on your part.

Mr. PORTER: I hear an Opposition member suggest that that is only wishful thinking on my part. I will keep that enshrined in my memory and repeat it to him in a few months. We will see then what is wishful thinking and what is a proper predication of the horrible facts that are soon to descend upon us.

The Leader of the Opposition is totally an apologist for Canberra. That is what he does here. He makes uncouth noises every now and again as much as to say, "Oh, I am going to fight for Queensland. I stand up. I criticise." He criticises very

safely in areas where he knows he will not get into any trouble. I have no doubt that he has already cleared beforehand these small areas of disagreement, saying to his Federal colleagues, "Look, I have to do this to make a show. Don't take any notice of it. I don't really mean it." On the things that matter he does not even bother to do that. He goes through his antics like some trained poodle, performing everything that his Canberra bosses demand of him. Always, of course, he tries to denigrate Queensland as part of his exercise. As I have pointed out before—and the figures are official, on record and cannot be denied—the Queensland economic situation is one of the best in Australia.

Mr. Alison: No thanks to Gough.

Mr. PORTER: Certainly no thanks to Gough. He is trying to tear lumps off it in a very considerable fashion at the present time.

It would be interesting, of course, for the honourable gentleman to realise, as an indicator of this position, that the basic rate in Queensland is higher than that in any other State of Australia. Our weekly wage rate, as prescribed in awards at 30 April 1974, is \$84.09, which is \$1.75 above New South Wales, \$1.89 above Victoria, \$6.05 above South Australia, \$4.42 above Western Australia and \$2.27 above the Australian average. That is a pretty fair indicator of our economic stability.

Mr. Baldwin: Now tell us the average earnings.

Mr. PORTER: The average weekly earnings amount to \$117.50. Does that satisfy the honourable gentleman?

I also point out to Opposition members that another basic area indicating this State's capacity to withstand the enormous fluctuations and tremendous strains imposed on it by the gross mismanagement of these helpless, hopeless people in Canberra is the Consumer Price Index. It is a good indicator. What are the facts? Between the June quarter 1973 and the June quarter 1974, and there are no later figures available, the rises were—

	per cent
Brisbane	14.3
Sydney	14.3
Melbourne	14.8
Adelaide	15.3
Hobart	14.3
Six Capitals	14.4

Here again the Queensland rise is lower than the Australian average. So any attempts, merely by using wild words—and pretty intemperate words at that—to suggest that the Queensland economy is in a bad way and that we are only propped up by Federal Government hand-outs simply cannot be sustained on the facts.

The Treasurer, in opening this debate, made a very complete analysis of the basic problems with the economies of all States. No

doubt he will refer to it again when he brings down his Budget. The main cause of the budgetary problems of the States, and undoubtedly the main cause of the apprehension, despair and desperation being caused among Australian people today, is the way in which the Whitlam Government is determined to stoke the fire of massive hyperinflation.

We have the situation where we have had demand inflation—we still have some but it has largely turned into cost inflation—and yet we have a Federal Government that simply refuses to do the one thing necessary to stop this inflation becoming the worst that the Western world has ever known.

Mr. Baldwin: What is that—ban the unions?

Mr. PORTER: The honourable gentleman has a very peculiar sense of humour, if it is a sense of humour.

The main cause of this is the massive, lunatic Federal Government spending. This is what started the inflationary spiral. The Federal Government is now taking out of the private sector and putting into the public sector something like 40 per cent—certainly it would not be far short of 38 per cent so I will be generous and say 38 per cent—of net national resources. Once it gets above 25 per cent, inflationary forces have been set in motion that simply cannot be controlled until that amount of Government spending is cut down.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: How come the Treasurer leaves you to languish on the back bench?

Mr. PORTER: I suppose that is meant to cut me down to size. I will say again, as I have said to other gentlemen, that I am quite happy on the back bench. I think I can perform a useful service here and I hope to continue for many years yet. What we get from Opposition members, when they are unable to put forward a counter-argument, is this raucous, gutter, Trades Hall tactic of trying to be offensive. It is the cheapest and nastiest piece of technique, if one can dignify it by that word, that debating could find. It is useful at the Trades Hall and in the stand-over tactics that the honourable member for Archerfield apparently uses, but it falls flat in this Chamber. The simple fact of the matter is that all States, including Queensland, must face enormous budgetary problems with inflation running at its present rate, and with the threat looming clearly that it will be at a much greater rate in the months that lie ahead.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that the Federal Government, although it knows what causes inflation, simply will not reduce its own spending. This is the answer to that specious plea of non-co-operation that we hear from the Leader of the Opposition. He

says, "Why don't you co-operate?" Co-operation can come only when the Federal Government is prepared to play its part, and it can play its part only if it massively reduces its own spending. But it will not. Always the Federal Government's plea to the States is, "Do as we say, but you will not do as we do."

What are the facts? On 2 September, yesterday, Mr. Whitlam, who was opening a social health centre in Melbourne, said, amongst other things, "Our programme of reform will continue in spite of any economic problems we face." There is the story.

Mr. Alison: To hell with inflation.

Mr. PORTER: Yes, to hell with inflation, as the honourable member for Maryborough says. And to hell with the people, too, as long as the Labor Party can carry out its fanatical, doctrinaire, stupid programme of rearranging incomes in this country, and putting everybody under an obligation to the Government. As long as the Labor Party can do that, who cares what happens to the country? As long as the Labor Party is able to carry out its programme, which the people have not endorsed, it will do what it likes with the economy.

I believe that, with a Prime Minister who has made it quite plain there there will be no diminution in Federal spending, the situation for all State and private finances in Australia is going to be desperate indeed. No wonder there will be a wave of lawlessness among trade unionists. No wonder there will be strikes as trade unionists try desperately to make their net pay match up with the increasing cost of articles that inflation will continue to force up. The fact is, of course, that, although there have been rises in wages, which have been increasing faster than prices, since the Labor Government came to power there has been more than a 60 per cent increase in taxation, which has been hitting the ordinary man.

Let no member on the Opposition benches try to suggest that these massive taxation increases come from so-called wealthy people. They do not. Less than 12 per cent of the Australian tax yield comes from people with incomes of \$15,000 and over. The rest comes from ordinary working-class people, and they are the ones who are suffering under the Labor Government. They are the ones who have to pay massive sums in taxation in order to finance the idiotic, outdated, unwanted programmes of the Labor Party.

I say that the Leader of the Opposition should be ashamed to come into this Chamber as the leader of a party in a State Parliament and make an obsequious attempt to play down this State's sovereign role and proper constitutional responsibility. He should be ashamed of wanting this Parliament to become a doormat so that his Federal bosses can walk over it. The jackboot is not far away when we listen to

the Opposition here and see how it is prepared to sell out this State to the Federal centralists in Canberra.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (7.54 p.m.): The honourable member for Toowong has just completed another of the tirades against the Australian Government that we have become so used to every time he rises in this Chamber. He talks about lack of co-operation. If ever we have seen a lack of co-operation, we have seen it in the actions of this Government. Never before have we heard so many contradictory statements from the leaders of the two coalition parties in this State—the Premier making statements, the Treasurer making different statements.

The honourable member for Toowong said that the reason for the lack of co-operation is that the Government of Queensland refuses to accept tied grants from the Australian Government. What honourable members opposite forget, of course, is that that is exactly what the State received from Canberra in the 19 years that their political counterparts were in Government in Canberra.

One does not have to go back 19 years. It is easy to recall the grants that were made in 1971-72 to relieve unemployment in this State. They were well and truly tied. It was indicated by the then Liberal-Country Party Government that any finance allocated to relieve unemployment in Queensland had to go to local authorities other than the Brisbane City Council; in other words, the unemployed workers in the Brisbane metropolitan area could go to hell. That shows clearly the attitude of a Tory Federal Government.

Honourable members will remember, too, the finance allocated by the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government for science and library blocks in this State. It indicated how the money was to be used and stipulated that the blocks had to be built by contractors, and so on. All this talk about tied grants to the States by the present Australian Government is so much ballyhoo!

If one wishes to go further, one has only to look at Commonwealth-State housing agreements under former Liberal-Country Party Governments. If any State did not accept what was in the agreement, it played no part in it. Honourable members on this side of the Chamber are well aware of that, because a Labor Government in Tasmania did not agree to some parts of the 1956 agreement and therefore was unable to participate in it. The 1956 agreement made it quite clear that 30 per cent of the funds had to go to co-operative building societies. A Labor Government prepared the legislation in 1956; a Country-Liberal Government in this State had to give effect to it when it came to office in 1957.

The Committee heard a great deal of rubbish from the honourable member for Toowong relative to the decision at the

ballot box. As has been said by honourable members on this side of the Chamber so many times before, he should be the last to refer to what happens at the ballot box in this State. It is the greatest joke of all time.

Mr. Chinchin: What percentage did Labor get in Queensland at the last Federal election?

Mr. NEWTON: It is not a question of percentages. For example, take the coalition Government in Queensland. One party received 19 per cent of the vote and gained 26 seats in this Chamber. The A.L.P. received two and a half times that percentage. It there had been a fair and reasonable electoral distribution in Queensland, an A.L.P. Government would have been returned here years ago.

The honourable member for Toowong also dealt with inflation. Whether he likes it or not, inflation was with us when a Liberal-Country Party Government was in office in Canberra in 1972.

He then referred to Mr. Hawke, who sounded a note of warning to the Federal Government about unemployment. It is true that Mr. Hawke mentioned the figure of 200,000 unemployed. However, he indicated to the Australian Government that the remedy was in its hands and that, in bringing down its Budget later this month, it should give urgent consideration to the problem and ensure that unemployment did not increase to anything like that figure. It is idle to trot out things like that for political purposes. I reiterate that Mr. Hawke only warned the Australian Government that something should be done to overcome the problem.

Of course, we are used to hearing the honourable member for Toowong knock the Australian Government. He referred to the wage rates in this State. We could never be proud of the system in this State compared with that of other States. In Queensland three wage rates apply. God help those poor people on the basic wage in this State! Housewives are suffering from the high cost of basic household commodities. If Government members had met the deputation I received on Friday afternoon, they would realise how people are complaining about the steep increase in the price of milk. Nearly every fortnight there are steep increases in the prices of various basic household commodities. Housewives have to find an extra \$2 a week for milk and bread.

The basic wage in this State is \$50.20 a week. Housewives say without hesitation that for a family of three or four it costs them about \$48 a week for food. Nothing is left for rent or anything else. Then there is the minimum wage of \$70.30 a week. The unskilled and semi-skilled workers in this State, particularly process workers on the basic wage, are battling to exist because of the high prices being charged for household commodities. The average weekly wage

is somewhere near what it should be to maintain a man, his wife and four children; it is \$120 a week.

The Treasurer is noted for using the debate on the first Appropriation Bill to give a full report on everything that has taken place in order to provide a full picture of Queensland's financial position as it exists at this time of the year. We well recall his using this occasion to explain the functioning of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Following the announcement, which we were all pleased to hear, about the extra \$47,000,000 that he said was approved as a result of the submissions made by officers of his department, one might have expected that he would tell us what projects these grants were to cover.

Tonight we have witnessed an attack similar to the one made by the Premier and the Treasurer the other day in the debate on the motion without notice to attack the Australian Government. What happened on that occasion? Of course, the motion collapsed around their ears. Tonight the Treasurer talked about what the Premiers endeavoured to do when they met the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer to discuss the present economic situation confronting State Governments throughout the nation. We have heard so much talk about State rights and sovereign rights, and that the Commonwealth Government is trying to do away with the States. It is about time somebody told the State Governments that they, too, have a responsibility as Governments in their own States. They are bucking their responsibilities. Nobody would know that better than the Treasurer. After he took over as Treasurer from Sir Thomas Hiley, in either his first or his second Budget after the State election in 1966 he was forced to introduce taxation measures to meet the deficit at that time and to finance his Budget for 1966-67.

The Premier and the Treasurer of Queensland make suggestions of all kinds to the Commonwealth Government on a variety of matters, and at the same time they are ducking their ministerial responsibilities. They would like the Commonwealth Government to collect all the taxes, and would then like to have a slice of the cake after the taxes have been collected.

When the Commonwealth Government made its first attempt to obtain increased revenue so that it could slow down the current inflationary trend, the first person to speak out against the Commonwealth Government and knock it was the Queensland Premier. But he cannot have it both ways; he must either shoulder his responsibilities as Leader of a State Government or leave the task to the Commonwealth Government. If he follows the latter course, he should support every measure taken by the Commonwealth Government to combat the present inflationary trend.

The States, of course, are talking with tongue in cheek. When the Commonwealth Government held a referendum in order to gain control of prices and incomes, the States bitterly opposed the Commonwealth's proposals. How quickly they followed the opposite course, however, when the Labor Party won the election. The Queensland Premier is on record as agreeing with all other State Premiers—whether Labor, Liberal or Country Party—that the Commonwealth and the States should control prices and incomes to combat inflation. Further, the Premiers decided at their conference to seek radical Government controls similar to those embodied in the National Security Act of 1948. All of us can recall what those controls were, and perhaps they provide the answer to the present problem. The States should have co-operated with the Australian Government in examining this aspect very closely.

It was natural to assume that in introducing this Bill the Treasurer would have spoken at length about royalties.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Ha, ha, ha!

Mr. NEWTON: It is all very well for the Treasurer to exclaim, "Ha, ha, ha!" We can all recall the Commonwealth Grants Commission telling him to get off his behind and do something about royalties. For years the Opposition has been telling him the same thing. Instead of calling upon the people of Queensland to tighten their belts—at a time when he imposed increased taxation, as he did in his 1967 Budget—he should have increased royalties. He now claims that the royalties have been increased, but of course the whole matter is open to question because on the one hand the Premier makes certain statements and on the other the Treasurer is on record as having made conflicting comments.

Tonight the Treasurer has not been as vicious as usual; we expected to hear more from him about wage increases. The Treasurer, the Premier and other Government members are expected to give the lead in a number of these matters. There is no need for me to remind you of some of the increases that have occurred recently when you, as the Government, have—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

Mr. NEWTON: Yes, Mr. Lickiss. I was making the point that the Government agreed to a 10 per cent wages increase retrospective to 1 July. At the same time it indicated to the combined union groups that it was an interim payment, and that when the case was heard in September the Government would be willing to pay the balance. Probably the increase is worked out on the Consumer Price Index. If that is the basis which the Government is using to grant an increase to one section of Government employees, it should apply the

same basis to all Government employees in Queensland. The Treasurer trod very lightly tonight when dealing with this matter because the Government's policy on wage increases for employees working in Government departments has changed in recent years.

We have heard much tonight about expenditure on education, health and social services. While the Government may be maintaining the free hospital system in Queensland, it certainly has done nothing to extend it. If anything it is deteriorating.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. NEWTON: Government members may scream; I can stand here and take it. They have only to look at what has happened to the two major hospitals in the metropolitan area in which wards have been closed because the Government cannot get the necessary doctors and staff to run them.

I fully support my Leader's comments on housing. It would not be proper if I did not say something about this serious matter. In this sphere interesting comparisons can be made with what is happening in other States. Victoria asked the Federal Government for \$83,000,000 to help finance its housing programme. The Federal Government urged the New South Wales Government to spend \$30,000,000 of unspent federal money and suggested that if it could not build homes it should buy them. The position in Queensland has remained much the same for years. The Government determines what approaches it will make to the Federal Government for finance. As I have said time and again when attempts have been made to get extra finance for housing, Queensland's advances to the Commonwealth Government have not been strong enough.

We are confronted with a shocking situation. The honourable member for Everton referred today to the number of applications made to the Housing Commission by married couples and by married couples with families. He said that there were 6,361 outstanding applications. If that number is multiplied by four in a family, it can be seen that there are 25,000 people in Queensland waiting to be housed in that way.

(Time expired.)

Mr. D'ARCY (Albert) (8.14 p.m.): Like my leaders I was very surprised to hear the Treasurer again attack the Federal Government for its allocation of finance to the State. As has been pointed out, the Treasurer does not seem to know whether he will end this year with a debit or a credit. He will probably go down in the history of Queensland as one of the greatest jugglers of finance of all times. Perhaps "juggler" is a kind way of describing him in view of what we have heard from him about mining royalties. The people of

Queensland are puzzled about it. The Treasurer this year says that royalties will be increased substantially. To me and others it is of interest that he now tells the people of Queensland that this can be done. People in my electorate are asking the same question as all people all over the State: "Why for so many years did the Treasurer say that we could not increase royalties; that we could not do anything about it; and that the railways were providing us with the benefits?"

I read his earlier speeches before I came into the Chamber. It is ludicrous that the Treasurer could cry poor mouth and claim that we were tied to these agreements, and then all of a sudden find that he can increase the amounts. What has happened to the substantial sums of money that would have been in the coffers of the Queensland Treasury if in previous years the royalties had been increased?

As has been pointed out, we are fortunate in having in the mining field such a strong Federal Minister as Rex Connor. He has severely embarrassed the Treasurer. It has grated on the Treasurer that Rex Connor's popularity in this country has risen so rapidly. He kept us out of the oil crisis. He has caused royalties to be increased. A news release only a few weeks ago stated that the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy had approved a \$21,000,000 renegotiation of the iron-ore export contracts, mainly to the Japanese. Evidently he handles those people a lot better than the Treasurer has ever done for the State of Queensland.

We in Australia are fortunate in having a Government that has taken such a tremendous interest in the national heritage and the mining industry. It has certainly made a difference to our State's financial standing. What sort of revenue would the Treasurer have had if he had to rely solely on the State's income? As I say, when we need the money he manages to juggle it.

Another interesting point is that when money comes from the Commonwealth Grants Commission, it is the independent Grants Commission that gives it to this State; when it is refused, it is the Australian Government that refuses it. To me it is rather strange that the Treasurer can be so hypocritical about the situation. It simply amazes me.

The Treasurer dealt at length with inflation, laying the blame for it at the feet of the Australian Government. However, the interesting point about inflation is that Queensland, as a sovereign State, has very strong powers in certain areas of the economy; yet we have seen this Government sit back complacently and continually blame the Federal Government for the present economic situation. The stage has been reached where even members opposite must realise that the public is getting sick of it and beginning to look a little more deeply at what the coalition Government has not

done for the economy over the last 17 years. Government members have been unconcerned about the huge deficits that have occurred. They overlook the fact that in the Federal sphere huge deficits were built up by previous Governments. We are still making up the deficit that Snedden left us with in his last Budget in 1972—\$52,000,000. Many countries in the world today continue to blame the Americans for the \$30-billion deficit they left on the world's money market by the end of the Vietnam war. Doubtless, that is having an effect on the world's economy.

From listening to members of this Government, it could be thought that the economic situation today can be blamed solely on the Federal Government. They do not realise that the same situation of a tightening economy exists throughout the world. The point is that in his last Budget the Treasurer forecast that, on past figures, it would be a good financial year. It is amazing to see Sir David Muir's comment in today's Press that factory production in Queensland is up substantially. This is the case throughout Australia.

But where has the Treasurer's money gone? A good deal of his revenue came from speculation. He pointed out in last year's Financial Statement that a good deal of money came through the Stamp Duties Office and the Titles Office from speculative activities. Some of these activities have ceased and certain fly-by-night real estate agents and some who have come into the game recently have gone out of business. The well-established real estate agents are still in business and are doing quite well selling legitimately. But the high speculative prices encouraged by the Treasurer have started to drop, thank goodness!

The Treasurer is very adept in speaking of large sums of money, and we are told by individual Ministers that so much money has been made available for urban areas, sewerage, schools and so forth. We do not see action where it is most needed—in the urbanised areas. We are given outdated figures that the Treasurer has managed to concoct for a number of years. In some of the fringe areas schools are supposed to have, for instance, 400 students and suddenly we find they have 900. That has happened in Kingston, Woodridge, Slacks Creek and Beenleigh. The same applies to sewerage in those areas. The Treasurer or other Ministers are underestimating financial requirements. This situation also exists in the railway system which has become a classic not only in its failure to produce revenue but also in its tendency to lose money.

The Treasurer well remembers that, as Minister for Transport, he ripped up the railway line to the Gold Coast and people in that area have not had a rail service since 1964. The Beenleigh area is still serviced by trains, although Kingston people

cannot board them because the Minister will not raise the level of the platform. Many hundreds of thousands of people use that service each year. The Kingston main road is a disgrace.

These are the areas in the State that are neglected in the provision of finance for education, sewerage and hospitalisation. The people are still forced to travel to Brisbane for hospitalisation. The State should provide additional finance for urgent facilities.

Mr. Wharton interjected.

Mr. D'ARCY: That is an interesting situation and I am glad the honourable member raised it. The Treasurer continually crawls out from under and passes the buck to the Federal Government, yet the Premier tells us often enough that Queensland is a sovereign State. The Federal Government is making money available for housing and education, as is pointed out in this letter I received from the Federal Minister for Housing (Mr. Les Johnson)—

"You will be aware that, although the Australian Government provides substantial financial assistance to the States for housing, and consequently is able to exert some influence on the overall policies to be followed, the detailed planning of their activities in this field including the acquisition of sites and construction of dwellings is left almost entirely as a matter for the State authorities to administer.

"I am therefore not in a position to be able to directly assist you."

That indicates the level of finance made available in the areas to which I am referring.

This is typical of the way in which money is provided. The State Government receives blank cheques, and what does it do with them? Money is not made available in the areas where it is most needed. In addition, where departments could possibly have moneys made available, they manage to avoid making use of them. Perhaps they do not even ask the Treasurer for money. A typical example of the point I am now making was provided by the Minister for Lands and Forestry. I suppose that ever member must from time to time receive complaints concerning his department. I wonder if the Minister answers them in the way in which he answers me? I quote from one of his letters referring to Crown land that it seemed impossible to have cleaned up. The Minister said—

"As advised previously, my department has no statutory obligation to clear rubbish from vacant Crown land, nor is it financially possible for the Crown to clear and keep cleared all the vacant Crown land in Queensland."

That is understandable, but what about residential areas? The Minister continued—

"My department has limited funds available to meet its various commitments throughout the State and must rely on the

co-operation of local authorities and local fire brigades to eliminate potential fire hazards."

Does that give the department permission to break the laws of the land? If land belonging to a private citizen became overgrown, the local authority would say to him, "Clean it up." But the Minister for Lands and Forestry says in this letter that the Treasurer does not give him the money necessary to clean up vacant Crown land even in residential areas under the control of local authorities.

I return to another problem faced in the present financial situation. The day after tomorrow in my electorate the Crown will be offering by auction a large parcel of about 37 blocks of Crown land which will produce substantial revenue for the State. I query the way in which the land is auctioned. The upset prices of residential blocks in Southport will be from about \$5,600 to about \$10,000 or \$11,000. I should like clarified the purpose for which the land is auctioned. Is it to produce revenue for the coffers of the State, or is it to give home-buyers a chance to obtain a piece of land on which to build a home? From the information that I have received, it appears to me that it is merely a method of grabbing money and helping to fill the coffers of the State. Perhaps the Treasurer will give consideration, if he has not already done so, to selling off more Crown land if he is a little short in his Budget.

When developers obtain Crown land, it is sold to them freehold for, say, \$10 an acre or \$50 an acre. Time and time again such contracts are signed by the Lands Department. Does the Treasurer really expect us to believe that the people of this State are getting a fair go? Does he expect us to understand his system of accounting, when he claims that the coffers of the State benefit very considerably from the sale of Crown land in building blocks although the subdividers pay the State so very little?

I conclude by making a plea on behalf of the rapidly growing areas of the State, particularly Kingston, Slacks Creek, Beenleigh and Loganholme, for finance for the provision of amenities such as roads, schools and sewerage.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (8.29 p.m.): I did not propose to join in this debate, but, frankly, I am sickened by the political dishonesty and hypocrisy of members of the A.L.P. I think I know something about people, and I tell the Committee that they detect and resent political hypocrisy and dishonesty before anything else. Goodness knows they are getting a spate of political dishonesty and political hypocrisy from the A.L.P. in this State.

Today honourable members heard the honourable member for Rockhampton North extolling the virtues of local authorities buying large areas of land and selling them as cheap allotments to home buyers. He said, "Why don't we do what the Townsville City

Council is doing?" I will tell you, Mr. Lickiss, what the Townsville City Council is doing.

The Townsville City Council did have a large area of land in the Douglas area. It cut it up into allotments, and it proposed to sell the land in allotment sizes to home buyers at about two-thirds the ordinary sale price in adjoining areas. It called applications from young people who were prepared to buy land, and hundreds were ready to buy it. But, thanks to the policy of the Whitlam A.L.P. Government alone in jacking up the interest rates, only a handful of young people can now afford to raise the money and pay the exorbitant interest rates that the Whitlam Government is imposing. That is the fact of the matter in Townsville, where the whole scheme is collapsing, not because of any sin of commission or omission by the Queensland Government but purely and simply because of the A.L.P. Government in Canberra.

The letters "A.L.P." are supposed to stand for "Australian Labor Party". The only people who are making a packet today, the only people who are stuffing their pockets with small people's money, with workers' money, with farmers' money, with little people's money, are the money-lenders. They are the people who have large sums of money to lend to the lending institutions. It is about time we faced up to the cold, indisputable fact that the letters "A.L.P." in Australia today stand for "Australian Loan-sharks Party", because they are the only people who are making anything out of the Whitlam Government while the workers, the farmers and the useful people are being hit to leg.

Recently in Townsville there was a shocking case of political hypocrisy. The Leader of the Opposition rushed into "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" paper and said that the Minister for Works and Housing should be appealed to, that it should be demanded of him that he reduce interest rates so that young people could buy homes and establish themselves in their own home. Nobody should know better than the Leader of the Opposition—he is not an absolute fool, although he may be partly one—that the Minister for Works and Housing in this State has nothing to do with the shocking and staggeringly high interest rates that young people are now being charged. The only people responsible for that are the members of the Whitlam A.L.P. Government, to which the Leader of the Opposition is a pretty good toady at any time.

The A.L.P. had an advertisement in "The Townsville Daily Bulletin"—it was run by my opponent, the fellow who ran very badly against me at the last State election and will fare worse at the next State election—and it also showed the Australian flag. It launched a vicious and venomous attack on "Joh Bjelke-Petersen"—that is how the advertisement read—for increasing the price of milk by 5c a pint. It is true that the increase of

5c a pint is a hardship on the worker and the battler. But my A.L.P. opponent—"Sweatrag" Wilson, as he is known—is an organiser for the Building Workers' Industrial Union, and if they want to talk about the increase in the price of anything, let them be honest and talk about the increase in the price of housing; let them talk about the increase in the price of building materials; let them talk about having to pay any carpenter in Townsville \$70 a day to do any work that needs doing around a home. It is like the pot calling the kettle black, or Satan reproving sin. Fancy an organiser of the Building Workers' Industrial Union criticising "Joh Bjelke-Petersen" for increasing the price of milk by 5c a pint!

What about pensioner units in Townsville? There are pensioners in Townsville without a roof over their heads because this same A.L.P. Whitlam Government, of which the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy are suppliant stooges and toadies, has stopped the supply of funds to the State Housing Commission that would enable pensioner units to be built.

When we are talking of housing, Mr. Lickiss, and when we are talking about the responsibility of the Government of Queensland and of the State Treasurer to supply money for housing so that young people can have a roof over their heads, we all know—and I have the figures—that Labor Investments Pty. Ltd. run by the A.L.P. has \$11,000,000 stashed away in various investments. How much of that is invested in housing? How much is invested in food shops so that the people can be supplied with cheap food? Not one single cent of it! All that Labor Investments Pty. Ltd. is interested in is big, financial, commercial undertakings from which it can sit back, without making one thing available to the people and rake in its shocking profits.

The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and their supporters say, "We have got to work in with the Federal Government or we will get nowhere." As I mentioned the other day, every time the Leader of the Opposition gets the opportunity he says, "If I've got to fight Whitlam in the interests of Queensland, I will roll up my sleeves and I will dong him on the konk." Here is an opportunity for him. Every time someone else says, "We've got to fight Whitlam in the interests of Queensland", the Leader of the Opposition comes out and says, "You won't get away with that. You'll get nothing for Queensland unless you tag behind the Whitlam A.L.P. Government." In other words, unless you become a yo-yo dangling on the end of a string pulled by Gough Whitlam, you won't get anywhere.

South Australia has an A.L.P. Government, too—the Dunstan Government. I do not know any Government that has been more supine to the Whitlam Government

until quite recently than the Dunstan Government. Why doesn't the Leader of the Opposition, his deputy, and the other people who think as they do, cite South Australia as a wonderful example? In no State in Australia are prices higher than they are in South Australia, even though price control has operated there for some years. In no State is there higher unemployment than in South Australia. In no State in Australia has there been a greater degree of industrial chaos than in South Australia. Only recently, owing to a demarcation dispute between the Transport Workers' Union and the Waterside Workers' Federation, thousands of tons of steel rusted on the wharves in South Australia. That steel was urgently required for buildings and other purposes, but it could not be shifted.

Finally Dunstan—this paragon of all the A.L.P. Premiers—introduced legislation into the South Australian Parliament which compelled the Transport Workers' Union to give way to the Waterside Workers' Federation. Believe it or not, Mr. Lickiss, the same Mr. Dunstan also introduced a Bill to provide for the South Australian Government to declare and operate a state of emergency. When the Queensland Government declared a state of emergency at the time of the visit of the Springbok footballers, we saw A.L.P. members of this Parliament sitting down in the gutter with known Communists. We saw and heard members of this Parliament shrieking, "Sedition!" We saw them throwing their arms around the scruffiest and the grubbiest element from the university and all the riff-raff section of the trade union movement. It is not that there are not decent members of the trade union movement, because there are. When the police finally rushed them in front of the Trades Hall it was members of the A.L.P. in this Chamber now—they were not then—who were first down the hill and first catapulted into the road down below. Yet they are the people who tell us that we are never going to get anywhere unless we kowtow to the Federal Government.

I feel sure that members of the crime and punishment committee would like to know that in the State of South Australia, which is held up as the model to all the other States, the incidence of rape has increased so alarmingly that a special commission is to be set up to deal with the shocking increase in that crime. If honourable members are going to cite anything as an example of running along in double harness with the Whitlam A.L.P. Government, for goodness sake in all decency and honesty do not let them cite South Australia.

The Whitlam Government is driving people off the land and that is the beginning of the end of any community. We are told that the Roman Empire fell because of debauchery, lechery and various other vices. Certainly the Roman Empire fell, but not for those reasons. The Goths, the Huns and

the Vandals were on the banks of the Danube and thundering at the Roman Empire's northern gates, but it fell because it had reached the stage that the Whitlam Government is getting close to. The Roman Empire depended for its oil on Spain and for its wheat, corn and other grain on North Africa. It was generously handing out these commodities to all the riff-raff in Rome and in other parts of Italy, and in the same way the Whitlam Government is doling out money to the deliberately unemployed and riff-raff in our community. Eventually the farmers in North Africa and Spain said, "We have had a gutful of this. We are not going to put any more into the pool. Instead we will go to Italy and get something out." So they went from North Africa and Spain to Italy, and the result was that because more people were taking out of the pool than were putting into it the Roman Empire collapsed, and had to re-establish itself in Constantinople.

Tonight, the honourable member for Albert fulminated against everyone who attacks the Whitlam Government or criticises it. Where was he quite recently? He was over in the Commo countries of Europe, kowtowing to the Commos and no doubt giving the Communist salute. He was over there as a guest of the Commo countries or of some Commo organisation that sent him over there and paid all his fares and expenses.

Mr. D'ARCY: I rise to a point of order. I ask the honourable member for Townsville South to withdraw the remarks he just made.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will do the ordering of any honourable member to withdraw remarks. I would like to hear the honourable member's point of order.

Mr. D'ARCY: The honourable member's remarks are offensive to me. I have never been in a Communist country in my life.

Mr. AIKENS: Tell us where you were and who paid your fare.

Mr. D'Arcy: I was in West Germany.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Albert claims that the remarks made by the honourable member for Townsville South are offensive to him. I ask that the remarks be withdrawn.

Mr. AIKENS: If any remark I made—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw the remarks without any qualification.

Mr. AIKENS: If any remark I made is offensive to the honourable member for Albert—

Mr. Wright interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Rockhampton has already been warned tonight.

Mr. AIKENS: If any remark I made is offensive to the honourable member for Albert I take it as a tribute to me, and I withdraw it.

Mr. Bousen interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair does not require any prompting from the honourable member for Toowoomba North.

Mr. AIKENS: I said if any remark I made is offensive to the honourable member for Albert—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will simply withdraw the remark and continue with his speech.

Mr. AIKENS: I will withdraw it, Mr. Lickiss, and consider it one of the finest compliments that have ever been paid me.

Mr. D'ARCY: On a point of order, Mr. Lickiss, I ask the honourable member for Townsville South to withdraw the remark without qualification, and I hope that at least someone would tell the truth in this place occasionally.

Mr. Lane: Take your handbag and go home!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! An honourable member on my right will be taking more than his handbag and going home in a minute.

Mr. B. Wood interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I warn the honourable member for Barron River under Standing Order 123A. If he speaks again while I am on my feet, he will be outside the Chamber. The Chair is losing its sense of humour. The honourable member for Townsville South will withdraw the remark without qualification.

Mr. AIKENS: I will withdraw the remark without qualification, and I would suggest that the honourable member for Albert have a look at the map of Europe.

Mr. D'ARCY: I rise to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Albert is now becoming frivolous. The honourable member for Townsville South will continue with his speech.

Mr. AIKENS: I will show him the border between West Germany and East Germany. I know where it is.

The honourable member for Everton is not in the Chamber, so I shall spare him. He, too, recently visited some Communist countries, as a member of a peace delegation. Imagine the honourable member for Everton advocating peace! There we have it. This Federal A.L.P. Government, with the full cognisance and support of its State helots, is driving the decent people off the land—the salt of the earth—the people who make this land what it is and without whom it would

not be worth a cracker. Sensible people who talk to us in the street ask the same questions—"How long will Whitlam last? How long will it be before he has to go? How long before the split occurs in the Labor Party which smashed—?"

Mr. Bousen interjected.

Mr. AIKENS: Fancy the honourable member talking! He scabbed on us in 1931. He scabbed on me in 1931.

Mr. BOUSEN: I rise to a point of order. The word "scab" is offensive to me. In 27 years in the railway service I never scabbed in my life.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will withdraw the statement.

Mr. AIKENS: I will withdraw that statement, Mr. Lickiss—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will withdraw without qualification.

Mr. AIKENS: I withdraw it without qualification.

I struck with my mates in North Queensland in 1931 against the vicious Moore Government. I was out for nine months. I lost my job; I lost everything, and the honourable member for Toowoomba North worked right through that period.

Mr. BOUSEN: I rise to a point of order. That is offensive to me; I didn't work. He's a liar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Toowoomba North is now aggravating the situation by referring to another honourable member in unparliamentary language. The honourable member for Townsville South I think that was even.

Mr. AIKENS: Thank you, Mr. Lickiss. I need no protection against the type of individual—

Mr. Jensen: Johnno Mann told me you were a scab.

Mr. AIKENS: Johnno Mann ought to be a good judge of a scab and you ought to be a good judge of a scab, too. You tell us where you got your money from for your first election. If you don't, I will.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair!

Mr. AIKENS: If the honourable member for Bundaberg will permit me, I will go down and get the letter.

Mr. Jensen: I will take anybody to court who says that he gave me money.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the honourable member for Townsville South to continue with his speech and address the Chair.

Mr. AIKENS: Yes, Mr. Lickiss. Sometimes we ask ourselves why the Labor Party can never aspire to getting back onto the Treasury benches. I suppose I have been a little provocative tonight, and I apologise to you, Mr. Lickiss, because I hold you in high regard. But I have given, by my provocative statements tonight, and the response I have got from members of the A.L.P., the complete answer as to why they will never get back on the Treasury benches. Anybody in the gallery who saw them and heard them will say, "How the hell can we vote for a ragtag mob like that?"

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Treasurer) (8.48 p.m.), in reply: In the 27 years I have been in this Chamber I have seen enter it as honourable members what I would possibly describe as some queer characters, but each has had his own peculiarity and, I believe, has made a contribution to the Chamber. When a man aspires to and achieves the position of Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber he should not only exhibit a knowledge of the responsible position he holds, but also realise that he has an obligation to place before the Chamber factual information. The utterances made by the Leader of the Opposition earlier tonight clearly indicate that he has no grasp of the finances of this State or, if he has, that he cannot interpret what the situation is.

From the outset of his speech he indicated that the defeat of the referendums in this State represented some action by the people of Queensland which was to the detriment of Queensland and contrary to the views of the Australian Government. It was an indication by the people of Queensland that they would not have any part of the policy enunciated. That was not just the view of the people of Queensland. Not one of the points in the referendums placed before the people of Australia was carried. On the first point, therefore, the Leader of the Opposition is so vague in his knowledge that on the basis of the referendums he does not realise just what the verdict of the people was.

He then attempted to explain that at some time over recent weeks I had made a statement that, in preparing the 1974-75 Budget, I was in deficit to the extent of \$78,000,000. Again, he either cannot read or cannot interpret what was said on that occasion. It is true that at a meeting of my own parliamentary members I indicated that I had the first figures, prepared by departmental officers and based on the figures in the previous year, indicating the expected receipts for the coming financial year.

An Opposition Member: Who leaked that?

Sir GORDON CHALK: Nobody leaked it. I made the statement.

The second point I indicated was that my departmental officers had given me certain estimates of expenditure, and the gap

between the expected income and expenditure was \$78,000,000. Nobody denies that. I then indicated that there was a responsibility on the Treasurer to try to bridge that gap and to prepare a Budget. However, never at any stage was there an indication that the State would be in deficit to the extent of \$78,000,000 when Queensland's Budget was brought down.

The next point referred to by the Leader of the Opposition was that talking to the Prime Minister and advocating on behalf of the States that extra grants should be made was, as it were, like trying to sell a refrigerator to the Eskimos. Does he class the Prime Minister of Australia and Mr. Crean as Eskimos, or just what did he mean by that reference? It is one of those things which, I believe, can be quoted from "Hansard" on an appropriate occasion and in an appropriate place.

Let us examine the further utterances of the Leader of the Opposition. He referred to the fact that the Commonwealth Grants Commission, which was set up to decide assistance to local governments, did not make a grant to the Gold Coast. He proceeded to say that, because of that, the Treasurer apparently did not put up a good enough case. The Treasurer did not appear before the Grants Commission—nor did any Government member appear before it—during the hearing in relation to the allocation of funds for local authorities. That was a hearing at which the Local Government Association submitted before the Grants Commission the cases on behalf of local governments. The State Treasurer had nothing whatever to do with it. However, as will appear in "Hansard", the Leader of the Opposition said that the State was connected with the case presented on behalf of the Gold Coast—and indirectly, I suppose, with the decision made by the Grants Commission.

He proceeded to say that we would claim it was the Grants Commission and not a benevolent Federal Government that made the funds available. I agree, because it was not a benevolent Government at all. Since the Grants Commission came into operation in 1932, no Government has ever turned down any of its recommendations.

Time and time again I have explained in this Chamber that the Grants Commission was set up by the Commonwealth Government when the late Joe Lyons was Leader of a Liberal Party Government for the very purpose of getting away from the normal Government procedure or the formulas applicable to the various States and the Commonwealth. Consequently, the decision was not made by a benevolent Government at all; it was a recommendation of the Grants Commission based on a case put forward by Queensland in which our peculiarities in certain activities were outlined. I repeat that I commend my Under Treasurer (Mr. Fields)

and my Deputy Under Treasurer (Mr. Hielscher) and those who worked with him on the preparation of this case.

The honourable member for Belmont claimed that we were not entitled to this money. He submitted that Queensland was so successful that the Grants Commission should not have given us any money. What does he want to do? Does he want to deny Queensland money to which we convinced able and capable men we were entitled, to provide certain amenities and benefits for our people?

The fourth point raised by the Leader of the Opposition was that the State was provided with \$82,000,000 of flood relief money. The correct figure is \$58,000,000. The State provided not \$2,000,000 but \$4,000,000. I have indicated how far the Leader of the Opposition was from the truth so can we take notice of this person who has become Leader of the Opposition and aspires to be Premier?

His next utterance concerned grants for tertiary education. The Commonwealth Government made available additional money for tertiary education in this State—additional in the sense that it was provided by the Commonwealth and was deducted from our financial assistance grant. On the one hand the Commonwealth handed it out for tertiary education and on the other hand it took it out of the funds that this State would have received.

The sum of \$27,000,000 was deducted for universities. This State would have continued to receive that amount while the agreement continued. In that case, that \$27,000,000 would have had a growth factor of something like 6 to 8 per cent annually. While we lost \$27,000,000 this year, it would have been \$27,000,000 plus 6 per cent next year and that amount plus 6 per cent the following year. That indicates what this will mean to Queensland in the years ahead. That again shows the complete inaccuracy of the statements of the Leader of the Opposition.

Let us go a little further. The Leader of the Opposition spoke about urban transport arrangements. Virtually these were arranged prior to 1972, and they were in progress when the Whitlam Government came to power. But two years later, after all sorts of central Government restrictions have been applied, this State has still not received \$1 from the Commonwealth Government. It is true that we have been told that we can proceed with a programme which, based on last year's figures, is in the vicinity of \$69,000,000. But the point of the matter is that by the time that is finished, escalation of costs will have taken the amount to \$100,000,000.

Whilst the Commonwealth Government has said that it will provide \$2,200,000 in the first year of operation, the State is expected to find \$1,100,000. However, the agreement that the Government has had to complete

contains certain clauses that indicate that if in the following financial year the Australian Government is not in a position to provide carry-on finance, the State will continue within the resources that are available to it. In other words, this situation could continue for a period of time, and who knows which party will be in government at a later date? The State Government has embarked upon this programme on one basis, that being the desire to ensure that it cannot be accused of stalling.

On the other hand, our planning is restricted because we have no knowledge of the amount of money that will be available in the next financial year. Unless it is possible to plan at least 12 months ahead and have specifications drawn and tenders let, there will be a time gap between the availability of funds and actually putting the work in hand. Again statements have been made by the Leader of the Opposition that no doubt will receive some publicity but are not in accordance with the facts.

Let us take another falsehood, if I may so describe it. Mention was made of beef roads. This scheme was introduced by the previous Government. The present Government is continuing the beef roads programme, but it is substantially reducing the grants to rural areas. To my mind, beef roads are constructed for the purpose of transporting cattle from country areas to the cities or to meat-works. Because of the desire of the Whitlam Government to operate in certain urban areas, which are adjacent to not only Brisbane but other capital cities, the money that was normally provided under an agreement between the Main Roads Department and the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of building beef roads has been substantially reduced. Yet the Leader of the Opposition makes the statement that the benevolent Federal Government, as he terms it, in Canberra is doing this and that for the State of Queensland. I shall have an opportunity in the presentation of the Budget to indicate just what Queensland has received.

As I said earlier today, the State Government has asked the Commonwealth Government for additional funds under our financial assistance grant. I know very well that, whilst 20 per cent has been allowed for increases in wages under the financial assistance grant, it is possible that we will obtain more. We will bludgeon the Prime Minister into that because we will have proof that the wage structure has increased beyond that percentage. For that reason, I believe that we will receive some additional funds. It will not be because of the generosity of the Prime Minister; it will be because wages have increased, and increases in wages affect the formula governing the amount of money made available to the States.

We also argued over additional loan funds. Heaven knows where we will be able to raise the money, but I will guarantee now that we will be given an opportunity to

raise additional loan funds because, again, that will play into the hands of the Commonwealth Government. These are the things we must have, and the things to which I believe we are entitled.

The honourable member also referred to the fact that Queensland receives more per capita than the other States. Is that a crime? The distribution formula has not been changed while the Federal Labor Government has been in office. Queensland has an advantage, and I believe that is because of the good advocacy of those who represented Country-Liberal Governments in argument when the basis of the present Financial Assistance Agreement was laid down. Queensland was able to demonstrate that, because it did not have the many miles of bitumen roads that have been built in New South Wales and Victoria, did not have a pocket-handkerchief area, and had 6,000 miles of railway line compared with 2,000 miles in one State and 1,700 in another, there was a need for additional funds to be provided on a per capita basis. I say, "All credit to those whose advocacy ensured that Queensland did receive the advantage." From the point of view of the Leader of the Opposition, apparently it is a crime that Queensland receives more per capita than other Australian States. In my opinion, the development that is taking place in this State and the part that Queensland is playing in increasing the wealth of the nation entitle it to receive additional assistance.

In this Appropriation Bill I have indicated to the Committee the amount of finance that is required to further Queensland's interests until such time as the Budget is placed before honourable members. However, I mentioned the difference between the funds required for this year and those required for a similar period last year, and that was clear evidence of exactly what is happening in the community.

The honourable member for Belmont accused me of ducking some of my responsibilities. He had to go back to 1967 to find something that he could condemn in a Queensland Budget. This is 1974.

Mr. Aikens: He was going to school in 1967.

Sir GORDON CHALK: He was not going to school then; in fact, the figures he placed before the Committee made me doubt whether he ever went to school.

It is true that there were some increases in taxation away back in 1967. However, since 1967 the rate of increase in any basis of taxation in Queensland has been much lower than similar increases in other Australian States, and I will keep it that way when I bring down the next Budget.

The honourable gentleman referred to price control and said that Queensland had agreed at the Premiers' Conference to introduce price control. That is far from being a fact. There were discussions between the Premiers on price control and control of wages. There was an indication that if the Commonwealth Government would take a certain line of action there would be a basis on which the States would consider not handing over powers to the Commonwealth, but rather the bringing down of what is described in political circles as mirror legislation that would enable us to control our own affairs; but, at the same time, it would be on the basis of agreement throughout the Australian States. What happened to that? The Prime Minister indicated that he was not prepared to take part in such a proposal.

The honourable member for Belmont made a number of statements about royalties. The action taken by the Government on royalties is one which it can defend under any circumstances. It is true that in the earlier stages risk capital for development was brought into Queensland. It is equally true that those who took the risk have in turn reaped their reward. Today we have townships established in Central Queensland; we have some 600 extra miles of railroad; we have improved ports; we have developed industries and we have subsidiary industries working with them. The time has arrived when the State can go to these companies, as I have done, and indicate that we believe that we are entitled to a greater contribution now that they have established themselves and have a payable and worth-while industry. That is the basis on which the approaches have been made. I make no apologies to anyone for the timing of the move or the manner in which it is being done.

The honourable member for Belmont criticised the Government for agreeing to a 10 per cent interim increase in the salaries of public servants. I want all public servants in Queensland to know that the honourable member for Belmont would deny them the 10 per cent increase from the time it was granted up to the time of the determination of the claim. In other words, he said in so many words that he wanted to deny the workers their right to this 10 per cent increase when many others had gone before the Industrial Commission and had been awarded larger amounts. Those who had claims before the commission and those who had lodged claims were all treated alike. I thought the honourable member was a workers' representative. I have come to one conclusion: he is not a workers' representative but a representative of the Left Wing which wants to bring about a socialised approach to all the activities within this State. We all know the advocacy of the honourable member. I am sure that

when he has an opportunity to really think over what has been said tonight, he will regret it the rest of his life.

Let me deal next with the honourable member for Albert.

A Government Member interjected.

Sir GORDON CHALK: Yes, I could understand him. I thought there was a difference in his voice, but I can understand why.

One would have thought that he would have been the first to get to his feet and make some attack on the findings of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. His area did not receive one cent from the Grants Commission, yet the honourable member came in here and said that we on this side of the Chamber should not attack the Federal Government on any particular activity.

We did not attack the Federal Government; what we did was point out that it was difficult to understand why the Gold Coast did not receive some assistance from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. In his speech did the honourable member for Albert make a plea on behalf of the people of the Gold Coast? Certainly not. What he did was indicate that everyone was quite happy with what had been done and suggest that we should be thankful to a benevolent Federal Government. I hope that the people on the Gold Coast will read his speech when they are given the opportunity.

The honourable member for Albert then condemned some of the developers. It is true that certain people have brought finance into the State, but it is also true that the developers have played a tremendous part in the advancement of the Gold Coast. Certainly some have become involved in land-dealings and others may be experiencing difficulty at the moment because of the unavailability of finance. However, the policies of the Federal Government have made it impossible for people to purchase land and for others to pay the interest rates on the loans that they have taken out.

Have we heard anything from the honourable member for Albert on their behalf? Not at all. Instead he criticised the size of schools in certain areas and claimed that their enrolments have grown out of all proportion to their size. Surely this is a clear indication of the progress of the area. We are prepared to admit that in some districts the growth factor has exceeded all expectations. But again this is the result of the development that has taken place as well as the prosperity presently enjoyed by the State.

The honourable member for Albert does not wish to see development; he has criticised the Government for taking up the old railway line between Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Certainly it was removed, but even if it had remained it would not have been able to

serve the needs of the community. For years it lay there, unused, because people preferred to drive to and from the Gold Coast on what was then a two-lane road. Imagine what would be the situation today with a four-lane highway connecting Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The line was put through in the days when the bulldozer was unknown and when the pick and shovel were used to go round hills instead of through them. That is the railway line that was removed, yet the honourable member for Albert would have us believe that we were guilty of a crime in removing it. The time will come, no doubt, when the population will warrant electrification from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. It certainly will not come, however, with the advocacy put forward by the honourable member for Albert.

He also criticised the Minister for Lands. The Lands Department's Estimates will be debated this session, and on that occasion the honourable member for Albert will be given the opportunity of raising the issues that he brought forward tonight. I know that the Minister for Lands will be quite able to handle him.

The honourable member for Albert claimed that the Queensland Government had been forced into doing certain things in connection with royalties because of the action of the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr. Connor). He has caused a great deal of consternation within the mining industry of Australia, and I make that comment advisedly as one I know to be true. The honourable member for Albert claimed that the Federal Minister had forced us to take action, because of the great deal he had secured in relation to the Western Australian iron-ore deposits.

Let us see exactly what happened, and to illustrate this I shall refer to a report in "The Australian" of Monday, 2 September—a report that I confirmed yesterday with Sir Charles Court when I was in Melbourne. The Leader of the Opposition shakes his head. Apparently he doubts the integrity of the Premier of Western Australia. In the light of the points I have made he should be the last man to doubt anyone. What happened? This was the joke of the year. The article in "The Australian" is entitled—

"Connor's ore win may be Japan's gain".

It reads—

"Japanese steel men are quietly pleased with the outcome of the iron ore price talks concluded last week.

"They feel they have succeeded in letting Minerals and Energy Minister Mr. Connor claim a stupendous victory when in fact they have conceded absolutely nothing.

"One informed source has even claimed—"

Mr. Tucker: That is not what the Minister for Mines said.

Sir GORDON CHALK: He may not have had all the facts at the time.

Mr. Tucker: Look at what he said.

Sir GORDON CHALK: He may have been drawn in by the same thing, but he was wise enough to have the matter looked into. The article continued—

"One informed source has even claimed that Mr. Connor's intervention to get higher prices has resulted in Australia actually getting lower prices.

"Under the agreement negotiated with Australian ore exporters a month ago, the Japanese had offered a \$U.S. 1.75 a ton across-the-board increase for all iron ore shipments from July 1.

"No further increase would be sought or offered before March 1975, the end of the Japanese fiscal year.

"Following Mr. Connor's intervention, the Japanese have now offered a \$U.S. 2.25 a ton increase or 22 per cent over the previous price, beginning September. But as it is wisely pointed out here \$U.S. 1.75 for the nine months almost exactly equals \$U.S. 2.25 for seven months."

The Japanese were too smart for Mr. Connor. They took it on the basis of the remaining period and are now not paying on iron ore deliveries that started at the beginning of July.

The article then states—

"The fact that Australian exporters will be receiving roughly the same amount in cash as they would have under the agreement vetoed by Canberra has not stopped Mr. Connor from claiming a victory.

"The Japanese mills a month ago agreed to provide the full amount of these increases."

All that really happened was the transfer of a larger sum over seven months of the year compared with a smaller sum over nine months. It is not a question of victory, but rather a question of negotiation.

After my recent visit to Japan I know something about the activities of Mr. Connor and those associated with him in dealings with the Japanese. The Japanese will accept certain increases but they say that the prices being asked for certain Australian commodities—the price being forced on them by the present Whitlam Government—are causing them to look for new areas from which they can make purchases. We will shortly find a situation where they will be spreading a lot of their orders amongst various countries of the world. In the long term, Queensland and the Commonwealth of Australia will be worse off. We will not have expansion or an increase in exports. We will not have the extra rail operations or the extra rail freights. There will be no extra harbour and port dues. These things are happening at the present time; but the Leader of the Opposition is so blinded by his desire to gain sheer political advantage that in his stupidity he is prepared to damn this State and its people.

In this debate the Opposition has not in any way indicated what it might do if it was the Government of the day. We will measure up to our responsibilities and, when I bring down the Budget on 26 September, I believe I will be able to indicate to the members of this Assembly and the people of Queensland generally that by good husbandry of our funds and by not having over-spent in the past we will be able to weather the problems that confront us through inflation. I hope to present a Budget that will enable this State to continue without some of the taxes that I believe will be introduced in other places. If we can do that, then we will have proved that this State has been in good hands through the years.

Motion (Sir Gordon Chalk) agreed to.

Resolution reported, received, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS

COMMITTEE

VOTE OF CREDIT—\$595,000,000

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

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

“(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1974-1975, a further sum not exceeding \$250,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1974-75, a further sum not exceeding \$305,000,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1974-1975, a further sum not exceeding \$40,000,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1)

ALL STAGES

A Bill founded on the Resolutions was introduced and passed through all its stages without amendment or debate.

The House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.