

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 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 papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account of the Public Curator for the year 1973–74.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Report of the Legal Assistance Committee of Queensland for the year 1973–74.

Orders in Council under—

Money Lenders Act 1916–1973.

Judges' Salaries and Pensions Act 1967–1973.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

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

Regulations under—

Elections Act 1915–1973.

Hospitals Act 1936–1971.

Fire Brigades Act 1964–1973.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

MT. GRAVATT HOSPITAL; ALTERNATIVE TO COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL

Hon. S. D. TOOTH (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (11.5 a.m.): In late September, the Premier received from the Prime Minister a letter, outlining certain proposals for a Development Programme for Australian Hospitals. This was based upon the "Report on Hospitals in Australia" made by the Hospital and Health Services Commission and outlined the Prime Minister's views regarding preliminary moves towards the implementation of that report.

In addition, the Prime Minister indicated his desire to undertake certain initiatives in respect of the construction of what he described as Australian Government Hospitals to be located in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. These proposals had been released to the Press on the previous week-end, and received widespread publicity. They were additional to, and indeed in marked conflict with, recommendations in the "Report on Hospitals in Australia", and in consequence were received with considerable surprise both in official and unofficial circles.

In respect of Queensland, I refer in particular to a statement in the Prime Minister's letter that he saw clear advantages in the Commonwealth Government's assuming full responsibility for the development of the major acute hospital at Mt. Gravatt, and

requested the concurrence of the Queensland Government in such a proposal within three weeks in order that substantial building work on the hospital take place early in the New Year.

Leaving aside for the present any comment upon the inordinate haste which he sought to impose on the Queensland Government in arriving at a decision on a matter of such importance, I have to tell honourable members that there are reasons of great weight which impelled us to suggest for the Prime Minister's consideration an alternative proposal to his request that we surrender the Mt. Gravatt project to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Bromley: It is over 25 years since a major hospital was built in Brisbane.

Mr. TOOTH: Mr. Speaker, the statement that I am making is an extremely important one.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for South Brisbane will cease interjecting.

Mr. TOOTH: The development of a major hospital at that location with the haste which the Commonwealth clearly has in mind, were it possible of accomplishment, which I gravely doubt, would dislocate the entire forward-planning programme of hospital construction in the metropolitan and south-east region of this State. Planning is currently under way, and in several areas construction is well advanced which will provide for this region within the next five to seven years approximately 1,000 additional acute beds. These include 200-230 beds in stage 1 of a new hospital at Mt. Gravatt, as well as major additions at Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra, Redcliffe, Nambour, Ipswich, Southport, and Cherm-side. These activities are all inter-related in a co-ordinated plan which also takes cognisance of proposed developments in church and private projects and of community health services centres which Queensland is providing as rapidly as possible.

The provision of hospital beds today is very costly both in terms of money and of trained professional personnel, and it is economically necessary and essential from a staffing-resources point of view to time the provision of additional beds with the changing needs of the populations they are to serve. For example, the planning to date at Mt. Gravatt has been directed towards an area of special need—an obstetrical unit which will ultimately form part of the over-all Mt. Gravatt complex, and a new teaching hospital, completely up-to-date in concept, to integrate with a new university medical school, which it is envisaged may come into existence at Griffith University, Mt. Gravatt, in the 1980's.

This brings me to another point of major importance, namely, the fact that the new Griffith University at Mt. Gravatt is

being established on very modern educational principles, involving innovations both in planning and structure on the campus and in the academic approach to university work. It is hoped in developing the teaching hospital to be able to relate as closely as possible to the university, consistent with adhering to the primary purpose of the hospital, the provision of patient care, and the provision of such care at the time when the need for it becomes apparent.

These considerations obviously conflict with any hasty development at Mt. Gravatt in advance of community needs and with the type of stereotyped and uniform pattern which I understand is envisaged for the so-called Australian hospitals in the three eastern capitals.

My justification for making this comment lies in the fact that I have become aware of approaches made to firms of architects in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane for the provision of plans for rapid implementation of Australian Government hospitals, and it appears that, to save time, uniform planning is contemplated. It is apparent that the principal criterion is to be speed to enable the Prime Minister or some other Commonwealth dignitary to turn sods or lay stones early in the New Year. Attempts to provide instant, uniformly designed hospitals must be deplored and cannot effectively be integrated into the careful professional planning of our hospital programme.

In addition to the foregoing, the Queensland Government has strong reservations as to the constitutional rights of the Commonwealth to enter in this manner the field of health delivery services, which has always been accepted as an area of State responsibility.

Having in mind, however, the expressed desire of the Prime Minister to assist State Governments in the financing of the building and operation of hospitals, we have suggested for consideration an alternative proposal which would allow the Commonwealth to contribute substantially towards the development of essential hospital services in this State and would provide the means whereby Commonwealth money could be used in this State almost immediately in this financial year.

I speak now, of course, in respect of the special finance which has been announced in the Press as being available for the construction of a hospital in this State—a figure of \$20,000,000. For the information of honourable members, I outline the alternative suggestion which the honourable the Premier has submitted to the Prime Minister.

As members know, the Sisters of Mercy conduct a completely public hospital in Brisbane in the Mater Misericordiae Hospitals complex at South Brisbane. These hospitals provide free public inpatient treatment to those requiring it, as well as free casualty and outpatient services at the hospital. The hospital provides 400 public

beds in its general paediatric and obstetrical wings. It is a teaching hospital for purposes of the Queensland University at St. Lucia.

The Mater Hospital authorities have been recognised by this State as partners in the provision of public hospital facilities in the metropolitan area of Brisbane. The funds of the Order have not been sufficient up to the present to enable them to mount any major capital rebuilding or refurbishing programme in respect of their general acute hospital, which now urgently needs to be completely rebuilt. They have, however, provided plans for this purpose, and these plans are well advanced—so far advanced, indeed, that it would be possible to begin operations before Christmas this year.

If the Commonwealth Government were to offer financial assistance to the Mater Misericordiae Public Hospital authorities to enable them to proceed with their major reconstruction and redevelopment programme, we feel sure that this offer would be favourably regarded. Not only would the assistance of the Commonwealth then be directed to a most worthy organisation, but it would merge into the total programme for the State without creating any imbalance or distortion, and would provide the quickest avenue by which Commonwealth assistance could be made available to Queensland patients.

It is devoutly hoped that this suggestion will commend itself to the Prime Minister. The need for rebuilding at the Mater is urgent and the State Government has already committed approximately \$2,000,000 for capital assistance towards extensions and renovations at the Mater. Further State assistance has been the subject of negotiation, but our resources are committed over a wide field, and progress would therefore be slow. If the Prime Minister will commit the \$20,000,000 he has reserved, and make it available for the Mater, the rapid restructuring on Mater Hill will be of early and immense benefit to Brisbane and Queensland.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

ADVERTISEMENT OF POSITIONS IN CORPORATE AFFAIRS OFFICE

Mr. Tucker, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) What was the cost of the advertisement in *The Courier-Mail* of October 12 calling for legal and accounting practitioners in the Corporate Affairs Office?

(2) In what other media was the advertisement inserted and at what cost in each?

(3) Of all the positions advertised, such as commissioner, assistant commissioner, inspectors, assistant inspectors, examiner

clerks, registrar and field officer, which are at present occupied by appointed public servants and what is the reason for advertising them as vacancies?

(4) As the detailed advertisement goes beyond the usual action on reclassification, why is the present staff being held up to public ridicule and what other indignities or interruption to their careers can they anticipate?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The advertisement appeared once only in *The Courier-Mail*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Melbourne Age* of October 12, and in *The Australian* and *Financial Review* of October 16. No accounts have yet been received."

(3) "As a result of a complete inspection of the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, the functions of the office have been regrouped and the organisation of the office has been completely restructured. The responsibilities of many positions, including those to which the Honourable Member's Question refers, have been substantially altered from those in the existing organisation and the classifications of these positions have been varied, although in certain cases the designations used are similar."

(4) "Where special qualifications are required, it is the usual practice to advertise such positions in the daily Press, in addition to the *Government Gazette*. In no way does this hold the present staff to public ridicule. In fact, the restructuring of the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs now provides a wider career structure with more promotional opportunities available."

ELECTORAL DISTRICT ENROLMENTS

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

(1) What were the enrolments in each of the 82 State electorates as at September 30?

(2) What was the percentage variation in each electorate on the quota set under the Act?

Answers:—

(1) "I table the information requested by the Honourable Member."

(2) "The *Electoral Districts Act* 1971 also provided for future re-distributions and for the ascertainment of fresh quotas based upon the number of electors enrolled for all the existing districts within the zone or area as at December 31 in the calendar year preceding the appointment of commissioners. The relating of existing enrolments to the

quotas which applied to the first re-distribution under the Act is therefore made on incorrect premises. If the principles prescribed by the Act were applied to enrolments as at September 30 last, the fresh quotas so ascertained would reflect the increase in electoral population since December 31, 1970, and result in a higher quota in every zone and area. I table a statement showing the districts which are above or below the 20 per cent. variation in such fresh quotas. It will be noted that in the South-Eastern Zone eight districts are above the maximum variation. In each of the Provincial Cities Zone and the Western and Far-Northern Zone one district is above the maximum variation."

Papers.—Whereupon Mr. Knox laid upon the Table of the House the information and statement referred to.

METAL CONTAMINATION OF MARINE LIFE

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

(1) Which species of aquatic fauna are tested for contamination by mercury, cadmium, lead and other heavy metals?

(2) With what frequency, in what numbers and from which localities are marine animals sampled and tested for heavy-metal contamination?

(3) What were the average and maximum levels of each metal found in each species, in each locality, over the last 12 months?

(4) What are the expected background or base-line levels of each metal in each locality?

Answers:—

(1) "The Government Chemical Laboratory has tested the following species for mercury: jewfish, mullet, bream, flat-head, tailor, mackerel, sweetlip, prawns, crab, tuna, black bream, whiting, ray, shark and oysters. In addition, oysters have been analysed for zinc, cadmium, lead and copper."

(2) "The species are examined as they appear on the various fish markets throughout the State."

(3) "These figures are not readily available but I will communicate further with the Honourable Member on the Question."

(4) "There is no data available on this Question. Sampling of tidal estuary waters is being carried out as a current project by the Water Quality Council. I am advised that the question of contamination of fish and oysters with heavy metals is under active consideration by

the Food Standards Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council."

ALLEGED POISONING OF ETNA CREEK PRISONERS

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

(1) With reference to the paraquat poisoning of two Etna Creek prisoners, resulting in the death of one, did the poisoning occur as a result of prisoners making an alcoholic beverage by mixing vanilla essence and methylated spirits in a gramoxone weedicide container?

(2) Will he investigate the allegations that prisoners in all Queensland prisons are manufacturing alcoholic beverages and that the traffic in such beverages is similar to the rum traffic of the historic Macarthur era?

(3) Will he also investigate the claim being made by inmates at Etna Creek that Lionel Hill, who died at Etna Creek in May this year, also died from paraquat poisoning and not from bilateral pneumonia as stated after the post-mortem?

Answers:—

(1) "The alleged paraquat poisoning of certain prisoners at Etna Creek Prison is still under police investigation and the coroner has not yet completed his inquest on the prisoner who died."

(2) "It is common practice for prisoners, not only in Queensland but throughout the world, to manufacture illicit alcoholic beverages whenever possible and prison authorities are constantly on the alert to prevent such manufacture. There is no evidence to indicate that the manufacture of illicit alcoholic beverages within prisons is prevalent."

(3) "I have no knowledge of any claim that the deceased died from paraquat poisoning. I have not been advised of any such allegation. The medical officer has certified after post-mortem examination that the cause of death was 'Bilateral Pneumonia', due to or as a consequence of 'Interstitial Pneumonia'. The death was notified to the coroner who authorised burial."

PUBLICATION, "COUNTRY AND LIBERAL ACHIEVEMENT"

Mr. Wright, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) Further to his Answer to my Question on October 15 regarding the publication "Country and Liberal Achievement", how many of the booklets were published for the Government prior to the 1972 election?

(2) What was the cost of publication?

(3) Who printed the booklet?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "10,000 copies were published by Watson, Ferguson and Company, South Brisbane, at a cost of \$2,942.55."

COMMONWEALTH NEGOTIATION OF PUBLIC LOAN IN GERMANY

Mr. Hinze, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) Is he aware of an announcement by the Commonwealth Treasurer on September 19, wherein he stated that the Government was negotiating a public loan in Germany for an amount of up to the equivalent of \$50 million?

(2) As the loan was to be underwritten by the Deutsch Bank in Frankfurt, and as the object of the loan was to assist in refinancing a maturing issue of Australian Government bonds, is he aware that in recent public loans in Australia no public subscriptions have been sought?

(3) As the Commonwealth Government finances most capital works out of revenue, were the intentions of the Commonwealth to seek overseas loans made known to him in financial discussions with the Commonwealth Treasurer and his officials in Canberra and what reasons did they advance?

(4) As all States sought Commonwealth assistance a few months ago to balance their budgets and as the Prime Minister declined their demands, causing many of them to savagely increase State taxation, is the raising of a public loan in Germany a devious subterfuge to cover up their own inadequacies?

Answers:—

(1) "The object of the issue was to refinance an issue of 200 million Deutsche Marks which matured on October 1, 1974. Due to the tight liquidity situation within Australia as the result of the credit squeeze imposed by the Commonwealth Government, it was considered reasonable that the loan should be refinanced in Germany rather than to extract more liquidity from the Australian community. Approval of the Loan Council was sought by the Commonwealth to the proposal and such approval was granted."

(2) "I am aware that the Commonwealth Government has been avoiding the raising of public subscriptions during recent months, which is also obviously related to the tight monetary situation which the Commonwealth had fostered and which is now strangling industry. The States have not objected to this avoidance of public raisings within Australia because

the need for relief to the liquidity situation has been quite apparent, one of the particular problems faced by the States being the grave difficulty experienced by semi-governmental authorities in raising loans to fill their current year's programs. In these circumstances, it is preferred that there should be as little competition as possible from Commonwealth loan raisings."

(3 and 4) "It has, as the Honourable Member suggests, been a matter of some concern to the States over a period of many years that the Commonwealth Government has financed most of its own capital expenditure from revenue while the States have built up huge debts. Further, it is true that the Commonwealth denied the States' request for a reasonable addition to their financial assistance grants for the current year. However, I would not accept that such denial was related to any difficulty in meeting the cost of additional grants. The Commonwealth in 1974-75 budgeted for a deficit of \$570 million but such was after taking into account monies to be provided to the States on a loan basis, assisted by public borrowings, including \$701 million for the Loan Council borrowing programmes, \$235 million for housing and approximately \$70 million for sewerage. There is therefore ample scope within the Commonwealth's revenue capabilities to grant further assistance to the States if that Government had any desire to do so."

ROCLEIGH AND FORGAN SMITH
BRIDGES, MACKAY

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

Further to my previous Questions regarding the deteriorating condition of the Forgan Smith Bridge at Mackay and the delayed construction of the Rocleigh Bridge, and in view of the increasing delays caused to motorists on the Forgan Smith Bridge, will he consider calming the irate motorists of Mackay by having the concrete superstructure of the bridge painted, as it is in a dirty and stained condition and is an eyesore?

Answer:—

"The limited funds available for maintenance on the national highway requires priority to be given to more urgent works. The amount of funds allocated to national highways by the Commonwealth for 1974-75 is less than what the State previously spent on these roads when it had full control of programmes."

RECONSTRUCTION OF MACKAY BASE HOSPITAL

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

(1) Have the plans and specifications for the second stage of the reconstruction of the Mackay Base Hospital been completed and have they been approved by his department? If not, what is causing the delay?

(2) When will the construction of stage two commence and what facilities will it provide?

Answers:—

(1) "Sketch plans prepared by the Mackay Hospitals Board's architects for the new ward block at Mackay Hospital were referred to the Department of Works for examination. As a result of advice from that department and with the concurrence of the hospitals board discussions have been held between officers of this department, the Department of Works and the board's architects with a view to finalising acceptable plans. This has now been achieved and the hospitals board has been informed."

(2) "The date for commencement of construction of the new ward block will be dependent on the time taken by the board's architects in the preparation of working drawings and specifications after sketch plans have been approved and also upon the availability of loan finance. The new ward block to be constructed at Mackay Hospital will comprise three floors. The ground floor will contain outpatients, X-ray and rehabilitation medicine departments, casualty area and administration offices. The first and second floors will provide ward accommodation to a maximum of 140 beds including 20 private and intermediate beds."

RAILWAY GOODS SIDINGS, MACKAY

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

(1) What additional siding accommodation for the unloading of goods has been provided during the last three years at the Mackay railway goods yards?

(2) Has this additional accommodation allowed the unloading operations in River Street to cease and, if not, when will they cease?

(3) As siding accommodation at Mackay is severely taxed and the unloading operations in River Street are a severe traffic hazard, will he urgently consider the establishment of additional siding accommodation at Paget Junction as the first stage of the construction of a major goods yard in that area?

Answers:—

(1) "Four."

(2) "The only unloading operations which take place in River Street are for two firms located on the river bank. Unloading is carried out on the warehouse side only and not on the roadway side of River Street."

(3) "The siding capacity of the Mackay goods shed is adequate for requirements."

TARIFF PROTECTION AND EMPLOYMENT

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the six-point plan of the Leader of the Opposition to overcome unemployment in Queensland?

(2) Would Mr. Tucker's efforts be best directed to his colleagues in Canberra to have the tariff barrier restored on certain industries to protect Australian workers from unfair competition from coolie labour in South-east Asia and also to assist the shipbuilding industry to become a viable proposition once again?

(3) What has his department done to promote industries and job opportunities in Queensland, in spite of the Commonwealth Government's disastrous financial and economic policies which have thrown thousands of Queenslanders out of work?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "One does not have to possess extra-sensory perception to realise that the present high rate of unemployment throughout Australia stems directly from the economic policies pursued by the Commonwealth Government. Not only is the future of the nation's textile, clothing, footwear, shipbuilding and furniture industries threatened, but many other sectors of Australia's industrial structure are being progressively weakened. The Leader of the Opposition would certainly be doing a service to the countless Australian workers whose employment is at stake if he could influence his friends in Canberra to take remedial measures to restore protection to the industries I have mentioned."

(3) "My department is constantly reviewing investment opportunities in Queensland. As the Honourable Member is aware, generous incentives are provided to promote the expansion of existing industry and the attraction of new projects to the State. Until such time as business confidence is restored by the authorities in Canberra, these efforts on the State's part must of necessity be hampered."

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR HOSPITAL SERVICES

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

(1) Is he aware of a letter sent by the Prime Minister to the Premier in which the Prime Minister gave an assurance that the funds allocated by the Commonwealth Government under the programme will not be offset against funds which would otherwise be made available by the Commonwealth Government?

(2) In view of this assurance, on what grounds does he claim that the Commonwealth proposal on the Mount Gravatt hospital impinges on State projects in Southport, Redcliffe, Nambour and Ipswich and the possibility of the long-awaited new general hospital in Wynnum?

Answers:—

(1) "I am, of course, aware of the full contents of the official communication from the Prime Minister to the Premier of this State, concerning financial relations between the Commonwealth and the State in respect of health services. I am, however, surprised to learn that the Honourable Member is also privy to this communication, which it was assumed was of a top-level confidential nature."

(2) "The Honourable Member has missed the point. If he carefully reads my earlier Ministerial Statement, he will notice that I emphasised the importance of, and necessity for, establishing a forward planning programme in developing our hospital services—and then implementing it. The proposal of the Prime Minister cuts across this forward planning programme, and if the Commonwealth hospital were to be established at Mount Gravatt in the time proposed by the Prime Minister to meet his personal desires, we could reach the position where more beds would be available in the metropolitan area than the assessed needs. My reference to the possible deferment of extensions at Southport and Redcliffe hospitals was in the context that beds to be provided by these projected developments may not be needed at the time planned for their use, if 1,000 unplanned beds were suddenly brought into use in the Moreton region of Queensland by the Commonwealth Government."

ADDITIONAL BOAT LAUNCHING RAMPS, WYNNUM ELECTORATE

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

Owing to the increase in the volume of traffic by small-boat owners and the increased demand for launching ramps, will he give consideration to constructing

additional launching ramps and trailer parking facilities in the Wynnum, Manly and Lota areas?

Answer:—

“Consideration is being given to the provision of additional boat-launching facilities in the Wynnum, Manly and Lota areas.”

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FEDERAL TAXATION AND TARIFF POLICIES

Mr. TUCKER: I ask the Premier: Is he aware that a brochure with the title “An Open Letter to All Queensland Housewives” bearing his name is being circulated by various retail stores and that the postal address mentioned thereon—Box 17, Alderley is registered under the name of the League of Rights? Further, in his call to eliminate sales tax, is it his intention to give a lead by eliminating stamp duty on real estate sales and transfers, which surely is a form of sales tax, and, if so, how then would he balance his State Budget?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am not aware that any pamphlet such as that referred to by the Leader of the Opposition is being circulated by city stores. However, if there is any such propaganda, from whoever it may be coming, about the reduction of income tax and the elimination of sales tax on Consumer Price Index goods and endorsing my suggestions about consumer support (or subsidies, as they later came to be known in some areas), I would say that it is on the right track. We have to make living easier for people, not harder as the Commonwealth Government is attempting to do, wrecking the economy, bringing industry to its knees and creating massive unemployment.

On the matter of reducing any State tax, I have said to the Commonwealth Government time and again, “You control the national economy through income tax, sales tax and excise duty. Start in your own back yard. That is where the lead has to be given.” However, that Government refuses to give the lead and is bringing the nation to its knees by unrealistic and dangerous policies.

PRICE DISCOUNT WITHOUT PRICE CONTROL

Mr. TUCKER: I ask the Premier: With reference to the same open letter and in view of the recent experience whereby lowered tariffs did not result in lower prices to the general public, will he explain how his proposed price discounts would be passed on to the consumer without the assistance of price control, which he so vehemently opposes?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: To the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition that lower tariffs did not result in reduced prices, I remind him that they did not cause massive unemployment and did not wreck

industries from one end of the nation to the other, as present policies are doing. The Federal Government, with which the Leader of the Opposition is closely allied, is doing a great disservice to the nation by wrecking the economy through its policies. What I cannot understand is that honourable members opposite and their colleagues in Canberra just cannot see what is happening to the people of our nation and our economy. That is why I say repeatedly that there is no alternative to getting rid of the Government in Canberra.

Government Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: That is the only solution.

Mr. Hinze: Ask him another one.

Mr. TUCKER: He hasn't answered one of them yet.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

PREMIER'S PLAN TO FREEZE TAXATION

Mr. TUCKER: When in his plan the Premier speaks about freezing all taxation, does he intend it to be at the new equitable levels or does he wish to revert to the levels existing under the McMahon Government?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: The present taxation levels are unrealistic and detrimental to the nation and to the livelihood of its people. They are entirely foreign to incentive and to harmony within the community. At the Premier's Conference I said to the Prime Minister, “While you continue taking an ever-increasing slice out of the national income, you will continue to get greater pressure for more wages and higher prices. You have to narrow the gap between an article's cost of production and its selling price.” However, the Commonwealth is widening that gap through increased income tax and greater sales tax, causing prices and wages to increase.

The Commonwealth has claimed again and again that the people have too much money and it has to be taken from them—a policy with which I do not agree—and I reiterate that the only solution is to get rid of the Government in Canberra.

MAIN ROADS DEPARTMENT FUNDS

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: In view of the statement in this morning's “Courier-Mail” regarding the provision of moneys from the Federal Government to the New South Wales Government to avert the paying off of 3,500 employees from its Main Roads Departments and the Federal Minister's statement that the funds have no strings attached, can the Minister inform the House of the present position with respect to funds for main roads in this State and has he

agreed to the Federal Government's setting priorities for the spending of such funds in this State?

Mr. CAMM: Prior to the introduction of the three Bills governing the provision of funds from the Commonwealth to the States for road-building, the Commonwealth indicated that, provided we give it details of how much money we have available from our own resources and how much money we intend to spend, it will make available through the Treasury certain sums to enable us to carry on. It has also indicated that it will waive the provision requiring the Main Roads Department to submit detailed programmes until after 1 January 1975. This is at it stands today.

After 1 January 1975, in accordance with the outline of the three Bills that were passed, the State Governments have to give details of all programmes that they contemplate. We find this an impossible situation, and I think the Commonwealth will find it impossible, too. We will have a pile of papers sky high. It will hold up all the road-building programmes throughout the State. Up till the end of December, funds will be made available by the Commonwealth, provided we tell it just where we are spending the funds that we raise.

SENATOR KEEFFE'S STATEMENT ON TOWNSVILLE PRISON ADMINISTRATION

Mr. AIKENS: I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services: Has he any knowledge of the people who supplied the information to Senator J. Keffe on which he based his scathing allegations about the staff, visiting magistrate and medical officer at Townsville Prison? If so, will he advise the House on the matter?

Mr. HERBERT: I would not know from which of his criminal associates Senator Keffe got the story. I sincerely hope that it was not the Aboriginal ex-prisoner who was on A.B.C. radio last night, because if it is the man we suspect it is, no responsible person would place any credence on what he says.

I think I should give the House the details of two telegrams that came from Townsville recently. The first is dated 10 October and was sent to Mr. Whitney, the Comptroller-General of Prisons. It reads—

“Re M. K. Timms T.P.O. H.M. Prison
Townsville”

“Claiming immediate department enquiry and salary until misconduct is proven against me not the kangaroo court procedure adopted by minority of trouble makers failure to acknowledge within 24 hours of intention details of incident released to Press for publication

... 5 Baxter Street, West End, Townsville.”

I received one, too. He did not leave me out.

It reads—

“Re wrongful dismissal T.P.O. Timms H.M. Prison Stuart Townsville request immediate reinstatement until inquiry will publish facts to Senator Keffes advantage facts in post

... 5 Baxter Street, West End, Townsville.”

So it would appear that that is one of Senator Keffe's sources. I warn him that if his information comes from sources of that kind, the slanders on the officers in the Townsville Prison that he has had published would be completely without basis. I now challenge Senator Keffe to produce reasonable information on which we can investigate any charges that might have to be instigated in respect of the Townsville prison. As far as I am aware, all of his allegations are without any basis in fact.

The danger is that he has now libelled every officer in the prison. Anybody who knows Mr. Henderson, the visiting justice, would say that he is one of the best and fairest magistrates in North Queensland. As visiting justice, he has the responsibility for seeing that that prison is run as it is expected to be run. He has furnished reports that clear the prison authorities completely of any irregularity. I would certainly take the opinion of the visiting magistrate and his decisions in writing rather than the ramblings of the criminal element with which Senator Keffe apparently associates in Townsville.

OPERATIONS OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: I ask the Minister for Development and Industrial Affairs: Has he seen a reported statement by Mr. Tucker, M.L.A., in “The Courier-Mail” of 16 October 1974 that he proposes to use the Department of Primary Industries, the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development and the Justice Department to provide specialised services to Queensland industries? Would the Minister inform the House what services are presently supplied by the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development?

Mr. CAMPBELL: Apart from the normal incentives which the department gives by way of financial guarantees to approved applicants, and the provision of Crown industrial land for would-be manufacturers and factory buildings for pioneer industries in decentralised areas, concessional freight rates for goods which are destined for export either interstate or overseas, and freight concessions on machinery going to decentralised areas, it has encouraged the establishment within its administration of a branch of the Industrial Design Council, which has been of tremendous assistance to industry, particularly in decentralised areas; it has established a department to encourage manufacturing under licence; and it has recently conducted a very successful business seminar for

small businessmen in Rockhampton. Next month the department proposes to conduct a similar seminar in Townsville and Cairns.

By contrast, the policy announced by the Leader of the Opposition, under which he would use the three departments mentioned by him in seeking to present a case to the Industries Assistance Commission, indicates that he has accepted completely the present policies of his Federal counterparts which are having such a devastating effect on industries not only in Queensland but throughout Australia. In supporting those policies he has shown that he is completely out of step with the great body of workers who, presumably, he believes, support him at the polls.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If I have to speak to the honourable member for South Brisbane again, I will warn him under Standing Order 123A.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Only yesterday I received a deputation from the furnishing trade composed of Mr. Cox of the Furniture Guild, Mr. Harding of the Furnishing Trades Union and Mr. Sharpe from the Chamber of Manufactures, and Mr. Harding in particular, a union representative, denounced in unmistakable terms the devastating effect that present Federal policy is having on the furniture industry.

As the Leader of the Opposition believes in the Australian Industries Assistance Commission, which is a product of the present Federal Government that was said to be created to give relief to those industries that are being so devastated, I repeat what I said earlier, which is also a reiteration of what trade union representatives from four callings have asked. I have been asked to take every step and use all my influence to have the Federal Government eliminate its present drastic policies and revert to the tariff structure that prevailed prior to the advent of the present Labor Government as a means of securing Australian employees against competition from Asian regions where the wages are only about 10 per cent of those of the Australian work-force and the hours worked are about 40 per cent above those required to be worked in Australia.

I support the Premier's call to the Federal Government to change its policies before industry becomes so devastated that it will have to approach the Australian Industrial Development Corporation and go down on its knees and beg for financial support, which is presumably the first step in the Federal Government's policy of socialisation of Australian industry.

AUSTRALIAN EQUITY IN HAIL CREEK ASSOCIATES

Mr. NEWBERRY: I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads: In view of the statement by Mr. Connor, Minister for Minerals

and Energy, in "The Courier-Mail" today regarding multi-national and foreign capital participation in mineral production in Australia, will the Minister inform the House of the Australian equity in Hail Creek Associates, which is endeavouring to produce export coal from the leases at Nebo?

Mr. CAMM: Hail Creek Associates are A.A.O. (which took into partnership Marubeni and Sumitomo, and recently changed its name to Associated Australian Resources), an oil company, I.O.L. Ltd., and Western Mining Corporation. I understand that C.R.A. has acquired an interest in I.O.L. as well as a small interest in Associated Australian Resources. An analysis will reveal, I am sure, that Australian equity in Hail Creek Associates is in excess of 75 per cent, the remainder being divided among Marubeni, Sumitomo and C.R.A. But, as I say, there is at least 75 per cent Australian ownership in the company that is seeking permission to export coal from Hail Creek.

LOCUST CONTROL

Mr. NEAL: I ask the Premier: Has his attention been drawn to an article in today's "Courier-Mail" in which it is reported that the Federal Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) claimed that the Premier had made no direct approach to the Prime Minister seeking financial aid for the control of the spur-throated locust? If so, will the Premier comment on this article and tell the House what action has been taken?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am surprised at the statement made by Senator Wriedt, because he must be aware of the fact that earlier this year I approached the Commonwealth Government on this very matter. On 9 April, in reply to my request for assistance, the Prime Minister wrote to me saying that the Australian Government had agreed to provide up to \$500,000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis to New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. I have made full inquiries into this matter, and I have ascertained that to date we have not received one cent. The Commonwealth Government drew a distinction between the spur-throated locust and other species. Apparently it overlooked the fact that any type of locust—spur-throated or otherwise—eats and destroys crops. The Commonwealth Government's attitude was that because Queensland was being plagued by the spur-throated locust we were not entitled to any subsidy. This is, of course, typical of the Commonwealth Government, which tries to wriggle out of its promises. In this instance, as I say, it had said that it would give the States \$500,000 towards the cost of combating the locust plague.

Yesterday morning I made a further approach to the Commonwealth Government. I pointed out in a telegram to the Prime Minister how serious the situation is. I said that it would cost at least \$2,000,000 to counter the inroads that locusts are making

in different parts of the State. I also pointed out that the Queensland Graingrowers Association, local authorities and the State Government are contributing. We are providing offices and staff to tackle this very serious problem that confronts so many people. I can only hope that Senator Wriedt and the Commonwealth Government will catch up on some of these things and realise their very serious responsibilities on a vital issue of this nature.

Mr. NEAL: I direct a supplementary question to the Minister for Primary Industries. In view of the question I asked the Premier, and in the light of the uncertainty that the report I referred to could create in areas plagued by grasshoppers, will he outline to the Chamber the action he has taken on the problem referred to by Senator Wriedt in the article?

Mr. SULLIVAN: Like the Premier, I am somewhat amazed that Senator Wriedt should make such a statement. The Premier indicated to the House that he had approached the Prime Minister, but had not received any response. To support the Premier I approached Senator Wriedt as Federal Minister for Agriculture. I felt that I had a responsibility to do so. I hoped that Senator Wriedt, being responsible for primary industries, would support the approach. I wrote to him on 1 May and received a letter in reply dated 11 June. It is amazing that he should say in the Senate that no approach had been made.

The Premier pointed out that the Prime Minister indicated to him in a letter that \$500,000 would be made available on a dollar-for-dollar subsidy basis to assist the States in controlling Australian plague locusts. The sum of \$15,000 was all that was spent during the year on the control of Australian plague locusts out of a total of about \$440,000 spent on controlling migratory spur-throated locusts and Australian plague locusts. As yet we have not even received the dollar-for-dollar subsidy on the \$15,000.

The Premier made the point that spur-throated locusts or migratory locusts eat as much grain as do the Australian plague locusts. To emphasise the point—and I am not sure whether I told the Committee this—when I went to the Agricultural Council I took with me a mounted spur-throated locust and a mounted Australian plague locust. A fair indication of the proportionate damage caused by the Australian plague locust and the spur-throated locust can be gained by comparing our Government plane with the V.I.P. 727's used by the Prime Minister. I should think that the spur-throated locust consumes four or five times as much grain as the Australian plague locust.

I am very concerned about Senator Wriedt's statement that we have made no approach. I shall not go into detail and bore the Chamber by reading the letter, but here

it is. The honourable member for Cook is nodding his head as though he is concerned. Perhaps through his party organisation he may suggest to his colleagues in Canberra that they should consider this a little more seriously. If we do not get financial assistance—we are doing it again; we are making finance available—

Mr. Davis: How much?

Mr. SULLIVAN: That is none of the honourable member's business. I will administer that part of it. The president of the Graingrowers Association is very happy with the efforts of the Queensland Government. We are working very hard on this. In Roma yesterday, officers of my department, councillors and grain-growers' representatives had the machinery set up to save our crops.

ROADWORK ON BEENLEIGH-WATERFORD ROAD

Mr. HOUSTON: I ask the Minister for Mines and Main Roads:

1. Will he take urgent action to have the work on the Beenleigh-Waterford road west of the abattoirs, which has been undertaken by the Albert Shire Council on behalf of his department, completed immediately?

2. Has the money allocated for this job already been spent? If so, has he taken urgent action to have the job completed?

3. Is he aware that the road is unsealed, is in a dangerous state and is affecting industries, particularly the meatworks, in the Beenleigh area?

Mr. CAMM: If, as the questioner has indicated, non-completion of the work is jeopardising the operation of an industry in the area, he may rest assured that the Government, through my department, will assist in every possible way. If, as he has indicated, the funds that were allocated for the completion of the work have been expended and the work-force of the Albert Shire Council is involved, I will have a complete investigation made to ascertain whether additional funds can be made available for the completion of the job so that the operations of the meatworks will not continue to be jeopardised.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Mr. HINZE: I ask the Premier: As the editorial column of "The Courier-Mail" is always headed by Jefferson's statement that the freedom of the Press cannot be limited without being lost, is he aware that the Federal Government, in one fell swoop, is now about to take away the last vestige of democracy that has been the birthright of all Australians and to supplant it with its own Left-wing, socialist, Communist doctrines? What steps can be taken to protect the Queensland Press, television and radio news media against this insidious manipulation of our daily news?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Everybody can see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears what is happening in this very important area of everyday living. The people in the Labor Government and the A.L.P. in Canberra are setting about destroying the freedom of the Press. This is one of the freedoms that has been guarded and protected over the years. It has been acknowledged by Governments and all political parties as a freedom that must be maintained. All of us from time to time feel that we have been criticised unjustly or unfairly but we have to admit that in the freedom we enjoy people are entitled to look at things from different angles. We accept that. On the other hand we cannot and will not accept the moves being made by Canberra to intimidate and control the media in the way it wants. The only good thing in this regard is that the Senate has blocked the moves. I hope it will continue to block them because it is not in the interests of this State or nation for the Press to be controlled by the socialist, Communist-dominated Government in Canberra.

RIDING OF TRAIL BIKES IN SCHOOL RESERVES

Mr. NEWTON: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: What action has been taken by officers of his department to keep trail bikes and other motor-cycles off vacant school reserves and to stop the damage they are doing to those school reserves as well as the nuisance they are creating in the early hours of the morning and late at night to persons residing near those reserves?

Mr. HODGES: If any complaints are lodged with the Police Department, the appropriate action will be taken immediately.

LEGALISATION OF PROSTITUTION

Mr. FRAWLEY: I ask the Minister for Justice: Have representations been made to his department by the Leader of the Opposition or any other member of the A.L.P. to legalise prostitution in Queensland?

Mr. KNOX: Ever since the iniquitous decision was made by the A.L.P. convention in Cairns that prostitution should be legalised—which of course is contrary to all the conventions of the United Nations, to which this country subscribes and which this State supports—the A.L.P. has been desperately trying to pretend it did not happen. As soon as it is mentioned in this House, A.L.P. members make derogatory remarks as though it had never happened. Of course, we all know perfectly well that it was a decision made by the Labor Party, and it is no good the Leader of the Opposition throwing up his hands in horror and saying, "I am bound by that decision. I cannot do anything about it." If members of the A.L.P. in this House had any courage at all, they would speak out against it under the privilege of the Parliament. Here they would have

your protection, Mr. Speaker, and the protection of Parliament, in speaking out against this iniquitous decision made by their party.

I have not received any approaches from the A.L.P. to have prostitution legalised in this State, and I trust I never will. I have, however, received numerous protests from members of the A.L.P.—not those in this House—against the decision of the A.L.P. convention in Cairns.

Mr. Frawley interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I inform the honourable member for Murrumba that when I rise to my feet I expect him to remain silent.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT— RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 15 October (see p. 1372) on Sir Gordon Chalk's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1974-75, a sum not exceeding \$96,262 to defray Salaries—His Excellency the Governor."

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG (Townsville) (12.17 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to speak on the Treasurer's balanced Budget. I can pay no greater compliment to the Treasurer and the Premier than to call it a balanced Budget. It hurts no-one, not even those who can afford to pay more but have complained bitterly about it. It does not affect the general over-all finances of businesses, including mining companies, on which there has been considerable discussion recently. It gives me great pleasure to belong to a coalition Government which in this world of change is moderate and considerate of the wishes and aspirations of the ordinary people.

The ordinary citizen has not altered at all; it is only the emerging Left-wing thinkers and socialists who have changed his life. He is still clinging to everything to which he held previously. All he wants is a job—the opportunity to follow an occupation that he likes and wishes to follow—and a religion, a way of life that is inbred in him, a belief in a supernatural being rather than an earthly god or, worse, socialistic-State god. He is clinging to the hope that his children's education will be what he and his wife wish it to be, and not what some socialistic, blank-minded official desires.

The ordinary citizen wishes to serve his country. He wants to be allowed to work his full working day and receive a full day's pay for it, to go home in safety to his family at night, to take them out in peace and safety at night and at week-ends as he chooses and, when he is sick, to go to a hospital where he is treated like a human being, with dignity and respect, not merely as an unknown with a number and a

card. That is what the Queensland Government offers the ordinary citizens, and I hope to God it never alters.

Unfortunately, I see signs of cracks and changes in our administrative procedures. When I study the provision for hospitals in the Budget, I note that in 1973-74 the Government spent \$85,431,000 on hospitals, and that in 1974-75 the expected expenditure is \$93,300,000. We also have to take into account another \$110,000,000 that the Government intends to spend in the next seven years on the construction of new hospitals at Redcliffe, Southport and Ipswich, a new medical school at Townsville, and additions to the Royal Brisbane Hospital. At the same time, we have been alarmed by the Federal Government decision, apparently made off the cuff and with very little forethought and planning, to build a 1,000-bed hospital at Mt. Gravatt. The cost of such a hospital will be at least \$20,000 a bed, which means that the Commonwealth Government will be up for at least \$20,000,000 for the hospital. Only one person could build a \$20,000,000 hospital overnight with a single stroke of the pen—the great imitator, Gough! Of course, God could do it.

Mr. Aikens: I won't be available.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: I don't think anyone will be available to see that \$20,000,000 hospital eventuate. No thought has been given to planning the building itself or staffing it. No architects have been engaged. The way Gough speaks, one would think it was an accomplished fact.

The whole health field throughout the world is characterised by a considerable lack of co-ordinated thinking and planning. We have trained medical and paramedical personnel and we have so-called economists—starry-eyed ones, green-eyed ones and red-eyed ones—and politicians like Hayden in the Federal sphere and Burns and Moore on the Opposition side in this Chamber, who have not the foggiest idea of the difference between agitation and administration. All we get from them is agitation. I have yet to hear one sound word of administration or suggestion from their lips. All they can do is complain about the system. If the health problems were "cured" as they would try to cure them, the health services would end up an expensive, jumbled mess, with a confused, disgruntled, disenchanted staff and resultant poor service to the community.

It is interesting to take a quick look at the general trends in health programmes throughout the world. It is a most confused picture. Some countries are erecting massive edifices to contain many hospital beds. Other countries are not building any more hospitals and reducing their bed numbers. Some countries are building more community health centres and saying that they are the answer to the problem. Other countries are pulling down their community health centres because they say that they are not worth having as they cannot keep them staffed and managed.

They find them costly, about 61 per cent more expensive than the ordinary general-practitioner rate. Some countries are even talking about employing bare-footed doctors. They are turning them out by the hundred, like sausages, and not even putting shoes on them. I do not know whether they put any knowledge in their heads or any diplomas in their pockets, but they are sending them out into the countryside. Wouldn't it be lovely if this State came to that! Then we could get bare-footed medicine in Queen Street for a dollar a time! That is what Gough, Hayden and their boys want to give us.

Dr. Crawford: Chinese-model.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: Yes, Chinese-model.

The National Health Service in England is the greatest socialist failure the world has ever seen. England tumbled to her knees, and now she is lying flat on her back, purely and simply because of socialism. The Kaiser, Napoleon and Hitler could not break her but by God the socialists did! They brought her to her knees very quickly. Now she is a nation ruled by "mediocracy". That "mediocracy" is controlled from the floor of the workshop at shop-steward level. The intelligent and the patriotic have all been killed in the wars. That country spends 5 per cent of its gross national income on health, yet the system is grinding to a halt. We can hear its groaning even from Australia. Its doctors are leaving the country. Its health service is staffed by Eurasians, Africans and Australians; if they left the country, the whole system would fall apart and fail to function. Every Australian graduate goes to England to practise medicine and surgery on the poor old Englishman. As if he hasn't already had a gutful of the socialists and the various people who have fought him over the years! He has no resistance or intestinal fortitude left; he is simply giving up under weight of socialism.

England has 1,000,000 people working in the health service. It has 3,000 hospitals and 500,000 beds. The hospitals and clinics have long waiting lists. The community health centres are being closed because they cannot be staffed; they cannot be organised or administered. On the other hand, private hospitals are on the increase in England. People are so fed up with second-rate medicine that they are paying for the personal touch and the care and consideration they know they can get in private clinics.

It is interesting to note that Mrs. Barbara Castle, the socialist witch who has become Minister for Health—or Mistress for Health—has decided to reduce the number of private hospitals so that she can bring back into the health service some of the best surgeons and physicians in England. Of course, she will not get them back. They will migrate, most probably to Australia, only to fall from the frying pan into the fire of Hayden and his mob.

It is interesting to look at what the poor old consulting doctor is paid in England. He is extremely poorly paid and very dissatisfied. He receives £5,000 a year—peanuts. The waiting list for ordinary, routine operations such as hernias can run into years but anyone in England who wants an abortion just presses the button and says, "Brother, I want an abortion", and she gets it. The acute beds are being cluttered up with abortion cases. Abortion has become such a racket that even the politicians who introduced it admit that they did not foresee that they would have their fingers steeped in the blood and guts of babies. Abortion on demand is a disgusting, stinking mess. It is taking so many acute beds that the ordinary citizen is not being treated for his serious ailments.

Now let us look at the position in Sweden, the greatest socialist country in history. This is the country on which Gough intends to model Australia—Gough called it a marvelous country—but this same stinking country, steeped in socialism, is financing various insurrections and selling arms made in its magnificent factories. These are the great socialists! They look after their own people with the blood of others. They spend 7 to 8 per cent of their gross national product on health but at the same time their people are withering and fading on the socialist vine. The suicide rate is high; the divorce rate is fantastic, and they, too, have abortion on demand. If people could get out of the country they would, but their taxes are so damned high that they cannot afford to leave. The general hospitals have 17 beds per 1,000 of population and six acute beds per thousand head, which is twice as high as that in America. Hospital treatment is so expensive that the Swedish authorities have decided to convert to health centres. An ophthalmological operation—an eye operation—is subject to a waiting period of two years. This is the highly proficient socialised medicine. So far I have instanced two socialist countries, both of them flops.

Now let me turn to New Zealand, another socialist-oriented country—the one that gave the great Gough Whitlam his first ideas on how to run a campaign. There is not one Australian Labor Party policy that Mr. Kirk had not implemented originally—before Gough Whitlam. Take Australia's foreign policy, financial policy or any other policy; every one came from Kirk. Whitlam is no original, just an imitator.

Mr. Bromley interjected.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: Read history and find out! New Zealand's free hospital system cannot cope with the demand for beds. It has 34,000 on the waiting list for beds, so there again people want the personal touch. Private insurance companies are instituting private health insurance schemes and backing private hospitals which are starting up again because people want that personal care

and attention. If honourable members opposite become sick, they will want it, too, because they will realise its importance.

Five per cent of New Zealand's medical practitioners are Asians or Africans. National medicine poses very complex problems which cannot be solved unless the plans are considered in depth. The plans we have in Australia at the moment have not been considered in depth or even fully. The medical profession and the economists have not got together. A limited plan was drawn up by an economist by the name of Deeble. He called it a health plan, but it is not; it is a financing plan. Upon this plan the whole of our national health scheme will be hung.

Let us turn to America. Seven Bills are presently before the Ways and Means Committee in the United States Assembly. This indicates how complex the matter is. First of all, there is the Nixon Administration Bill. I do not know what will happen to that now that Nixon has been axed. Then there is the Mills-Kennedy Bill, the Griffith-Kennedy Bill, the Long-Ribicoff Bill, the American Hospital Association Bill, the Medi-Credit Bill and the Health Insurance Association of America Bill. Whereas America has seven Bills, Australia has Mr. Hayden and Mr. Deeble, who claim that we will have a beautiful, workable, composite health scheme. All my eye and Betty Martin! It simply will not work. The complexity of such a scheme is shown by the tremendous amount of work that has been done in America.

The American Association of Medical Clinics, which has a membership of hundreds of medical practitioners, said this in its gazette of 30 May 1974—

"The demands of today's health care are so extremely complex that no single proposition thus far advanced provides the necessary solution. For any national health insurance scheme to work there must be co-operative alliances between provider, payers, Government and the public."

The concluding sentence is most interesting, and the medical profession, the paramedical personnel and, as well, the hospital and health administrators should thoroughly digest it.

Little cracks have appeared in our State health service, and it will not be long before they become wide crevices. In its desire to forestall steps taken by the Commonwealth socialist Government to establish a centrally controlled national health scheme, the State Department of Health is rushing headlong into action that it will later regret.

The State would receive higher dividends from bolstering and improving the present facilities. The set-up of base hospitals and district hospitals is a magnificent one, but the facilities provided need to be enlarged and improved. For example, the out-patient departments should be enlarged, and hospital administrators more competent than those presently in office should be appointed.

And I mean medical administrators not lay administrators. If an administrator does not do his job, the Government, instead of fiddling around, should sack him. There is too much pussyfooting around with persons who do not look after people. Any hospital administrator who does not ensure that the patients are properly cared for should be sacked; he is no good to the community. After all, the State is running a health service, not an institution for mentally crippled health officers.

The cost of establishing community health centres will be tremendous. In spite of that, the number of patients treated per hour or per day will be reduced, thereby causing dissatisfaction among patients, who will not be given personal medical attention. Furthermore, I suggest that community health centres will not attract staff, and that by the time adequate staff are found—possibly six or seven years hence—the medical and health administration will have fallen down around our ears.

I turn now to the Queensland Radium Institute. Without doubt it is the most efficient unit of its type in the world. Over the years I have referred to it many patients on whom I have operated and who required post-operative radiotherapy. At all times I have received full co-operation and first-class service from the institute, and I am sure that all other surgeons in Queensland have had similar experience.

The Queensland Radium Institute, which was developed and originally administered by Dr. Cooper, is the envy of other Australian States. The present director, Dr. Mowatt, is a first-class officer, who is kind and considerate not only to the patients but also to his staff. He has imbued those who work under him with the desire to care properly for the patients. Anyone who is referred to the Queensland Radium Institute receives first-class, personal treatment. All of my patients who have received treatment there have the highest regard for the institute.

Recently, however, two of my patients who were referred to the institute found upon their arrival that no beds were available to them. In one instance that did not matter, because the patient's son was a wealthy man and was able to have his father admitted to a private hospital. On the other hand, the other patient was a pensioner, and makeshift accommodation, not within the Royal Brisbane Hospital, had to be found for him. That is not good enough for an elderly man in need of radiotherapy. Inquiries that I made disclosed that the administration of the Royal Brisbane Hospital has reduced the number of beds available to the Queensland Radium Institute. This is criminal.

If more beds should be provided for any category of patients, they should be provided for Queensland Radium Institute patients so that country people, by arrangement, may come to Brisbane and go straight into a hospital bed. They should not have

to go to lodgings in the city. Persons receiving radiotherapy are sick—and they get sicker each day from the effects of radium. This matter should be looked into. Regardless of all the administrative difficulties and personality clashes at Royal Brisbane Hospital, the number of Queensland Radium Institute beds should not be reduced. The Director-General of Health should bounce off his tail and investigate what is happening. It is not good enough for the State and its citizens that professionals like Mowatt and his men should have to fight so hard to get beds and decent treatment for their patients.

Whilst browsing through the Budget I noticed that no money is being paid to universities. Last year we paid \$15,246,000 to the universities, but this year we have only a blank space in the Budget.

Mr. Lee: The Commonwealth Government is paying.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: That is so.

I wonder what is to happen now that the Commonwealth has taken over financial responsibility for the universities. I shudder to think what will happen in our moral, educational and political spheres when universities are controlled completely by the Commonwealth. The university newspaper of 15 August carried the headline—

“University growth limited by Senate quota decision.”

As soon as the Commonwealth took over the universities it started cutting back. The article reads—

“Total new undergraduate enrolments will be limited to 3,615 students compared with an enrolment of new students in 1974 of just under 4,000.”

Browsing through the article I found that the arts faculty has a quota of 1,120 students; engineering, 260; educational studies, 430; and medicine, 245. It seems that we will have an imbalance of graduates from universities. We will have people with B.A. degrees cleaning the streets and driving buses. While an arts degree is of use in teaching, it is good for little else. Australia has great mineral deposits, but a very small quota is set for technological studies such as engineering, applied science and architecture. They are virtually neglected, yet arts is given a large quota.

Many people will be frustrated and disillusioned by the university policy. What is the answer? Arts should have much higher entrance requirements. The arts quota should be reduced considerably while the quota for engineering should be increased, and better facilities should be provided for engineering, medicine, architecture and veterinary science. We want science graduates in a developing country, not a lot of airy-fairy people with B.A.'s who cannot do a good day's work or anything constructive. Before arts graduates know what is happening, they will be driving buses and cleaning the streets. They

will become disillusioned and will cause a deal of trouble. As we need technologists, let us cater for them.

I know that we now have little control over the universities, but this Assembly should keep a close eye on what is happening there. Interstate students are being admitted and preventing Queensland graduates from entering certain faculties. It seems that interstate students are even given preference. A lot of radicalism is still being fostered in various faculties. During question time this morning Dr. D'Urso and Dr. Wertheim of the Council for Democracy in Schools were mentioned. They belong to the philosophy department at the university and are pushing out their evil tentacles in an attempt to influence school-children with their Left-wing radical principles.

University administration at board and committee levels is very poor. The State's role and the wishes of the people who control the purse strings are completely disregarded. The Universities Commission considers that the States are redundant and should not have anything further to do with education. That is an interesting philosophy because it grows at the university and spreads downward. Before we know it, people will be saying that the State provides nothing for education. The Federal sphere will assume total responsibility and gain all the kudos for our education system.

In a previous speech I referred to this poor administration. I cite an interesting remark by Dr. Goodman that appeared in "The Courier-Mail" of 10 May 1971. He is reported as saying—

"The administration has thus far been outwitted, outthought and outmanoeuvred by the radicals in the university power struggle."

He went on—

"A team of management consultants and financial experts would, I am sure, find many areas where financial savings could be made, and many ways in which the university could operate more efficiently."

That rather serious accusation was made when the State controlled the finances of the universities. Now that we have no control over them, what will happen? We will have turtle-farm fiascos in every department, with misappropriation of money by airy-fairy economists working out their own theories at the expense of the university as a whole. The Commonwealth will pour in taxpayers' money and the State will have no say in its management.

I consider that the future of our universities is not at all bright. They could become States within a State—places in which Commonwealth money (that is, the taxpayers' money) is squandered and wasted; places from which few technically trained people can emanate; places where frustrations and disillusiones are bred and fostered; places

where undemocratic and unchristian philosophies are taught and instilled into students. In fact, they could well end up defeating the very reason for their existence. That is exactly what will happen to the universities in this country unless they are controlled and watched carefully.

The Budget's provision for education is rather illuminating. Expenditure has been increased from \$189,000,000 to \$230,000,000. Recently in the Press we have been pestered by claims from various teacher groups that they are not receiving a fair deal and that they are not getting this or that. However, on perusing the Budget, we find that of the \$230,000,000 being provided only \$16,450,000 comes from the Commonwealth. Therefore, the State is supplying almost \$214,000,000. In the last four years the number of teachers has risen from 13,600 to 18,600. Allowances for scholarship-holders have been increased to an expected amount of \$1,970,000. As reported in the Press, wages have increased by 22.8 per cent. Obviously the teachers have had a fair crack of the whip. Now the citizens and the parents expect a good return for the money.

One point on which I consider the teachers' complaints are justified relates to accommodation provided in one-teacher schools in the northern and western areas of our State. In many instances no accommodation is provided and the teacher stays in a hotel, hostel, or boarding house. That is not good enough. The matter should be investigated at top level. Some sort of Public Service housing commission or authority should be formed to consider the problem in depth and suggest improvements to provide more comfort and better facilities for teachers at those schools. That would be one of their big bones of contention. If it is eliminated and these people are provided with better quarters, a considerable amount of the agitation coming from the Queensland Teachers' Union will disappear.

A comparison of the figures for 1957 and 1974 indicates the growth in education since this Government came to power. In 1957 we had no pre-school facilities. In that year we had 23 kindergartens, whereas today there are 270. Kindergarten teacher college enrolment was 34 in 1957; today it is 451. In 1957 we had 1,507 primary schools; today we have 1,058. Enrolments have increased. Primary school teachers have increased in number from 5,368 in 1957 to 8,077 today. There were no deputy principals in 1957, whereas today there are 113. That shows a spreading of authority and responsibility, which is a good idea. There were 16 special schools in 1957; there are now 79. In 1957 we had 16 technical colleges and we now have 18. Since 1957 there has been an astounding increase in expenditure. No-one can say, with what has been achieved and is to be achieved in 1974, that the Queensland Education Department has not done a grand job in providing an extremely good education system over a very vast area. I

may differ from my colleague the honourable member for Townsville South, but I think that the Minister is to be congratulated.

Recently Opposition members have passed some uncomplimentary remarks about the State Government Insurance Office. What is its fate? Where is it going? Recently the National Compensation Bill was introduced in the Federal House. It will provide compensation to anyone who receives an injury at work, at home, in bed, while robbing a house, in the process of committing grievous bodily harm on another person, while committing piracy and even while hijacking. As far as I know, the latter two are regarded internationally as capital offences. They are punishable by death. It does not make much sense to me that the present Federal Government intends to compensate people who, in any other country, would be executed.

What is an accident compared with an illness? This is extremely difficult to define. I have searched the books and I cannot come up with anything definitely concrete. The definitions are airy-fairy and are certainly not definite. Injury by accident is defined as damage to the human system (the human system being body or mind) caused by an external untoward event. That is a lovely definition. I would expect that to have come from Mr. Hayden because, having heard it, a person would scratch his head and wonder what it meant.

The human body can be injured if it is hit by a virus or bacteria, or when a malignant disease starts to grow in it. Basically there is no difference between being hit by a virus and by a 10-ton truck or double-decker bus.

It is rather interesting that venereal disease is compensable. This is the first time that venereal disease has got a decent card out of the pack. It has always been looked upon as something to be ashamed of. Under the legislation a person could receive up to \$500 a week. A Cabinet Minister, a senior Minister anywhere, or a businessman could be paid \$26,000 a year. This is fantastic. He could get up to \$500 a week.

Mr. R. E. Moore: For taking his secretary out.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: For taking his secretary out, or for falling down the back stairs whilst drunk. This Utopia has suddenly been thrust upon us. We will breed a race of bludgers, no-hopers, cheats, rogues, and beggars. And who does the Government want to run this scheme? Who are to say whether people are sick enough to receive such payments? The despised old medical profession—the doctors that the Federal Government want to put down under their thumbs and turn into mere numbers.

This was pointed out to the planners, and they said, "That cannot be allowed to happen. We will have a tribunal." There will be no medical officers on that tribunal, so it will be an open go for anyone to feign

sickness. I defy anyone to say that I do not have a backache, and I could get my \$500 a week until I am 65 years of age. That payment would then cease and I would be put on a pension of some sort.

How is this Utopia to be financed? For a start, everyone is to be slugged 2 per cent of his wages. That will also apply to Government and semi-governmental bodies. The self-employed person will pay 2 per cent of his own taxable income in addition to the 1.35 per cent levy. These charges may eventually become part of the one levy. In addition, all users of petrol will be required to pay an extra 10c per gallon. Can honourable members imagine the influence that that will have on air fares? Where is all of this going to stop? There will be a loading of 10c a gallon of petrol used in all forms of transport.

How is it proposed to finance the scheme? The genius who worked it out is named Woodhouse, and he had an offside named Meares. They are justices. All I hope is that I never have to appear before them. I do not think I would get a fair judgment.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: At least they wouldn't use a knife on you without anaesthetic.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: There is nothing like a little acupuncture now and again.

These gentlemen were asked, "How will the scheme be financed?" They said, "That's easy. All you have to do is work out the total cost." They contend that they will receive \$495,000,000 from workers' compensation premiums. They will take over all workers' compensation—and the State Government Insurance Office will go out of business. What will happen to the insurance companies? Where will people be able to borrow money later? What will happen to the loan programmes of insurance companies? Much of their liquidity is obtained from insurance premiums. Compensation business will be taken from private insurance companies and the S.G.I.O. Soon the S.G.I.O. will not be able to erect another building, as all of its business will be taken from it by the Commonwealth Government.

From levies on the self-employed, it is estimated that another \$105,000,000 will be obtained. From the extra 10c a gallon tax on petrol, another \$290,000,000 is expected. Not bad! It is said that in 1973-74 \$370,000,000 was spent on social service benefits, which will be included in the new scheme. That leaves \$390,000,000 to be obtained from general revenue.

This is not really a good business deal. Social service benefits amounted to only \$270,000,000 last year. From the levy and the petrol tax \$395,000,000 will be obtained, and still more will have to be found. It is proposed to interfere with insurance companies. This will create unemployment, disrupt trusts, and reduce the number of avenues through which people can borrow money. The result will be financial chaos

until everything is sorted out. The planners say that the scheme can be financed on \$1,655 million. They say that it will reach a plateau and level out over 20 years, and they will then be able to grab—I think that was the word used—so many millions per annum to put in their hip pocket. I do not know why.

This idea started in New Zealand. In that country, however, the plan was less drastic—a levy of 1 per cent was imposed on employees and self-employed people, \$1.50 was added to the drivers' licence fee, and third-party insurance was taken over. Recently I asked the Treasurer how many claims for compensation for personal injury were made to the S.G.I.O. for 1972-73 and 1973-74, and what was the total amount paid out on the claims. In 1972-73, it was \$22,186,469, and in 1973-74 it was \$30,144,679.

In New Zealand, about 100,000 workers are injured each year, and the New Zealand Government considers that it can run the scheme on a payout of \$50,000,000 annually. The Queensland figure is nearly up to that of New Zealand at the moment.

Other drastic figures are the 3,600 people killed, and the 90,000 injured, on the roads in Australia last year. Multiply those figures by five and one gets the number of work injuries. It will be an enormous bill. I doubt whether \$1,655 million will cover it. We are heading for absolute chaos. The State Government Insurance Office, which adequately covers injured workers at the moment, will be almost castrated financially. It will have terrific upheavels in its staff and in its financial income. If the Bill goes through, the result will be financial calamity for the whole of Australia.

It is envisaged that eventually the scheme will take over the whole of rehabilitation and repatriation, and all sickness benefits. There will be one huge unit controlling health, sickness benefits, compensation, repatriation and all other matters in respect of which a person can receive social service payments. They will all be run by one big department. It will be the greatest financial monster this country has ever been saddled with.

It has given me great pleasure to speak on the Budget. The Treasurer and his fellow Ministers have done an amazing job. They have looked after the financial and general welfare of the State extremely well during the last 12 months.

Mr. R. JONES (Cairns) (12.57 p.m.): I refer to page 3 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement where he says—

"Railway operating losses again were a severe drain on the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Operating costs, exclusive of general debt servicing costs, were \$183,661,801. Receipts totalled \$145,077,223, leaving an operating deficit of \$38,584,578. This compares with a deficit of \$13,919,074 in 1972-73."

One aspect of the State Budget that requires close attention is the huge railway deficit the State has now to bear. In 1972-73 the State lost \$33,500,000 on the railways. Last financial year the loss increased to the staggering sum of \$58,500,000, an increase of more than 74 per cent. Only 10 years ago people regarded the loss incurred on the railways—then \$6,190,000—as a serious state of affairs. It is clear that the Treasurer, the Minister for Transport and the Commissioner for Railways could not care less how much money is now lost through maladministration and failure to rationalise freight rates. Obviously they have caught the blame-Canberra bug, and are now too preoccupied with helping the Premier to pursue his personal vendetta to worry about how the State's financial position is affected by the operation of the railways. In his Budget the Treasurer estimated that the Railways would lose \$40,100,000 this financial year. On his record of rarely being able to estimate railway losses accurately, it can be expected that the working loss, plus debt charges, will probably be far in excess of \$60,000,000.

In referring to the loss last year, the Treasurer said—

"This deficit position is clearly the result of this Government's policy of holding fares and freights at fixed levels while costs all around, including of course the costs of operating the rail system, are continually increasing."

If ever there was a forewarning of an imminent increase in rail freights, we have it in the Treasurer's Financial Statement. Mark my words, the only reason there was not an increase in this Budget was that it was designed as an election Budget. Believe me, if the present Government is returned to office, which is becoming less and less likely each day, rail freights will be savagely increased without any consideration of the programme of rationalisation promised by the Government during the election campaign in 1972. The record of this Government with the railway is one of neglect and indifference, which I will outline as I proceed.

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

Mr. R. JONES: I turn now to what the Treasurer said on 4 May 1972 in delivering the policy speech of the Liberal Party section of the coalition. On page 28 of his policy manifesto, referring to the Government's transport policy, he said—

"The Government will also proceed with the co-ordination and rationalisation of all forms of public transport in the metropolitan area under one Brisbane Regional Transport Authority.

The plan envisages these things:

The linking of the northern and southern suburbs by rail;

The building and modernisation of new rail stations with bus-rail interchange facilities, and adequate car parks

at suburban stations to facilitate the co-ordination of bus and private transport with the rail system;

Further modernisation of railway rolling-stock, use of electric rail cars and the provision of modern fast buses;

Electrification of the suburban rail system and the provision of fast and frequent rail services to such areas by the end of the first five-year stage."

Now let us look at some of the Government's actions during the past years. Firstly, this Government has torn up railway lines at the rate of one mile a week since it came to office. In fact, nearly 1,000 miles of track have been ripped up since it came to office in 1957. Ironically, the Government claims to serve country people, yet, when we analyse the tearing up of these railway lines, we find that it was the countryman who lost out.

Over the past 17 years, the Government has reduced dramatically the number of railway jobs. In 1957, 25,303 wages staff were employed in the Railway Department; in 1973 these had been reduced to only 18,562. Similarly, salaried staff had decreased from 4,520 in 1957 to 4,043 in 1973, giving a sum total of 7,218 jobs lost to Queensland railway workers. On that basis, no fewer than 17 railwaymen have lost their jobs each pay period, or each fortnight, since the National-Liberal Government came to power.

Assuming that this Government has torn up railway track at the rate of one mile a week and that 17 jobs a fortnight have been lost since 1957, let us see what has happened to the financial operations. It is on record that the last occasion when the railways were run at a profit was under a Labor Government in the mid 1950's. During the regime of this Government the policy in the railways has been one of increasing the excess of expenditure over revenue. Indeed, in the last 10 years the percentage of excess of expenditure over revenue has increased from 107.53 per cent to 123.82 per cent. I shall look forward to the early tabling of the Railway Commissioner's report in this Parliament in order to ascertain the percentage in 1973-74.

Neglect of our railway system has been reflected in the number of passenger journeys undertaken. There has been a net decrease of some 39,400,000 in the 17 years of National-Liberal administration or, in percentage terms, a decrease of 10 per cent. This is despite an increase of 40 per cent in the State's population during the same period.

Some \$160,000,000 has been added to the Public Debt while Sir Gordon Chalk has occupied the positions of Transport Minister and Treasurer. It now totals the enormous sum of \$334,000,000 and this does not include the estimated \$800,000,000 required to electrify Brisbane's suburban network.

Electrification is yet another story. It is one of the greatest tragedies in the history of Queensland's transport. Over a long period of time it has been fully covered by members on this side of the Chamber, and it will be dealt with again.

I shall now examine the financial results as revealed by divisional statistics. A comparison of working expenses as a percentage of revenue earnings shows that the Southern Division has witnessed an increase from 118.23 per cent in 1957 to 116.23 per cent in 1973 while over the same period in both the Northern and Central Divisions the reverse applied. For example, in the Northern Division the corresponding percentages are 88.70 and 72.11 and in the Central Division they are 92.56 and 61.56. The significance of these percentages is that, whereas the railways operated at a handsome profit in the Northern and Central Divisions, they lost heavily in the Southern Division, particularly in the Country Party strongholds.

What a chaotic situation this is! There is a dire need for rationalisation, but the Government has ignored all calls made for it. What a pity it is that the Budget was not used as the starting point! But what else could we expect from this tired, stale Government?

In 1973-74 there was a deficiency of \$58,522,438. Indeed, over the past years the deficiency has increased alarmingly, from \$6,193,522 in 1963-64 to \$30,910,413 in 1972-73. In the same period the total revenue earnings increased from \$41,100,000 to \$134,200,000, while total expenditure increased from \$44,200,000 to \$165,100,000. Over a 10-year period of Country-Liberal Party administration the percentage excess of expenditure over revenue increased from 107.53 to 123.02. In fact, the last occasion on which the Railway Department made a profit was, as I have said, in the mid-1950's, when the Labor Party was in office.

Mr. Jensen: Last week in Bundaberg it was said that Mr. Knox was the first Transport Minister to make a profit, in 1965.

Mr. R. JONES: Whoever said that should read the figures that I have just quoted.

To revert to passenger journeys in country areas—rural dwellers are relying less today on railways as a mode of travel than they did previously.

Mr. B. Wood: They have no choice.

Mr. R. JONES: I whole-heartedly agree. Country passenger services are the worst ever provided in the history of Queensland railways. In 1955-56, which was the last full financial year of a Labor Government in Queensland, a total of 5,738,049 journeys were undertaken by country passengers. By way of contrast, in 1972-73 the number had dropped to 1,493,797. This represents a decrease of nearly 4,300,000 journeys. This is due, of course, to the fact that not one steel passenger car has been made available

by the coalition Government to improve or modernise country rail services. Those cars that are in service were constructed under a Labor Government.

As to suburban rail journeys, the number of passengers carried has increased slightly, from 29,747,445 in 1955-56 to 30,499,969 in 1972-73. With electrification the railways may have been able to cater for the 725,000 people living in Brisbane, but, because more than half of the population of Brisbane are not served by rail, the railways cannot cater properly for them. Not one mile of railway line has been built in the new suburbs and expanding areas of Brisbane. The number of passenger journeys shows a net decrease of about 3,490,000, or about 10 per cent, in the 17 years of Country-Liberal Party administration, yet Queensland's population increased in the same period by 40 per cent.

In the 15 years from 30 June 1958 to 30 June 1973, the total tonnage of goods carried by rail increased threefold—thanks to coal haulage, which increased from 1,670,000 tons to 15,830,000 tons. However, in the same time, less wool, timber, livestock and general merchandise have been handled. While tonnages hauled have increased threefold, or by 309 per cent in 17 years, revenue has increased by only 216 per cent. In fact, in recent years, only the increased coal haulage has saved the railways from financial chaos. However, coal haulages appear to have reached the optimum, and revenue is now in inverse proportion to the tonnage hauled.

Another point of contention that will be looked at very carefully by a Labor Government concerns secret freight agreements. This is one of the main issues of contention in the northern, north-western and western areas of Queensland. A few years ago the Auditor-General's Report revealed that the Fraud Squad found that under one such secret agreement the person who was getting preferential treatment took the railways down with ghost loadings to the tune of about \$40,000. In this instance it is a matter of "No name, no pack drill." Honourable members have only to read the Auditor-General's report published a few years ago to get the relevant details.

I repeat that one of the most contentious issues is the authority vested in the Railway Commissioner to conclude secret trade agreements with large companies. It is thought that no fewer than 1300 of these agreements conferring preferential treatment on certain companies are in existence. Despite constant pressure from members of Parliament, no details have been given to Parliament. Only the other day the Minister for Transport admitted that secret freight agreements afford no relief to the ordinary citizen. People who benefit under the freight agreements obviously do not pass on the benefits. Their calculations and costings are made on the normal freight schedule, not on the secret

freight rates that they are getting. Their charges are based on the freight rates applicable to the operator of a corner store.

In Far North Queensland and other far-flung country areas the people are not getting any benefit from the secret trade agreements. The benefits are retained by those who enter into secret contracts with the railways.

The financial results in the railway divisions over the past years under the National-Liberal Government, have caused considerable concern, as may be realised from the following table—

Division	Percentage Working Expenses to Revenue Earnings	
	1956-57	1972-73
Southern ..	118.23	166.23
Central ..	92.56	61.56
Northern ..	88.70	72.61

It can be seen that the high freight charges to North and Central Queensland have contributed to profitable divisional operations. However, in the Southern Division, particularly in the Warwick and Roma sections, both being Country Party strongholds, the increasing losses over the past 17 years amply illustrate that a complete review of freight charging and traffic scheduling is necessary. Goodness knows, those on this side of the Chamber have been advocating that for a very long time.

In 1972-73 the Queensland Railways accumulated contribution to the Public Debt totalled \$334,000,000. As I said previously, it has added nearly \$160,000,000 to the Public Debt in the 17 years this Government has been in office, without much to show for it. The railways are continuing to operate at an ever-increasing loss. No rationalisation of programmes is evident, apart from the retrenchment of men. Dieselisation has proved to be only a temporary solution to the upgrading of our rail system. Electrification is groaning to a meagre start, forced onto a reluctant State Government by the Australian Government. I repeat that the estimated cost of upgrading the railways in accordance with plans drawn up by a Labor Government 20 years ago is \$800,000,000. As a result of the inaction of this Government, Queenslanders have been long deprived of that improved service.

Freight rate injustices still remain throughout our rail system. A typical example is the impost of charges foisted upon people in Northern and Western Queensland. Recently the Premier said that 4,500 railwaymen would lose their jobs if the A.N.L. were allowed to operate within Queensland, as advocated by the Leader of the Opposition.

It was suggested that if A.N.L. were permitted to carry freight to North Queensland it would provide competition and perhaps some relief to North Queenslanders from heavy rail charges.

If intrastate shipping trade were allowed, said the Premier, 4,500 men would lose their jobs! That about equals the complement of the railway staff in the Northern Division. He says, in effect, that by sending a few ships to the North we would lose practically the whole Northern Division. That is ridiculous. I will leave it to the readers of "Hansard" to assess the Premier's veracity in this matter.

When the Premier was making that Press statement, apparently he forgot the Government's railway employment record. I will repeat the figures, because I believe they bear repeating. In 1957, when this Government assumed office, 29,823 people were employed in the Railway Department. The latest figures, as disclosed on 26 September last in answer to a question from me, show that 22,705 were employed at the end of the financial year 1973-74. Obviously 7,118 jobs of railwaymen have been lost through redundancy and retrenchment caused by this Government's actions in 17 years. No fewer than 7,118 railway jobs have been lost.

We must remember that over that period a substantial profit has been returned to the Government from the Northern Division. However, that has been used to offset the heavy losses of the Southern Division—particularly, as I said, those lines servicing National Party strongholds. Despite the profits from the North, the National Party has done nothing to alleviate the burden of the heavy freight charges which inevitably make the cost of living in Far North Queensland much higher. Furthermore, the application of freight rates is inconsistent. Supermarket lines that are almost identical are attracting over 100 different rates when freighted from Brisbane. Through the 1,300 secret freight agreements the Railway Department has reached with individuals or companies, it is pouring profits into the pockets of those individuals or companies.

There is an illogical classification of goods in the application of freight rates. This was borne out by the provincial freight study conducted in September 1970. It was then shown that a Mt. Isa distributor was paying \$90.15 per ton ex Brisbane for a canned product but \$55 per ton ex Brisbane for the same product which had been renamed. That is just one example of the illogical classification of goods for the determination of freight rates. Although this report was compiled and presented almost four years ago, the situation still exists. It is the people in the North, the Far North, and the North-west who are suffering. It is an indictment of the National Party, which professes to represent the country areas and claims to have the interests of country people at heart. But nothing is done about rail freights, which

it controls and with which it could compete with other forms of transport. It can pour the profits into the pockets of its big-business friends by setting secret freight rates. It is using every means at its disposal to assist its business friends but not the ordinary people in Far North Queensland.

Because of the Government's inept approach to urban transport and electrification over the past 17 years and its failure to follow Labor's plan, more than 370,000 of the 725,000 people living in Brisbane are still without a rapid suburban or urban rail service. If the people living on the Redcliffe Peninsula are included, the number of railless residents rises to 400,000.

The only stainless-steel carriages delivered in the 1950's were ordered by the Labor Government and built for it. Antiquated passenger carriages 40 to 60 years old are still being used in the suburban service in the 1970's. It is ridiculous. No wonder visitors to Queensland find our transport system laughable. No new track has been provided in suburban areas and the number of suburban rail terminals has remained unchanged for 17 years, yet Brisbane has experienced the greatest growth in its history.

The report on the electrification of the Brisbane rail system was presented to Parliament in 1947. Its approval by a Labor Cabinet and a Labor Government in 1950 was repudiated by the coalition Government in 1958. Since the preparation of the Wilbur Smith plan in 1970, the Minister for Transport has announced that we will experience the first electric train service in Queensland in 1977. In "The Courier-Mail" of 28 August 1974 he predicted electrification in the metropolitan area—30 years after the tabling of the initial plan in this Parliament, 30 years of procrastination and messing around, including 17 years of this Government which repudiated Labor's plan! The Government is 30 years behind the times in this as in everything else.

The Opposition is conscious of the Government's neglect of the railways. Go to the country areas and see the decrepit buildings, the old rolling-stock and the poor communications within the railway service. Is it any wonder that the morale of railwaymen is at a low ebb?

Mr. Bousen: Poor amenities are supplied to the staff as well.

Mr. R. JONES: That is correct. It seems likely to be a definite attempt to run down the railway system. There is a growing need for maintenance and for the provision of new technical and communication facilities. Whilst the rest of the world has progressed, the Queensland Railways have remained static. They are probably the greatest employer in the State, and they provide many essential community services in the West and the North. Indeed, the railways are the basis of the economy of some country towns and the backbone of

their transport system. They provide an essential service that must constantly be upgraded.

Railway rolling-stock and passenger services should be developed not only to meet the demands now placed upon them but in order to gain the traffic that could be attracted if they operated efficiently, and to allow them to compete against other forms of transport. Upgrading and assessment for the future should be given top priority in each section and division. Some communities are served solely by the railways, particularly in adverse conditions produced by cyclones and floods. After such disasters, the railways are always the first means of transport to operate.

I think that the Government should be planning the future transport requirements of the State, and I think that rail transport has been sadly neglected and should receive prompt attention. Unfortunately, it is not being given the necessary consideration. Recently we have seen constant confrontation between the State and Federal Ministers for Transport. It becomes crystal clear to the observer what happened prior to federation of the Australian States, and why Queensland has a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, New South Wales 4 ft. 8½ and Victoria 5 ft. 3. Obviously each State was looking across the border at the neighbouring State and jealously guarding its right to maintain its own independent railway service. The stupidity of such an outlook has not yet penetrated the halls of Government in this State in 1974. We are still procrastinating and perpetuating what was done so many years ago. We are still making the mistakes that we made before federation, when each State established its own little transportation system and operated it within its own area.

Where is there any breadth and depth of outlook in that attitude? Where is the Government's foresight? If it does not start to do something now, Queensland will be left behind the rest of the world in rail and road transport. At least air transport is a Commonwealth responsibility, and the facilities of the Department of Civil Aviation are well maintained at the various airports and are far ahead of those provided for other forms of transport administered by the State. Let us be a little enlightened in our thinking, and let us make the Australian transport system one of which we can be proud.

We hear much talk about the tourist industry. While the facilities provided for air transport might be adequate to handle the tourists presently arriving by jumbo jet, how are they to be handled by other forms of transport in the coming decade? It is absolutely ridiculous! Government members should pull up their socks and start catering for Queensland's transport needs now, for the next decade, instead of looking inwardly at themselves and contemplating their own

stupid little importance. Let us provide a transport system to cater for our needs and enable us to compete on a world-wide basis.

We are so far behind that it is laughable. We have to co-ordinate surface transport to achieve over-all efficiency. We cannot expect to continue as we are today. No individual transport operator, however big, can cope with the task. Individual State Governments cannot handle the task. My own feeling is that we should stop dealing with transport piecemeal, with each transport task in isolation. Transport has to be tackled in conjunction, in co-operation and in co-ordination. We cannot blithely assume that we can go on as we are. We have just got to expand into the field of an Australia-wide transportation system. If we cannot afford the cost of making rail transport more efficient, we cannot afford the cost of the infrastructure for alternative forms of transport. Would it not be best from all points of view to have each section doing the job that it does the best, instead of each running across the others' corners, or running parallel, with each transporting the same sort of merchandise in competition? Surely that is an important point to consider when we have a railway deficit of something like \$58,500,000 in one year. The task of all those engaged in transport activities in the 70's should be to organise all transport systems and take full advantage of the particular capabilities of all forms of transport.

It always has been the A.L.P. objective to make provision for a rapid transport system in the metropolitan area to provide a safe, cheap, clean and efficient service. Back in 1965, and possibly earlier than that, we proposed to set up a transport commission. The Government made a similar announcement in 1972, but what has transpired in the last two years? Have we seen any transport commission or Brisbane transport authority set up? Has such a body evolved? Committees have been set up, but so often has the same type of committee with so many different people on it been constituted and reconstituted that it has become farcical. Despite all the committees, the proposed transport authority has still not come into being.

It is time something was done about the establishment of an authority to co-ordinate all passenger transport systems in the Greater Brisbane area and surrounding areas. Certainly the people of Brisbane, and the people of Queensland, want to see the job done. They want the Government to get on with it, and we will support the Government if it does. We will be there to make sure the job is done, in co-operation with the Australian Government, on a broad basis, so that the whole thing is done correctly and efficiently.

We should be reviewing passenger transport throughout the whole State with a view to eliminating unnecessary delays and providing the best possible service. We have to

look at what is required on a long-term basis. We have to co-ordinate bus and train transport in the metropolitan area and in country areas. The existing suburban system should be extended to cater for all people living within the Greater Brisbane area. Through a transport authority we should be able to introduce a system of co-ordinated transport, which we believe would even be able to reduce fares. We want to get people out of their motor cars and by providing a better and more efficient system we will do this. If we can provide good transport we will get them out of their cars and thus reduce our traffic problems.

Mr. R. E. Moore: What difference does it make?

Mr. R. JONES: If the honourable member for Windsor does not know the difference that a co-ordinated transport system will make to traffic in Brisbane, I suggest that he should go back to Japan and have a good look at its system, bearing in mind the density of its population. We can squeeze only so many motor cars onto our roads; but, with a co-ordinated system, the maximum number of people can be transported over the longest distance in the shortest possible time. It is not logical to believe that as many people can be transported as quickly and efficiently with one or two to a motor car as can be transported by a rapid rail transit and co-ordinated transport system.

The bringing of this authority into operation will need some adjustments in the thinking of this State Government, of the Railway Department, the Brisbane City Council and the private operator. However, any problems that arise must be overcome because we cannot allow the present situation to continue. The longer we delay, the worse will the position become. Let me make it quite clear that areas at present serviced by private operators should not necessarily be interfered with; nor should the ownership of the services, but their time-tables should come within the economic operation of the over-all service and must be under the control of the transport authority. I think that is one thing that must be quite clearly spelt out.

I think we should also guarantee that as a result of the change there will be no worsening of the service to any member of the community. For this authority to operate properly our passenger rail services must be separated, as far as possible, from other railway activities. Naturally, in many cases suburban trains will run on the same lines as other trains but, with the co-ordination of rail transport and other transport, there should not be any problems in regard to time-tabling or control.

Appropriate financial arrangements should be made. I have no doubt that some ground-work has already been done. I hope that any arrangements that will have been made will continue and that the Federal Government will come into the arrangement on a more generous basis than the one-third that has

already been offered. I am not making any promises in this regard, but I think that should be the basis of our submission in the future and that we should be talking about this to the Federal Government.

This authority will be charged with the responsibility of implementing a modern transport system designed to eliminate duplication of transport with a view to achieving fast, modern and economic movement of people. This transport authority, or commission—call it what you like—would, in effect, control all the public and urban transport in the metropolitan and near-metropolitan areas. I should hope that it would control not only railway passenger services but also bus and ferry-boat services and any others that may eventuate in the years to come, the object, of course, being fast and economic transportation of passengers.

Electrification is something we should be accelerating. It simplifies requirements and reduces the cost of going underground when the need arises, particularly in the long term. And I think that the whole matter of urban transport in the metropolitan area should be looked at in the long term. The sooner we establish such a transport authority and get it moving, the earlier we will reduce the number of cars on the road and thereby contain the mounting road toll, which I am sure each one of us deplors. We must accept the challenge. No one person is to blame for this grave problem, and I am sure that the best means of attacking it is the provision of alternative means of transport.

Before leaving the operations of the Railway Department, I make a plea to the Minister for Transport, who is in the Chamber, for the resiting of the Cairns marshalling and goods yards. This matter has been brought to his attention both through the local authority and by deputation from the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. In the early days the site now occupied by the marshalling yards was on the outskirts of the town, but what was once the edge of Cairns is now the centre of the city. Great inconvenience is caused to many people, particularly motorists, who are frequently delayed at the railway level crossing. To a motorist sitting in his car with the motor idling, a two-minute delay at the level crossing seems a much longer period, particularly if he is in a hurry to get to work. Frequent complaints are made about the practice of shunting across the road crossing.

The level crossing near the wharves could be closed off, and the marshalling yards could be relocated on land set aside in the East Cairns reclamation area near Smith's Creek. As a result of representations that have been made, ingress has been provided to the railway yard, but we need to look at the provision of egress over the new reclamation area, which is under the control of the Cairns Harbour Board. Such an outlet

would allow a connection to be made with the North Coast line near Woree. This is, of course, a long-term project.

I see no reason why the railway passenger terminal should be shifted, nor do I see the need to relocate the passenger line to Redlynch and Kuranda. Provided the level crossings are adequately protected by mechanical signalling devices, the line will not create any great inconvenience to motorists. I stress, however, that the marshalling and shunting yards should be removed to the Smith's Creek area.

Finally, in the 10 years that I have been in this Chamber I have noticed a great deterioration in the public's approach to Parliament. It is only natural that in this game of politics the tempers of members sometimes become heated, so we should look closely at ourselves, and ensure that any disrespect that we as politicians might evoke is not shown to the parliamentary system by way of contempt for it. As parliamentarians we must be masters of our own destiny and we must also do our duty to uphold the reputation of parliamentarians.

To command respect we should be meticulous in the example we set. How could anyone think other than ill of politicians when their behaviour, as reflected in that of some members of this Assembly lately, is both base and crass. I could itemise instances here of character assassination, allegations against members without basis in fact or truth, snide innuendoes and insinuations, made in the hope of creating doubt or gaining cheap political advantage, and muck-raking. Some of the mud must stick, not only to those who are denigrated, but also to those who are denigrating.

Mr. Frawley: Give the honourable member for Lytton a copy of this.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. R. JONES: As elected members of the people, we should not abuse the privilege of this Assembly. We should establish a privileges committee to discipline honourable members who abuse the privilege of the Chamber.

Mr. B. Wood: That applies in the Federal Parliament, doesn't it?

Mr. R. JONES: It applies in most Parliaments of the British Commonwealth.

Can we blame the public for thinking ill of a person who, in his individual speeches, is grossly abusive? Some honourable members use this Assembly to their own advantage and, I am sorry to say, to the disadvantage of the standing of members of Parliament. Is it any wonder that the parliamentary representative's image is soiled when he despoils his political opponents with cowardly and untrue attacks in this Chamber and attacks innocent people outside? Although he knows the true state of affairs he

besmirches people's characters under parliamentary privilege. That is reprehensible, but I have heard it done in this Assembly.

In the last few years the incidence of such attacks has increased. Even on the public platform some honourable members denigrate others, particularly those who belong to an opposing party. It seems that it is done for some personal, narrow satisfaction. Unfortunately Ministers indulge in the same tactics when they seek to support their own political parties, or launch a barrage of abuse on some issue. All honourable members know that Opposition members are sometimes berated in their own electorates. On other occasions Opposition members are supplanted, as it were, by a Government member in their own areas. During election campaigns particularly, a Government member may inform people in an Opposition member's electorate of a benefit that is to be given to the area, and the people's elected representative is by-passed.

I have seen public servants elevated to the platform while the elected member is relegated to a seat in the audience. I thought it was very bad taste when that happened to me at the opening of a hospital. Perhaps it has happened to all Opposition members. Relegating a local member to the body of an audience is not the proper way to treat an elected representative. After all, he is elected by a majority of the people in the electorate, and he should be looked up to by them. When we denigrate ourselves, we must expect the can to fall on our own shoulders.

I give credit to a number of Ministers who, when they come to my electorate, always notify me of their intention to visit and invite me to attend their functions. In fact, the majority of them invite me onto the platform with them. If they do not act in this way, it does not benefit them. In my electorate, where I receive 66 per cent of the vote, it does them no good not to do the right thing. There is an immediate reaction against them.

The attitude of passing over members of Parliament and purposely not recognising them in an address should be reconsidered. I have been subjected to that. I do not know whether the Minister concerned thinks it is smart not to mention the local parliamentary representative. Most Ministers are honourable in this, but it is the Minister who does not observe that standard who denigrates parliamentarians and, by so doing, denigrates his own position as a Minister of the Crown.

Another ploy is to have a public servant open a function or a building instead of delegating the task to the local member, particularly when he is a member of the Opposition. That I have seen on occasions.

The ever-increasing ministerial practice of delivering a tirade against a person who is not present is to be deplored. Since the

A.L.P. assumed office in Canberra, Queensland Ministers have used various platforms where those attacked cannot reply. They have the floor and get stuck into somebody who may be a thousand miles away. I have seen that done. That does not help the standing of parliamentarians. As those Ministers damage themselves by their own statements, there is often no reason for retaliation. Action of that sort may appear at the time to be smart, but inevitably it damages the prestige of parliamentarians and thereby the parliamentary system itself. That has to be remembered. It is for that reason that I bring this matter to the attention of this Parliament in its dying stages.

Another complaint of mine is the denial of the right of representation to the Opposition within the parliamentary system. I refer particularly to the subject raised yesterday by my colleague the honourable member for Barron River—the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. If at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meetings all other States have Opposition representation and Queensland does not, surely that is a reflection on Queensland as a whole. Do honourable members believe that others at the conference look on all of us as members of Parliament—or are we denying ourselves by the Government's actions?

The Government may be secure in office at the moment, but politics is a peculiar business. One day those sitting on the benches on the right-hand side of the Speaker will be sitting on the Speaker's left. I can assure Government members that I will be advocating that members of Her Majesty's Opposition—members of the alternative Government—whoever they may be, should be represented at a parliamentary conference or a parliamentary convention. It should be considered from the point of view of parliamentary protocol rather than party politics. If we are to speak about democracy, let us spell it in the right way—not "d-e-m-o-c-r-a-c-y." Let us spell it in the correct way and approach it in a way that most benefits the community.

The deletion of any privilege within the parliamentary system foreshadows an eventual erosion of the standing of a member of Parliament within the community. How could any member of the community look up to a politician when he is spoken down to by his own colleagues? When a Government denies rightful representation to the Opposition, whether at a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference or in the member's own electorate, the pretensions of such action will eventually have repercussions. The public cannot be expected to look up to a member of Parliament, and accept him as a person of standing with an aura of responsibility, when his own parliamentary confreres attempt to denigrate him at every opportunity. An attitude adopted for political or monetary considerations does not pay off in the long term. First and foremost,

we are parliamentary representatives. If we cannot remedy these matters within the confines of Parliament, the situation can only deteriorate and will prove to be a blot on our democratic system. If these faults are peculiar to Queensland, the Legislative Assembly of Queensland should do something about remedying the position.

It is no good accusing Press reporters of sensationalism when the aim of the politician is headline-hunting. If the purpose of politicians is to gain publicity, we can have no complaint at being subjected to unfettered newspaper jargon. The word "statesmanship" applies not only to parliamentarians but also to journalists. Perhaps they should go hand in hand. Inevitably, the politician must become conscious of the fact that he has certain privileges in the field of politics.

We understand the cut and thrust of politics. Nobody understands it better than the members of this Assembly. Therefore nobody can remedy the situation better than they can. We all know the hurly-burly of politics and how the political game should be played. But there are times when we are at risk in running down our fellow members. The Parliament itself falls into contempt in this pursuit. We despoil ourselves and throw mud at one another. It is despoliation of the system under which we choose to represent our electors.

If we choose to bypass capability and experience by not applying ourselves to useful purposes, we are bad members of Parliament, and future democratic government could be in danger of erosion by default of members of Parliament. Do not blame the Press or the public for looking down on members of Parliament and treating them with derision.

(Time expired.)

Mr. WHARTON (Burnett) (3.12 p.m.): In rising to join in the debate on the Financial Statement, I place on record the efforts of the Treasurer—

Mr. B. Wood: Aren't you going to pledge your loyalty to the Throne?

Mr. WHARTON: I did it the other day. I do not have to do it in every speech I make. The honourable member never does it. In any case, there is nothing to worry about; nobody questions my loyalty to the Queen. If everybody acted as I do, it would be a far better world to live in.

I realise how difficult it was for the Treasurer to formulate this Budget. Because most of the matters that affect the Budget to any real extent are outside his control, it was far from a simple task. Most of the changes in recent times have resulted from the Federal Government's fiscal policy.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The Australian Government?

Mr. WHARTON: The Australian Government, the Federal Government or the Commonwealth Government. It is really the Federal Government. It exists because of the federation of the six States. I respect it in that sense in the same way that I respect the Queensland Government and the Governments of the other States.

The root of the Treasurer's problem is Canberra. We had devaluation, revaluation, tariff adjustments, higher petrol costs, high wage costs to both industry and the Government and high interest rates which created a terrific problem not only for business people but also for the ordinary working people who have to pay more for commodities.

Queensland is coping a financial hiding. The recent Federal Budget increased postage rates, telephone fees, interest rates and fuel prices, and caused higher costs in every way for the primary sector and the secondary sector as well. The results are higher prices for food and lower incomes for those who produce it. These matters greatly concern the people of this State.

However, the Treasurer was able to present a reasonably good Budget. People on both sides of the fence will admit that mining royalties and hospital fees were the only increases. That would be a source of satisfaction to most people. It is very difficult to please all the people. Many of them want to express their own opinions and try to force their own wills on the Treasurer.

Some may not like one section of the Budget, and some may not like another. When the Budget is worked out, an attempt is made to avoid new taxes, although some others may have to be increased. In the main, however, the Treasurer has not generally increased costs to the people.

Mr. Davis: Wouldn't you like to tell us about the C.P.A. conference you attended?

Mr. WHARTON: Of course I would like to tell the Committee about it, but it would take a week to do so. Even then, you would not understand what I had said.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dean): Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

Mr. WHARTON: I shall do that, Mr. Dean. If the honourable member cares to take some time off outside the Chamber, I should be delighted to tell him about the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting that I attended. I hope I represented Queensland well, and I hope that I was able to convey Queensland's point of view to those from other parts of the world.

When one considers all the complexities of trust accounts, appropriation accounts and adjustment of many other accounts, it is obvious that the Budget is not prepared overnight. It is the Treasurer's duty and responsibility to present a Budget covering

all such items, and I pay a tribute to him on the way in which he has done it. It is always a difficult task, and it has been made more difficult over the years. It must be accepted that the present Budget is reasonable, sound and resourceful.

I am not going to repeat much of what has already been said by others. One line of thought on which I wish to concentrate is irrigation. This is a vital aspect of the Budget. The State faces problems of inflation and increased unemployment, and the Government will handle them as they come along. Later, when I return to the Budget, I shall mention some ways of overcoming unemployment.

Mr. Davis: What about that C.P.A. conference?

Mr. WHARTON: There is no point in the honourable member's repeating his question. It is tedious repetition and I know that you, Mr. Dean, do not like it. I do not, either, because there is no point in it.

The people of this State are becoming a little tired of the Federal Government's policies. Very few people like the higher postal and telephone charges, and I am sure they do not like housing difficulties and higher interest rates. I believe that the worker in particular is being penalised, yet A.L.P. members of this Parliament invariably go along with Federal Government policies. Wherever they can they defend them, saying, "These are things that the A.L.P. are doing for you." If they are examples of what the Federal Government proposes to do, I am quite sure that the people will not re-elect it. I feel sure that the A.L.P. will be the loser at the next State election because it has advocated policies of the Federal Government that the people reject. If the people want such policies, fair enough. I would not be worried unduly if the people elected a Government that was pledged to such policies as long as they were correctly put before the people. The A.L.P. has a tendency to present its policies in such a way that one does not, in effect, know what is in the sugar bag till it is opened. It is then found that there is a snake in the bag.

Mr. B. Wood: We don't know your policies at any time.

Mr. WHARTON: If a person is determined not to find any good in policies, he will not find it. I will give credit to the Federal Government where credit is due. Those who are not prepared to look for a good policy will not find one.

We have a lot of good fellows on the other side of the Chamber, but some of them are putting forward socialist policies. I commend the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt for his speech during this debate when he exposed the theories of the socialist movement. He indicated the way socialism is spreading throughout the Commonwealth. People must think about these things before they cast their vote. Socialist policies can

injure this great nation of ours and do untold harm to what has stood the test of time. We are now at the cross-roads.

The policies of the Federal Government that are being put into effect are bringing about higher food costs. They adversely affect the average worker, who was traditionally a supporter of the A.L.P. He has to pay more for his food, fuel, transport and other necessities. Without doubt, he finds himself worse off under these policies. When our colleagues were in the Federal sphere they did the job well, but things have altered. The State Government has demonstrated that its policies are fruitful to people in every walk of life.

This Government is greatly concerned about inflation and unemployment. It seems that unemployment is on the march. Unemployment must be a matter of great concern to every Government and every person. I realise the problems of inflation and unemployment. When unemployment is rife, people cannot afford to buy the necessities of life. Unemployment affects the primary sector, the secondary sector and the business sector, which does a great job in providing the necessities of life. When consumer goods get beyond the purchasing power of the individual, we have problems. In a moment I will point out how the State Government will try to overcome the problem of unemployment.

The Treasurer has brought down a record Budget, providing for the expenditure of over \$1,000 million. Such a large Budget befits the times. Our State is growing in population, development and prosperity, and it is essential that the Budget should grow with it. I commend the Treasurer for bringing down a record Budget.

Only mining royalties and hospital fees have been increased.

Mr. Jensen: You are wrong there.

Mr. WHARTON: I am not wrong.

Mr. Jensen: What about the pay-roll tax? That is the biggest increase of the lot.

Mr. WHARTON: The honourable member will not see that in the Budget. Legislation covering the increase in pay-roll tax was brought down before the Budget. In any event, pay-roll tax was handed over to us by the A.L.P. Federal Government. We never had pay-roll tax in Queensland until the A.L.P. Government took over in Canberra.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: No, of course we didn't. Now that we have it we are getting more of it. The Federal Government handed over the taxing power to us. It gave us some of its work to do. But the Federal Government wants to retain for itself the great field of taxation—*income tax*. The amount of money collected from that source has grown considerably as a result of inflated wages.

There has not been any increase in rail freights or fares, which is very important not only from the point of view of the primary sector but from the consumer's angle as well. If we can produce foodstuffs at a reasonable price, then consumers, most of whom are working people, must benefit. No increase has been made in fares for city people and I think this is appreciated. I concluded from the speech made by the honourable member for Cairns that if ever Opposition members become the Government there is no way in the world that fares and freights will not rise. This Government has seen fit to more or less subsidise the railways to the tune of about \$40,000,000 this year. I think this is wise because next year we might have a \$40,000,000 profit. At least, we are giving service and attracting business to the railways by offering that service at a reasonable price.

Mr. Jensen: Where is the \$40,000,000 coming from?

Mr. WHARTON: It is coming from the general revenue of the State, as the honourable member knows.

Mr. Jensen: It is coming from pay-roll tax.

Mr. WHARTON: We will discuss that later.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Tell him to write you a letter.

Mr. WHARTON: Well, I suppose he could. I do get letters from him. I do not want to be at cross purposes with him because his electorate is quite close to mine. We might disagree on policy but if something arises for the common good we go along together.

We have increased the education allocation by the considerable sum of about \$40,000,000. Education is a very important aspect of our way of life. It would be a sad day if we ever went backwards in education. Times are changing and education is becoming ever more important so as a Government we have seen fit to increase this Vote. A new high school has been built at Gin Gin. I appreciate that very much. It is a magnificent building and it is performing an excellent service for the people in that area.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: That may be a worthwhile comment. The honourable member for Bundaberg likes to make a few interjections during my speech. I listened to him in silence and it was not solely because I had a bad throat that day. I respected him and allowed him to make his speech without interruption. I merely nodded my head a couple of times when he was right—and he was not often right.

Teaching staff is being increased by more than 2,000 to over 18,000, an increase of over 13 per cent. This is also very important. Teachers do a marvellous job and I pay

tribute to them for their work. Obviously, if their classes are too large—and in some of the cities they are too large—then the standard of teaching must drop. If we want the highest educational standards we must see to it that classes are not too large. The Government is gradually doing this. We are increasing the teaching staff in order to overcome this situation and to advance education to the required standard.

We are giving extra scholarships and extra allowances for scholarship holders. Extra per capita payments are being made to non-State schools. The increase per primary student is from \$62 to \$81 and per secondary student from \$104 to \$132 as from 1 January next year. It is important to look after these non-State schools because if the State had to educate every child it would face serious problems. As a Government we try to assist these schools so that, irrespective of which school a parent wants his child to attend or what type of education the parent desires for the child, it is available to him.

The mileage rate payable to operators of school bus services is being increased by 6c per mile. When these services first started, everything was cheaper and it was a simple matter to get contractors to do this work; but times have changed. People are demanding better buses for their children to travel to school and in many ways the standard of the services has to be raised. In some instances even short runs over good roads are not economic, so it is easy to visualise the problems that confront those operators whose service extends into country areas without bitumen roads.

The total allocation for health and hospital services has increased from \$117,000,000 to \$149,000,000. The health of the people is of paramount importance, so the Government has a heavy duty to provide adequate health services. The Queensland Government is doing this quite capably, and the Minister for Health deserves commendation. Incidentally, he should be complimented upon the ministerial statement that he made this morning.

The subsidies payable to the Blue Nursing Service and other home-nursing services are being increased. This is certainly a step in the right direction, because those persons who suffer from ill health, whether they are young or old, are entitled to receive the services they desire. Quite naturally some people prefer to be cared for in either homes or hospitals. On the other hand, a large number of people would rather stay at home and be cared for there. It is only humanitarian, therefore, to make adequate provision for home-nursing services.

In recent years many country areas, including the Gayndah district, have received the benefit of home-nursing services. Because of the small number of patients, contributions to the funds of these services are limited and they deserve special consideration. I am pleased to see that the Treasurer has taken steps to lighten their load.

The increase of 251 in police strength is necessary to provide adequate protection for the community. It is a shame that more protection is needed than in the past, but we cannot deny that the crime rate has increased tremendously. Police officers carry out their duties quite efficiently, even though sometimes they operate under extreme difficulty. Under this Government their conditions have been improved.

Mr. Jensen: Don't you think Bundaberg and not Gympie should be the headquarters of the new North Coast police district? Isn't the Minister being parochial?

Mr. WHARTON: Perhaps I, too, am parochial, but I must agree with the honourable member. Bundaberg should be the centre of the new police district.

The Treasurer has set aside a total of \$1,500,000 for sporting, youth and recreation services.

Mr. Davis: Not enough.

Mr. WHARTON: Perhaps it is not enough, but we must be sensible. A great number of sporting bodies apply for financial assistance towards the improvement of their playing fields, and in most instances the Government has acceded to their requests. The position is, of course, that it is only since this Government made finance available to sporting bodies that some of them saw the need to improve their facilities. The Government's move is a wise one, because the last thing we want is a nation of academics or professional people without sporting ability. We must also have sport-minded persons in our community. Many employers look for versatile people who have done well academically and in sport. Sportsmanship develops leadership. There is no doubt whatever that the community as a whole will benefit from improvements in sporting facilities.

Money has been allocated for cheap rental accommodation for aged people.

Mr. Davis interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: I think I will withhold the bouquet I was thinking of handing the honourable member.

It is easy to say that the Federal Government does this and that. It makes a contribution. If anyone gives us something, we give due credit, but listening to the honourable member one would think the Commonwealth gave us everything. That is not so. We have been providing housing for aged people for a long time. We all realise that housing for the aged is important, and we realise that most of us will grow old. It is wonderful to think that old people have somewhere to go if they cannot manage on their own. While they can decide when they are young where they will work and reside, when they are old and have limited resources it is appropriate that they should have suitably comfortable conditions. That is their due.

The Treasurer allocated \$5,000,000 towards the operating costs of council services in areas of special need. That is one of the finest benefits to be conferred on local authorities in Queensland. For quite some time I and other honourable members have advanced submissions for such a grant. Local authorities in Queensland are doing an excellent job. The State cannot be run from Brisbane, and power must be diversified. I am sure that honourable members on both sides accept that. Local authorities that get into difficulty can draw on this fund. This is a worth-while provision because already local authorities are unable to finance all their activities from rates. The Commonwealth Government has made funds available and local authorities welcome them.

In the light of the difficulty in borrowing money, the \$45,000,000 that the Treasurer has allocated as debenture loan money for local authorities is a tremendous contribution. It will help many people in rural areas to remain in employment. I am sure that no honourable member would like to see a spate of unemployment in Brisbane, Bundaberg or elsewhere. Local authorities are probably the main employers in rural communities. They provide work for men on roads, sewerage construction and so on. Country people who own their own homes are part of the community—more so than people in the city. People in rural communities are interested in everything that happens. The country man is a member of Rotary and the p. and c.; he is interested in virtually everything that takes place. That is why I want local authorities retained. The \$45,000,000 set aside in special funds will help to keep local authorities going. In my electorate many local authorities are reducing staff. Honourable members know how local governments function. They have a certain amount of money and prepare a budget. They cannot pull a string in heaven and say, "We want more money to keep our employees on."

Mr. Lee: Canberra has a money tree from which it keeps plucking money.

Mr. WHARTON: The day will come when there is no more money to pluck.

Local government is concerned about local people. We should remember that we are a State of human beings. We should concern ourselves with the human element at all times, remembering that people are human beings. We should keep them employed if they want to work. I am not so silly as to say that anyone who does not want to work should be kept in employment.

We have provided \$85,000,000 for education buildings. That means more employment for Queenslanders. \$20,000,000 has been set aside for capital works for health and hospital services—again creating more employment. This is the answer to the Leader of the Opposition, who asked what we were doing about unemployment. We are

providing for these capital works, which mean more work for Queenslanders. We will build more schools—again more employment.

Mr. Tucker: If you came over to our party, we might have a hard look at it.

Mr. WHARTON: Don't look too hard.

Funds for housing have been increased from \$48,000,000 to \$61,000,000—again more employment for Queenslanders. \$43,000,000 is to be spent by the Housing Commission and \$18,000,000 is to be provided for advances to terminating building societies for home buyers. Again, that is more employment for Queensland. Every move taken by this Government has been directed at creating employment. I repeat that we want our people to be fully employed so that there will be a turnover of money. Full employment benefits the primary producer, those involved in secondary industry, the businessman and the worker himself. Everybody is fully paid for his efforts and is able to spend the money as he desires.

Another \$82,000,000 has been set aside for roadworks, creating more employment. I stress the importance of roads in the rural areas because of the work-force that is employed.

I commend the Government on the assistance it has given to the extension of electricity into rural areas. However, more is needed in my electorate. In this field of activity expenditure is to be increased from \$65,000,000 to \$78,000,000—again creating more employment. That is the attitude we have to maintain in this great State of ours to keep it moving: keep people in employment. Provided expenditure in the Government sector is counterbalanced by expenditure in the private sector, our growth is assured. Public works should constitute a field of employment, but the private sector should be encouraged too, so that it employs its share.

One of the problems arising from Federal Government actions that worry me is that the private sector of the economy is falling by the wayside. That is a shame, because many people will lose their jobs. Obviously no State Government can provide funds for capital works sufficient to balance the employment potential of private enterprise. I am concerned at the Federal Government's attitude towards the private sector. Many businesses are folding up. I know that the socialist attitude to this is, "You can't run your business, so we will take it over. You can't run your farm, so we will take it over." Whatever it is, they will take it over. We must be wary of that attitude.

I turn now to irrigation, where expenditure has increased to \$26,000,000. That is not enough and I will expand my argument to show why. Included in the proposed expenditure is \$2,000,000 for the Monduran Dam. That has cost 17,000,000-odd dollars and is an important project. We were to receive \$4,400,000 from the Federal Government.

That money is required. State funds will supplement Federal allocations, but we are still short of money.

I pay tribute to the State Government for the part it has played in this scheme, which for simplicity is known as the Bundaberg irrigation scheme. It covers not only my own electorate of Burnett but also Bundaberg and Isis. It is now a regional scheme, although when it started it was thought of merely to provide water for the cane-growers at Wallaville, who suffered from repeated droughts and frosts. They experienced great difficulties. The project started through the efforts of Bundaberg District Irrigation Committee. It has now spread through the whole region and includes the shires of Kolan, Gooburrum, Woongarra and Isis. It is disappointing that the scheme has slowed down.

We understood when the scheme was first promoted that phases 1 and 2 would each take five years, or a total of 10 years, but because of the slowness of money coming in we will have to wait until about 1980 before Stage I is finished. This is rather disturbing because, as a result of escalating costs, the final cost will be considerably more than the original estimate of \$47,000,000. It could be somewhere round \$70,000,000. I am sure that honourable members realise how adversely such increases affect budgeting.

I have thanked the Federal Government for its funds. It promised \$4,400,000 and we received \$2,000,000 of it the other day. I will take it if it is good money, and it is good money. Because it came from us in the first place, it is not socialist money, and there is no socialist Government in this neck of the woods.

The State has done its bit. It found funds to get the scheme started. Then we persuaded the Federal Government, which was of our own ilk, to get the scheme really off the ground. Now we have a dam that will soon be full of water but we have not the funds to reticulate that water to the farms. This is most disappointing for the Kolan and Wallaville people, who know that the dam is completed and that the channelling is nearing completion, but that they will be the last to get water.

We will soon have the barrages on the Bucca Weir and the Burnett River. No doubt, with channelling, they will provide water for many more areas than were originally envisaged. But we have to get on with the job. We cannot allow water to simply be held in the dam; it must be reticulated. I support the honourable member for Bundaberg, who said today that we need additional funds to complete the job. I am not being derogatory of the State Government. It has played its part very well. The Federal Government has provided funds, although it has been tardy in doing so. The project is not stalemated any longer.

Water is important to my area. I am speaking now not simply of this scheme but of the whole region. It is a region of sugar growers and it is very important that water be got out to the farmers so that they can obtain the benefit of it. Water is also important to the city of Bundaberg. It is expanding and lack of water hinders development. Because the scheme is primarily for cane farmers, the Irrigation Commission is not able to say that water will be reticulated to all subdivisions.

If the other barrages are provided and the water supply is plentiful, more development will be possible in Bundaberg, Burnett and Isis. It is important that the scheme be extended to Isis, which is at the end of the line. It was not mentioned in the early stages but it, too, is a region of sugar production. The sugar industry is important. It is well organised and well controlled by the growers, and has very efficient mills in our area. It is doing an excellent job and, with water, the potential of the area can be realised.

We hope that the report of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics is completed before long. We expect it to be favourable. Obviously there had to be a report on the feasibility and economics of the scheme. These studies are important. We undertake them in our own businesses, so they must be done with big schemes. We expect to follow the report, and if this is done there will be a shortage of funds to complete phase 2. The whole region needs to be served by irrigation. One can see the importance of providing finance for it.

Mr. Blake: Would you expect increased costs to be offset by increases to the user?

Mr. WHARTON: I accept the honourable member's interjection. Some increased costs will be paid for by the user. Whilst I commend the honourable member for Bundaberg on his speech, I do not know if he obtained any more money for irrigation. More money has to be provided from some source for the Estimates of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission. Where is it to come from?

Mr. Jensen: There is one scheme unfinished on the border of New South Wales and Queensland. Finish one scheme first.

Mr. WHARTON: The honourable member would have to admit that the Bundaberg scheme has progressed reasonably well. But more funds are needed. In a State such as Queensland, water-storage facilities are necessary in very many places. There is no doubt that if more money could be obtained for this State, a greater share could be allotted to Bundaberg. This is what I am trying to bring about.

There are many ways of going about obtaining this money. The honourable member for Isis mentioned a greater contribution by the growers. It must be accepted that

irrigation is a national responsibility, because the return to the State on capital invested in irrigation is infinitesimal. Every Treasurer is a businessman, and when a proposition is put to him he looks at it and says, "What will be the return from it?" Irrigation does not produce the return obtainable from other fields of investment. It must therefore surely be a national matter. Bundaberg is a great sugar area, and, if irrigation makes it fully productive, a considerable amount of additional taxation will flow to the Federal Government. As it is taxation that provides the funds from which allocations for works of this nature are made, a great deal of the finance needed for this project must come from the Federal Government. I do not want to be criticised for asking for more for a special purpose. Irrigation is very important in Queensland. Irrigation works are proceeding at a number of places throughout Queensland such as Eton, Burdekin, Mt. Isa, and the Queensland-New South Wales border. Not a great deal of State money has as yet gone into these schemes. About \$300,000 of Commonwealth money has been used on the Burdekin scheme. This emphasises the need for the infusion of a great deal more into the irrigation Vote in Queensland.

My concern is to find some way of obtaining that money. Perhaps some more could have been found within the limits of the Budget. The Treasurer found \$92,000,000 for future escalation of salaries in the Public Service. Perhaps some of that could have been shoved into the pool, but would that have been wise? The railways are being subsidised to the extent of about \$40,000,000. Perhaps rail charges could have been increased, and that \$40,000,000 could have been allocated for irrigation. Perhaps some could have been taken from the Education Vote, but would that have been wise just now? When one looks at the Budget over all, it will be seen that the State could hardly afford to take funds from any Vote and transfer them to another without problems.

The State should therefore seek from the Federal Government additional funds for capital development in irrigation. I appreciate what has been done by the Commonwealth Government, but it is the one who, after all, holds the purse strings, and so much of the money is obtained in taxation from Queensland. It is our money, and surely we can get some of it back for capital investment projects that the State cannot afford, particularly when they provide more money for the Federal Government. This would be wise expenditure by it. I am not attempting to minimise the responsibility of the State; it has to pay its share.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: The honourable member made his speech, and I listened carefully to it. We have to get funds from the Commonwealth Government for that purpose. For the State it is the only

source from which we can get the money. The Commonwealth Government is able to recoup itself. As a Government, maybe we could go into the taxation field, but it would be a very serious move to say, "We will set ourselves up as our own taxing authority." Perhaps it would be the best thing that could ever happen for Queensland, but would it be right at this particular time? The Budget identifies the advances that have come from the Commonwealth Government by way of special grants and matching grants, and through various funds. We have to consider the matter very carefully. We have to ask ourselves, "Is it better this way or would it be better the other way?" Maybe the time will come when we will be better off by being our own taxing authority. We would certainly be able to spend the money as we wanted to.

When the Federal Government provides money for irrigation we have to match its allocation from our own funds. This does cause a drain on State revenue. As a Government we must co-operate with and seek funds from the Federal Government so that the pool for irrigation can be increased. We might be able to provide more money ourselves, but I am not trying to dictate how that should be done. I have mentioned the possibility of levying our own taxation and I have mentioned the adjustment of Votes. I would say that the Votes included in the various Estimates are appropriate, and I should not like to interfere with them. I should not like to rob Peter to pay Paul.

I throw another suggestion into the ring. We all need food, and we cannot live on bread alone. When adequate food at reasonable prices is not available, the whole nation suffers. I know of no better way than irrigation of making sure of the availability of food. Irrigation ensures a continuity of food. It is the ups and downs in food production that cause high and low costs and depressions. Irrigation ensures to the whole nation a constant supply of food at a reasonable price. Most other countries impose a consumer tax on food and other commodities. I see nothing wrong with obtaining money in that way. If the revenue from that small tax was expended on irrigation, which would have the effect of cheapening the price of food generally, in the long term consumers would be getting a rebate on the tax they were paying. Perhaps that is one way in which we could obtain additional funds for irrigation.

Mr. Lee interjected.

Mr. WHARTON: The cost is \$10 per acre-foot from the channels. It has been increased again—by about 20 per cent, I think. Of course, there are varying rates for water from streams—\$3.50 and so on. The Bundaberg scheme was designed for the sugar industry. No other industry could afford that charge. With the sugar industry's

peaks, assignments and so on, that was estimated to be the figure that it could afford to pay. It had to be worked out on an economic basis. All schemes have to be economically viable, and that is how the charge was worked out. Not many people could afford to pay \$10 per acre-foot for water to grow pastures and fatten cattle. Irrigation does help the sugar industry, the fruit and vegetable industry and other industries in my area that have returns high enough to cover that fee. It is a fairly costly scheme over all, but I know how beneficial it will be to my area. Indeed, it will be important to Queensland and the whole of Australia. I make these points in hope that further funds might flow into the irrigation Vote to serve Queensland by conserving water.

Mr. NEWTON (Belmont) (4 p.m.): The honourable member who just resumed his seat was very apologetic for his Government's Budget. He endeavoured to explain some of the matters contained in it and it was interesting to note that he supported my leader's call to get Queenslanders back to work. Of course, this cannot be said about some other members of that side of the Chamber who found it very difficult to support the Budget.

Mr. Lee: Ha, ha.

Mr. NEWTON: Despite the "Ha, ha" from the honourable member for Yeronga, who was one of the worse culprits, they used their time in the debate to attack the Australian Government in the slanderous, scurrilous manner we have become used to in this Chamber since the Australian Labor Party became the Government in the Federal sphere in 1972. Such speeches will be of valuable assistance to Australian Labor Party candidates in the forthcoming State general election campaign.

One expected gloom and fear to be part of this year's Budget because this time the bright lights and television camera were absent from the floor of this Chamber. Absent also were the titles that the Treasurer has given his Budget over the years—such as the "March of Progress" Budget and the "Go Ahead" Budget. The only thing that remained unchanged was the Treasurer's glowing tie, although it lost its glow towards the end of his introduction of his Financial Statement. It is interesting to note that the only television appearance he made connected with the Budget depicted him digging in his garden looking for a glow-worm.

After studying the Budget papers I can only call this the "Hold the position as is" Budget. We all know that this will not be the position because the Budget allows for the expenditure this year of a further \$200,000,000 and a study of it reveals that this amount will merely cover increased administrative costs and wage increases, with, as indicated by my leader, more emphasis on administrative costs. We are all fully aware of what happens in an election year

and we all know how brochures and election pamphlets are turned out in an endeavour to bolster the stocks of a weary Government. On top of this the League of Rights has entered into the campaign in the metropolitan area and is using a business firm known as Scurr Bros., who are sending out with their accounts to electors in the Mansfield, Mt. Gravatt and Belmont electorates a scurrilous pamphlet. Let me inform these people that we have received many telephone calls complaining about this leaflet. They have come from people who are not supporters of any particular political party but are, in the main, swinging voters.

Mr. R. E. Moore: Complaints to whom?

Mr. NEWTON: To members of Parliament. Who does the honourable member think they are being made to?

Mr. R. E. Moore: Why wouldn't they object to Scurr Bros.?

Mr. NEWTON: They are objecting strongly to the way it is being done. We hear much talk about businesses closing down. Let me indicate quite clearly that these people are well known to members on this side of the Chamber and if they start complaining about loss of trade they will have nobody but themselves to blame, because of their actions in this regard.

From a State point of view there is nothing in the Budget that will stimulate the employment position for the people already unemployed or the thousands of school-leavers at the end of this year. They will be faced with a gloomy future.

Mr. Miller: Do you agree with Dr. Cairns?

Mr. NEWTON: I am making my speech from material that I have gathered. I am not like the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt, who used a book written by Dr. Cairns as the basis for his speech in this debate. At least I have studied the Financial Statement, as the honourable member for Ithaca will learn before I conclude my speech.

As I say, thousands of children who will leave school this year and seek employment are faced with a gloomy future. The Queensland Government should be thankful for the assistance that it is receiving under the Australian Government's Budget. Such assistance is reflected in the Queensland State Budget. This State will receive direct assistance amounting to nearly \$400,000,000 by way of special grants from the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

Mr. Lee: That's untrue.

Mr. NEWTON: It is not untrue. These figures are revealed by the Auditor-General's report. In 1973-74 the State received \$322,172,490 by way of financial assistance from the Australian Government, and that sum represents an increase of \$50,526,976 over the figure received in the previous year.

Present indications are that in the 1974-75 financial year the Australian Government's assistance to this State will reach the level of \$400,000,000.

Instead of painting a gloomy picture and trying to instil fear in the minds of the Queensland electors, the Treasurer in his Financial Statement should have reviewed the economy of this State in minute detail. Since the Labor Party assumed office in Canberra it has taken many steps towards making the economy of this State buoyant. For example, the Federal Treasurer (Mr. Crean) has announced amendments to the Banking Act. In this debate Government members have attacked the Federal Treasurer. They have not given him one ounce of credit for what he has done to assist Queensland.

To rebut the scurrilous attacks made by Government members on the Federal Treasurer, I will read the following extract from a recent Press statement—

"The Federal Treasurer (Mr. Crean) announced today the promulgation of the amendments to the Banking (Savings Banks) Regulations that he foreshadowed in his announcement on 5 September 1974 on lending for housing. The amendments come into effect immediately.

"The effect of the amendments is to reduce from 60 per cent to 50 per cent the proportion of the depositors' balances required to be held by savings banks subject to the Banking Act in prescribed liquid assets and public sector securities, and to reduce from 10 per cent to 7.5 per cent the proportion of depositors' balances the savings banks are required to hold in deposits with the Reserve Bank and Treasury notes.

"Mr. Crean stated that the amendments to the Regulations would enhance considerably the ability of savings banks to expand their lending for housing in the year ahead."

Government members have made all sorts of allegations against the Federal Treasurer; they give him no credit whatever.

As recently as Tuesday of this week "The Courier-Mail" reported as follows—

"The Commonwealth Savings Bank boosted its lending for both new and established houses by more than 25 per cent in the last month.

"The general manager (Mr. I. R. Norman) said yesterday that the bank approved loans of \$35,600,000 to about 2000 families, compared with housing loans of \$28 million in August.

"He said he expected the September total to be exceeded for at least the next few months."

Mr. Lee: What about reading from today's "Telegraph"?

Mr. NEWTON: The honourable member should listen. He doesn't like this because it is true and factual. This is what appeared in the "Telegraph" of 15 October—

"All savings banks would gradually increase lending for homes, the Director of the Australian Bankers' Association Research Directorate, Mr. R. B. Cameron, said today."

Then—

"Yesterday Australia's biggest home lender, the Commonwealth Savings Bank, said it would lift home approvals by more than 25 per cent."

and further on—

"The Commonwealth Bank, because it is the oldest and the biggest, will naturally be able to do it first.

"But other banks also are doing it and before long everyone will, Mr. Cameron said."

No-one can tell me that this is not an attempt to give a boost in the right direction.

To go a little further, I refer to the latest figures released by local authorities, including the Brisbane City Council, the Shire of Pine Rivers and the Toowoomba City Council, all of which have indicated clearly that building permits approved increased in the month of September.

Alderman Brusasco is reported in "The Courier-Mail" of Wednesday, 16 October, as follows:—

"City Council Health Committee Chairman, Alderman Brusasco said there were 1,007 building approvals in September compared with 766 in August and 917 in July.

"Compared with the number of approvals in the boom of 1973, the latest figure is particularly encouraging," said Alderman Brusasco.

"It may indicate that Federal Government monetary policies are stimulating the building trade," he said.

"In September 1973 there were 973 approvals, in 1972, 1,204, and in 1971, 1,099.

"For the first time in about four months, the number is almost back to the same level as in the past years," Alderman Brusasco said."

I now turn to other financial assistance referred to by the Federal Government since the introduction of the Budget. Firstly, I cite a statement made by the Minister for Housing and Construction, Mr. Les Johnson, who recently held a meeting of all State Housing Ministers in Canberra on 11 October. He indicated that a housing research council was to be set up as agreed on at the meeting in Port Hedland on 14 June. He indicated that the Australian Government would provide \$450,000 on a dollar-for-dollar basis, for the triennium 1974-75 to 1976-77, as well as a supporting secretariat. Mr. Johnson said that the conference would

discuss additional advances to the States in the light of developments in the building industry and the ability of the State Housing authorities to use extra funds in home construction. He said also that the committee would decide amendments to the Housing Agreement Act designed to allow the States to use more of the Federal funds for lending through terminating building societies to low-income earners. At present this is limited to 30 per cent of Federal advances except in specially defined circumstances. Mr. Johnson said that he agreed at Port Hedland that there was need to look again at this limit so that the Australian Government could act more flexibly when circumstances justified an increase in terminating society funds.

Mr. Johnson said also—

“I have told the Ministers that we will give them all the money they can use to build more homes for lower income earners.”

But he planned to raise a number of matters for discussion. Among these would be housing standards, the special needs of handicapped people, a greater involvement in participation by consumers in evolving housing policy, and whether the States were fulfilling the requirements of the Housing Agreement in relation to provision of amenities, recreation facilities and landscaping and the intermingling of Housing Commission homes with private dwellings.

Mr. Lee: Do you believe what you are saying?

Mr. NEWTON: I have no reason not to believe it because I have a lot of confidence in the Federal Minister for Housing, irrespective of what Government members might say.

Mr. Tucker: It makes much more sense than the speech made by the honourable member the other day.

Mr. NEWTON: Yes. Judging from what we heard from the honourable member for Yeronga the other night, that is quite true.

Let me draw attention to the proposed amendments to the Defence Service Homes Act. Mr. Johnson said that the amount of \$115,000,000 included in the Federal Budget for the Defence Services Homes scheme this financial year was \$13,000,000 more than had been provided in the year 1973-74. The proposed maximum loan for persons eligible under the Defence Service Homes Act is to be increased to \$15,000. Queensland, of course, will benefit from that allocation.

Turning to what has been stated about the pensioner dwelling scheme—the Federal Minister for Housing (Mr. Les Johnson) announced that the Australian Government has doubled the amount made available under the scheme for dwellings for aged pensioners. He said the Federal Government would make

\$30,000,000 available over three years, renewing the scheme from 1 July 1974. This doubles the amount made available in each of the five years from 1969-70 on. The grants, which are to be non-repayable and interest free—

Mr. Frawley interjected.

Mr. NEWTON: You don't like it, do you? Well, you are going to cop more of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

Mr. NEWTON: The member for Murrumbidgee can interject as much as he likes. I am on my feet and he will get the answers here this afternoon.

Mr. Johnson said that the grants, non-repayable and interest free, should provide more than 3,000 units in three years. He said the scheme would provide reasonable accommodation for single pensioners at rents they could afford. He said it was further proof of the Government's intention to care for the aged. Too often single pensioners living alone in private accommodation were forced to pay too high a proportion of their pensions in rent. The annual grants available to the State Governments for each of the three years would be \$10,000,000. Mr. Johnson said the units were built by State housing authorities after each proposed building scheme had been submitted to him for approval. A typical unit was of between 300 and 400 sq. ft., containing a bed-sitting room, kitchen, bathroom and toilet. Rents for the units provided under the new scheme were to be not less than the maximum rate of supplementary assistance paid by the Department of Social Security.

Mr. Hodges: Why haven't we got some of the money?

Mr. NEWTON: You've got it! You don't know you've got it. You made one of the most stupid statements—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Would the honourable member please address the Chair?

Mr. NEWTON: Through you—

The CHAIRMAN: No, not through me. The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. NEWTON: If the Minister wants to interject, let him. I am quite happy to deal with his interjections, too. I will give him a good send-off before I finish this afternoon.

Rents under the previous scheme have been fixed by State housing authorities and they vary between \$2 and \$4.60 a week. The grants would be apportioned among the States according to the total number of single pensioners in receipt of supplementary assistance in each State. On this basis, the annual allocation for Queensland will be almost \$1,500,000.

I turn to the other scheme that has been set up and about which so much has been said in the Chamber—the Australian Housing Corporation. That is another very good scheme. The Commonwealth Government is endeavouring to assist the State housing authorities by setting up a corporation to assist those people it feels should receive assistance to overcome housing shortages throughout the Commonwealth.

Mr. Hodges: That hasn't been set up yet.

Mr. NEWTON: I will tell you what is in it so that you might know.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. NEWTON: I will tell the Minister what is in it, for his information, so he will know what further assistance he will receive from the Commonwealth.

One of the measures announced by the Federal Treasurer in his Budget speech was the establishment of the Australian Housing Corporation, with initial funds of \$25,000,000. The corporation will seek to effectively monitor the housing industry to identify its unused capacity and to facilitate housing loans to take up any slack that may occur. Funds lent will probably be available to low and middle-income earners at moderate rates of interest and may incorporate the deferred repayment principle. The Federal Treasurer continued that the people in the employ of the Commonwealth Government, including migrants, will be included in this scheme.

A further announcement that has been made relates to money being made available for environmental protection. The proposals include—

Assistance to the States for nature conservation purposes, \$9,000,000;

National air monitoring programme, \$250,000;

Nature conservation studies, \$381,000;

Assistance to the States for water quality assessment, \$322,265;

Assistance to the States for soil conservation \$500,000; and

Public environmental awareness programme \$100,000.

The Federal Government has been doing a good job in the provision of aged persons' accommodation. From 1 July this year, the maximum subsidy has been increased to \$6,000 for a single nursing-home unit and \$7,000 for a double unit. These benefits to the State are in addition to those already listed by the Leader of the Opposition and me on behalf of the Opposition. But the Premier, Ministers and Government backbenchers knock these and other Australian Government schemes that will stimulate the economy of the State and create employment in many fields in which people are now seeking it.

Turning to the State Budget, I shall deal first with police. The proposed increase in police strength looks good in black and white. The Budget says that it is to be increased from 3,772 to 4,023 by the addition of 251 police officers. These figures have to be compared with those given by the Minister in answer to a question on 27 August 1974. He said that the approved strength was 3,406. So 366 police personnel are unaccounted for in this State in addition to the shortage of 69 police officers, because the actual strength at the time the question was asked was 3,337. Therefore, the number of serving policemen and police women is down 435 at present.

It will be interesting to see where the additional police officers come from to bring the force up to strength and offset the all-time high level of resignations as at 30 June 1974. And there will be more resignations. The police arts and science course is to be the main basis of promotion from this year on, whereas prior to 1974 police duties and law enforcement were the main basis of promotion.

Further discontent is occurring in the force because of the long delay in filling promotional vacancies for non-commissioned officers. There are 21 vacancies for senior sergeants, and there is a strong feeling in the force that this rank will be eliminated by the Government if it is returned at the next State election. Some police stations have been downgraded and reclassified. They include Camp Hill, Chermiside and Hamilton, which are in explosive-growth areas in which no new police stations have been provided. There are 40 vacancies for first-class sergeants and 51 for sergeants second class—a total of 91 vacancies waiting to be filled in those two ranks.

The failure to bring the number of non-commissioned officers up to approved strength is so serious that the matter has been taken up by letter from the Queensland Police Union to the Premier. The Minister and the Commissioner of Police are deliberately holding back these promotions.

Mr. Hodges: Don't be so ridiculous.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister is able to do it. That sort of thing happens continually. According to yesterday's newspaper, officers are receiving promotion after promotion; but that has not been the case with non-commissioned officers during the past two years. The Minister claims that he is still awaiting a report from the planning and research section of the Police Force. That has been the excuse used for some years past.

Labor's policy, as laid down at the recent convention, is quite clear. As the Government after the next State election, the Labor Party will have a full and open inquiry into all aspects of the Police Force in this State. That is something for which the A.L.P. has been asking for some time in order to overcome the discontent that there has

been, and still is, in the Police Force. The inquiry will investigate the strength of the Police Force, including policemen and police-women; the downgrading and reclassification of police stations; and the re-opening of police stations closed by the Government in areas where they are needed.

New police stations will be provided in fast-developing industrial and housing areas. All types of patrols, including mobile, water and foot patrols, will be investigated. Promotions in the Police Force will be based on other courses, and the police arts and science course will not be the main basis for promotion. Duties that can be carried out by civilian personnel will be considered more fully to release policemen and police-women for other duties. Juvenile aid will be brought back under the control of the Police Force. Police will be provided at sporting functions to maintain law and order and to see that public property is protected. The operational hours of police stations throughout the State will be reviewed with a view to returning to manning police stations for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, where required.

Let us make quite clear where we stand on the matter of discontent in the Police Force.

Mr. Hodges: They don't want to again work under a Labor administration.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister comes in on this matter. It has been made clear in every deputation that the A.L.P. has received from the Queensland Police Union that, under Labor Governments, systems of promotion and the courses on which promotions were based were better than those being followed today.

I now wish to deal with housing, which has been seriously neglected by the Government over the past five years. During the past 16 months, the National-Liberal Government has been playing politics, for election purposes, on the question of funds allocated by the Australian Government for housing to relieve unemployment in the building industry in this State. The National-Liberal Government has voided its responsibility for housing those in need in Queensland, and it has placed the full burden of providing houses for home ownership on the shoulders of permanent building societies, which are providing up to 65 per cent of houses in Queensland today.

Again I support the action of Mr. Bill Hayden, the Federal member for Oxley and Minister for Social Security who has been condemned by so many members opposite, in assisting permanent building societies when recently they were faced with a very serious situation. I place on record the motion that I moved at the Labor-in-Politics Convention on this matter.

Mr. Chinchin: Are you proud of it?

Mr. NEWTON: Of course I am proud of it, and you'll swallow everything that you said—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair. I do not propose to give him any more warnings.

Mr. NEWTON: The motion reads—

"That convention congratulates and fully endorses the action of the Acting Australian Treasurer, Bill Hayden, in guaranteeing Australian-Government backing for financial institutions such as building societies in the current credit squeeze.

"Convention agrees it is unquestionable that the asset backing of permanent building societies is strong and that Mr. Hayden's prompt move will strengthen this backing.

"Convention is confident that the permanent building society movement has the Australian Government's full support in the role it is playing in providing finance for home buying in this State.

"Convention applauds the Australian Government's recent decision to allow interest payments on mortgages as tax deductions—thus giving home buyers weekly rebates—and urges, as a further move to assist home buyers, that interest on building society contributors' accounts be tax free, as they are in Britain, in order to attract more investment into building societies. Convention notes that this would, in effect put contributor interest payments about two per cent above stated rates and a paye system of taxation would mean a two per cent reduction in the rate paid by borrowers."

Here is a telegram from the permanent building societies congratulating the A.L.P. on the move taken by Mr. Bill Hayden, the then Acting Treasurer. I also have here a telegram thanking me for what I did, and a letter received in this morning's mail from the Metropolitan Permanent Building Society, thanking the Australian Labor Party Opposition in this State for what it has done.

This Government has shirked its responsibilities. It is placing the responsibility for financing home-ownership fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the permanent building societies. During the past 12 months the National-Liberal Government has provided the lowest number of houses on record through the Queensland Housing Commission—1,407. It finished the financial year with a credit of \$11,800,000.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member has been making that wrong statement for several weeks now. I should like to put him right. The Queensland Housing Commission did not finish the year with \$11,800,000 in credit. It finished the year \$3,600,000 overcommitted.

Mr. NEWTON: I suggest to the Minister that he go through the 1974-75 Estimates.

Mr. Hodges: You can't read.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister hurts me when he says that I cannot read. He should put his glasses on and read the document; the information is there in black and white. What I said is correct.

During the last five years of the Australian Labor Party Government in this State, we constructed through the Queensland Housing Commission 10,132 houses. If I take your last five years, you have constructed only 8,369 houses.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I can assure the honourable member that the Chair has not constructed any.

Mr. NEWTON: These figures indicate that home construction by the present Government over the past five years is down 1,763 houses. The output for the last six months of the 1973-74 financial year should have been doubled. Had the Minister been doing his job, he would have done that. At the end of the financial year the Home Builders' Account had a credit of \$3,100,000; the Housing Institutions Advance Account, \$2,500,000; and the Queensland Housing Commission Fund, \$6,100,000. The last-mentioned is used for the purchasing of land, home-ownership, rental housing and maintenance. There is a further increase of just on \$12,000,000 in this year's Budget. The shocking thing about it is that terminating building societies were screaming for money before the end of the financial year, yet all that money was held in funds by the Government.

On the day the Minister got off the plane from Canberra, I received a telegram indicating to me what the allocation would be for the next 12 months. It stated that there would be a further allocation of \$27,400,000 under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, being made up of \$16,950,000 for the Queensland Housing Commission Fund and \$10,470,000 for the Home Builders' Account. Let the Minister get up and deny that. The Minister got the front page of the newspapers when he said that he received only \$6,000,000.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. I did not make an untruthful statement. The amount I stated was correct. I got \$4,200,000 for the Home Builders' Account and \$2,300,000 for the Queensland Housing Commission Fund.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the honourable member will accept the Minister's statement.

Mr. NEWTON: I made no reflection on the Minister. Let us get the point quite clear. I am just stating what was conveyed to me in a telegram. The Minister told my Federal Minister to put his finance where his mouth is.

Mr. Hodges: That is right.

Mr. NEWTON: I invite the Minister to enter this debate. If he is game to put his money where his mouth is, he has the opportunity to do it. The total amount advanced to this Government by the Australian Government for housing for 1972-73 was \$15,800,000, and for 1973-74 it was \$17,400,000. The amount allocated to Queensland by the Australian Government has almost doubled since Labor took office in December 1972.

Mr. Hodges: That is right.

Mr. NEWTON: I thank the Minister for acknowledging that I am right in something. And I am right in my other statements, too.

The Master Builders' Association and the Building Trades Group of Unions have both asked the Queensland Government through the media to release money for housing to relieve unemployment in the industry, which has been serious in this State since April 1973. This request was completely ignored by the State Government which had ample funds and, since the floods in January 1974, ample materials stockpiled to overcome this position. Do not deny that, because up until recently it was still stockpiled under the Story Bridge, as has been pointed out by the honourable member for Lytton on many occasions.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. The timber stockpiled on the wharves is for the Queensland Works Department, not the Queensland Housing Commission.

Mr. NEWTON: I am talking about the timber stockpiled under the Story Bridge, which plainly belongs to the Minister. He said it was obtained during the flood period for the relief of people affected in this area.

Mr. Hodges: That is right.

Mr. NEWTON: Up to a few weeks ago it was still stockpiled under the bridge. You continually get up in this Chamber screaming about people being unemployed—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the honourable member please address the chair.

Mr. Davis: Oh!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Brisbane had better watch himself. This is not the first time that the honourable member has reflected on the Chair when I have been addressing another honourable member. If I have to warn him once more, I will deal with him under Standing Order 123A. And I remind him that he is interjecting from other than his usual place.

Mr. DAVIS: I rise to a point of order. I have laryngitis and I could not—

Government Members: Speak up!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. NEWTON: The National-Liberal Government has also eliminated the day-labour construction force of the Queensland Housing Commission.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is flirting with the truth. We have not eliminated the day-labour force of the Queensland Housing Commission, and I ask him to withdraw that remark.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the honourable member for Belmont will accept the Minister's statement.

Mr. NEWTON: I can only place these matters before the Committee on the information received from the Minister himself in his answers to questions. He answered a question from the honourable member for Everton by saying that he had only constructed seven houses with the day-labour construction force for the year 1973-74.

Mr. Hodges: You are admitting there is a day-labour force.

Mr. NEWTON: Of seven.

Mr. Hodges: You said seven houses.

Mr. NEWTON: Yes, seven houses.

Mr. Hodges: What about all the maintenance? Get your facts right.

Mr. NEWTON: I am glad the Minister has brought maintenance into the matter because he is 12 months behind there, even with the strong day-labour force he does have in that section. I will give him credit there. At least he has a decent day-labour maintenance force.

Mr. Hodges: You just said I did not have a day-labour force.

Mr. NEWTON: You have not the good day-labour force that we had when we were the Government. As a Government we will set up a programme for providing houses through the Queensland Housing Commission and will double the output of the present Government. This will be achieved through the contract system and the reintroduction of a day-labour force throughout the State.

Mr. Hodges: What would it be achieved through?

Mr. NEWTON: It will be achieved through the contract system—

Mr. Hodges: What about your day-labour force?

Mr. NEWTON: And a day-labour force throughout the State. The Minister did not listen.

We are proud of day labour, which did a magnificent job for the whole time we were in Government but which has now been eliminated by this Government. We will encourage home-ownership on the basis of a low deposit and low repayments.

Mr. Hodges: Did you say home-ownership?

Mr. NEWTON: Yes.

Mr. Hodges: You don't believe in it.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister does not believe in it.

Even when a Liberal-Country Party Government was in power in Canberra, the present Queensland State Government did not go there seeking additional finance for housing. In spite of constant appeals from the Opposition to do so, the Government sat back and did nothing whatever. It relies on the permanent building societies to provide money for home-ownership.

We will review the Building Societies Act and Co-operative Housing Societies Act in relation to fixing interest rates charged by private lending institutions. Government-guaranteed loans for housing and for home-ownership can and should be pegged at fixed interest rates for the repayment period of the loan and at the time of the signing of the agreement. Aged persons' units will be given top priority to overcome the present backlog under this Government. Rental accommodation for married couples, couples with families and pensioner couples in need of accommodation will be catered for in complete accordance with the new Commonwealth-States Housing Agreement of 1973, which was introduced by the present Australian Government. Under this agreement the means test on overtime has been lifted. The Minister did not make a great splurge about this when he returned from Canberra.

Mr. Hodges: I did.

Mr. NEWTON: I did not see any such report in the Press. This morning the Federal Minister for Housing told us that the means test had been lifted. Labor will play its part in providing housing for people in Queensland, who have been grossly neglected by the present National-Liberal Government.

In the time still available to me, I wish to deal with the Queensland State Emergency Service, which was formerly known as the Civil Defence Organisation. We would have expected more than \$301,150 to be set aside by the Queensland Government to reorganise this body. We must not forget that Queensland Cabinet Ministers rushed off to Canberra to obtain \$500,000 at a time when the Australian Government was considering the setting up of a national disaster fund. In 1973-74 only \$61,355 was set aside by this Government for this organisation and the actual amount expended totalled \$73,180. This year, to save face, the Queensland Government has increased its expenditure to \$301,150, which is almost \$200,000 less than the sum asked for by it from the Australian Government.

In view of the damage caused by cyclone "Althea" in 1971, by the Brisbane tornado in 1973 and by the disastrous floods earlier

this year, the Government should have provided the State Emergency Service with more finance than it has given to it.

Mr. Hodges: We were invited to Canberra by Mr. Barnard, who promised us half a million, but when we got there he reneged.

Mr. NEWTON: I will tell the Minister why in a moment; the reason is easy to see. In 1973 the expenditure approved for natural disaster relief totalled \$31,506,250. Of that sum, to 30 June 1974 the Australian Government had paid back \$27,800,000 to this Government, but that fact has been hushed up by Government members so that they could get all the credit for what happened earlier this year.

The new State Emergency Service will be given complete autonomy by an A.L.P. Government in this State.

Mr. Hodges: It has always had autonomy.

Mr. NEWTON: The new State Emergency Service will be given complete autonomy under an Australian Labor Party Government. The director will be the chief commander of operations, with regional directors appointed throughout the State. The Commissioner of Police and inspectors in charge of police districts will be under the control of the director which will be a complete reversal of the present situation.

Mr. Hodges: I am reorganising the whole thing.

Mr. NEWTON: They will assist where requested by the director, and carry out their normal duties of keeping the public clear of disaster areas so that members of the State Emergency Service will not be hampered by sightseers and property will not be damaged or pilfered by people who go through flooded areas in their boats.

We will work in close co-operation with our national counterparts. A close study will be made of all the New South Wales Acts covering all aspects of disaster.

Mr. Hodges: You sound like Gough.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

Mr. NEWTON: Every effort will be made to set up voluntary assistance regional groups throughout the State and provide them with up-to-date plant and modern equipment so that they can cope with such emergencies. Volunteer groups will be put through the school at Mt. Macedon or other similar schools, where they will be given the most up-to-date information and advice on disasters. Costly experiences in this State with natural disasters have proved that this is essential. The director and his staff and the volunteers in the force are to be commended on their untiring efforts and loyalty in the difficult task they were called upon to perform in recent disasters. I make no apology to the Government for our policy on this

matter; in the light of the disaster experienced in Townsville by my present leader, the tragic happenings experienced by honourable members on both sides of the Chamber at Mt. Gravatt, Springwood, and so on, and the recent flooding throughout the State, we think the steps I have outlined are essential. This service must be improved and encouraged to continue with the wonderful work it did on those three occasions.

Mr. Hodges: That is exactly what I am dealing with now.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister accused me of being like the Prime Minister. I am announcing what we intend to do, but the Minister is taking action piecemeal. If he had given us information on what he intended to do, there would not have been any need for me to make this speech.

I turn now to land for residential purposes. In this context we have again seen a rush to Canberra to get money for land in Queensland. The Minister may correct me if he wishes, but I remind him that he has ample housing sites available to get on with building houses in Queensland. It is about time that this land, which has all the required facilities, was subdivided so that people are not pushed into areas where the facilities they want are not available.

A Labor Government in Queensland would ask the Australian Government to review some of the schemes suggested by the present Government to ensure that they measured up to the standard required by the A.L.P. If the Minister wants to buy into this, now is the time to do so. When we were in Government, and sewerage was not available in an area that we went into, at least we put in absorption trenches and bailer sumps in an attempt to dispose of household water.

Mr. Hodges: Like Victoria Park?

Mr. NEWTON: I am amazed that the Minister should talk about Victoria Park. He should do what Sir Thomas Hiley did when he was Minister for Housing—and I give him credit for it—that is, spend most Sunday afternoons driving around Housing Commission projects. No matter which one we raised, Sir Thomas Hiley knew something about it. Believe me, there are some shocking projects on the fringe of the metropolitan area at the moment. If the Minister has not had a look at them, I suggest he does, because we on this side of the Chamber have.

Mr. Hodges: Shocking in what way?

Mr. NEWTON: Water is being dispersed into open earth drains and all over allotments.

The other day somebody was silly enough to say that if people did the right thing their allotments would not become soggy and waterlogged. What utter rot in a wet year such as this one! The land is absolutely

saturated. It could not take another drop of water. Those conditions are being experienced in Woodridge, Kingston, and Carole Park, where the local authorities are not concerned about the health hazards caused by these conditions. We on this side of the Chamber are very concerned.

The Government cannot condemn what was done by the Labor Party. As a carpenter, I worked in many of the Housing Commission areas that have been spoken of. I recall the amount that we spent on drainage in those areas in an endeavour to ensure that, wherever there was a treatment plant, it was utilised to its fullest extent to get rid of household waste water.

Mr. Hodges: Why doesn't the local authority take the sewerage to where we have our sites and homes?

Mr. NEWTON: That is something that the Minister and his commissioner should have considered before they went into those areas. We should not be going back to the dim dark ages of the 1930's and the 1920's.

Mr. Hodges: But the Lord Mayor said that he would have all places sewered in two years.

Mr. NEWTON: Which Lord Mayor?

Mr. Hodges: The Lord Mayor of Brisbane.

Mr. NEWTON: He has done a very good job.

The Housing Commission has ample land within a radius of six or eight miles of the G.P.O. Some of it has been subdivided and is ready for bitumen roads and kerbing and channelling to be put in. It is within a mile of a sewerage treatment plant. Other land is two miles from a sewerage treatment plant. The Housing Commission is going outside the metropolitan area.

Some people working in the metropolitan area are being forced to travel 10 or more hours a day to earn eight hours' pay. They incur heavy expenditure on fares in travelling great distances into the metropolitan area, where their jobs are, yet there is land within the metropolitan area that could be utilised. The Housing Commission is developing land in areas where facilities are not available.

I could go into those matters at greater length, but as the Minister has taken up so much of my time with his interjections I will have to turn to other policy matters that I wish to deal with. We will study the schemes, because we believe that some of the suggested schemes and some areas in relation to which negotiations are being conducted are very desirable.

The Kallangur scheme is one that is being handled by the Premier and one that we would wish to consider very carefully. The schemes for Townsville, Gladstone, and the Moreton region are being handled by the Treasurer. My leader has informed me that some good land is presently available in the Townsville area, which could be used to

assist in overcoming the housing shortage there. The same could be said of the area represented by the member for Port Curtis. We know that a lot of suitable housing land is available in the Moreton region. It has all necessary facilities and people would not have to wait two or three years after moving into a house for the facilities to be provided.

There is also the scheme that the Minister inspected. He was endeavouring to buy land which he claimed had been made available to him by the developers. We are not knocking that. It was done by the Labor Government. A project that comes to mind is the one in Stannard Road, Wynnum West. A similar position arose during a credit squeeze in, I think, the 1960's. A real estate agent could not unload the land. The Housing Commission got a bargain. It is one of the best housing areas in the Wynnum district, which of course was in my electorate prior to the Government's redistribution.

In addition, there is the scheme that is being considered by the Federal Minister for Urban and Regional Development, the State Minister for Lands and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. We feel that the Housing Commission has ample land and should get on with the job of building houses and providing employment opportunities for builders and apprentices.

Mr. Hodges: If I had the money, I would.

Mr. NEWTON: The Minister does not know where his money has gone. My appeal the other day must have been warranted. I made a statement through the media that it is about time the Federal Minister for Housing came to Queensland or sent somebody else up here to see where the money is going. The Minister answered a question earlier this year about finance, and there is no way in the world he could have spent all the available money by the end of the financial year. At that time he had spent 4,000,000-odd dollars on land and indicated that between March and June he had a further 1,000,000-odd dollars to spend on land. He also disclosed the funds he had for other housing purposes over and above what he had set aside for land.

We will co-operate fully with the Australian Government where residential land for housing is made available on either a freehold or perpetual lease basis. The perpetual lease basis would allow people endeavouring to own their own homes to take full advantage of the amount of the loan.

Mr. Miller: Would you allow them to buy that land at a later date?

Mr. NEWTON: That is up to the person. I expected that question. A number of houses are built on perpetual lease land in my electorate. The people are quite happy and have no argument with what will happen to the land eventually. They are paying a

small annual rent for the land and were able to take advantage of the full amount of the loan to build a decent three-bedroom house, whereas a person building on freehold land has to purchase both the dwelling and the land out of the loan money if he does not already own the land.

We would also request that such land be close to employment and be serviced by a fast and modern mode of transport. It should have such necessities as sealed roads, kerbing and channelling, and sewerage, as well as park and recreation areas, to avoid the substandard housing conditions which apply in a number of Queensland Housing Commission estates. At present there are a number of schemes for land for housing in this State, all of which attract financial assistance from the Australian Government.

The people of Queensland should have a good look at the record of this Government since the 1972 election. The Premier has been and still is circling around the State in his plane like a queen bee looking for a new colony. He is more concerned about a Queen for Queensland than the affairs of this State that need urgent attention. He has forgotten that Queensland is part of Australia. Every assistance offered by the Australian Government is looked upon suspiciously by the Premier. This has been the case even when the assistance has been in the form of money to overcome unemployment. The Treasurer and the Minister for Mines must stand condemned on the low royalties paid by companies mining our mineral wealth. For the past five years the State has missed out on more than \$30,000,000 a year in royalties.

(Time expired.)

Mr. R. E. MOORE (Windsor) (5 p.m.): If the speech of the honourable member for Belmont is a sample of A.L.P. policy, I do not think we on this side of the Chamber have a thing to worry about.

In reply to the remarks of the honourable member concerning the supposed rosinness of the building industry, I point out that it is stated in the Stop Press of today's "Telegraph" that home loans insured by the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation fell by 40 per cent to the end of June. I do not doubt that the down-turn has since become greater. Things are in fact anything but rosy, and I should like the honourable member to get his facts straight.

I should also like to reply to the honourable member for Cairns, who referred to electrification and what he said I did not know about transport in Japan and other places. What I said is that the type of traction used in trains is not very important. If a train travels at 40 miles an hour hauled by a diesel locomotive, it will not carry one extra passenger if hauled by electric traction. The same Budd cars used on the railways in

Queensland today would be used if electrification was introduced. The honourable member for Cairns should get his facts straight. It is carrying capacity that is important, not the method of traction by which trains are hauled.

It is true that electricity has its advantages. Coal, which is a natural fossil fuel, is used to produce electricity. It is also true that electricity does not produce the air pollution caused by diesel motors and engines of other types. With electrostatic smoke precipitators and the correct ratio of air to fuel, smoke can be kept to the minimum in the generation of electricity. Electric motors also have the advantage of lower maintenance costs. Whilst there are indeed benefits to be obtained from the electrification of the railways, electric trains certainly will not carry any more passengers than diesel trains.

Mr. R. Jones: I am thinking in terms of going underground in the future.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I think the honourable member has been underground for too long.

During the Budget debate, I usually speak to the Treasurer's Financial Statement. As the Budget applies to the whole financial situation of Queensland, I propose to skirt briefly round fiscal policies. When one considers the Budgets brought down in other States, the Queensland Budget is seen to be a very good one. In comparison with it, other State Budgets pale into insignificance. This is not solely because the Treasurer is a financial genius. It has been made possible as a result of the natural assets of Queensland and the Government's policies generally. The Budget also shows that the State is fairly robust, as nearly two years of Federal rule have not completely killed it.

The Federal Government is fast making inroads into the livelihood of Queenslanders. By all manner of insidious means, it is attempting to take over the States. It is not doing it in one fell swoop; it is doing it by attrition. Its policy is to take things away gradually until the people get used to that situation. It hopes that finally the people will give up, and it will then take over the States. The Federal Government is trying to say, "You are in a bad situation as far as transport is concerned in Queensland. We will be kind to you and take over your railways. We will be good to you." That is the way it works. When we decide that something is too much for us and therefore hand it over to the Federal Government, that will be the first nail in our coffin. I hope we never fall for any of those tricks. No matter how hard things get as a result of the maladministration in Canberra, I hope we do not fall for anything of that type.

When the Federal Government offers us money for main roads and tells us that we must spend it in a certain way, as far as I am concerned it can go to hell. We do not

need the money that badly. We will spend the money our way. We are not going to take money with strings attached to it, whether it be for harbours or anything else. This is an autonomous State with a Government that has the ability to govern. We have a Treasurer and top public servants of skill and proficiency who can run the State efficiently. They have done it in the past, so why should they suddenly fall down and not be able to do it because by some mischance the suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne unfortunately elected a Federal Government of socialist persuasion. Of course those voters would change their mind tomorrow. They elected a Government that was not wanted here. Honourable members opposite got the greatest shock of their lives when they saw the results of the poll.

Mr. Porter: They will get a greater shock at the next State election.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I know they are doing a lot of whistling in the dark. They have thrown out challenges and said, "Let us go to the people. The sooner the better." They do not really mean it, and they have their fingers crossed. I do not get any great enjoyment out of seeing any member defeated. When half a dozen or more of them go to the wall, they can come to me for help. I respect them as men, but I do not think very much of their party. If they need a hand after the election, I am sure honourable members on this side will help them out.

I do not know why we allowed the Federal Government to take over our universities. I realise that if the Commonwealth Government enacts legislation similar to that enacted by the State, constitutionally the Commonwealth legislation takes precedence. But I do not see how that applies to legislation dealing with universities. The amount of money that is now being allocated to universities is being handed direct to the universities instead of first coming to the States. The result is that the States have lost control. Staff and students at the universities still have to comply with State laws covering, say, driving on the left-hand side of the road, but, generally speaking, we have lost control of the format of university education. I do not know why we did not put up a better struggle against what has happened.

We have heard a great deal of talk about the Commonwealth Government building a 1,000-bed hospital at Mt. Gravatt. The honourable member for Townsville very clearly explained the situation. One does not build a 1,000-bed hospital with the stroke of a pen. Massive planning is necessary to build and equip an efficient hospital. One must look to the future when planning a hospital. I think the State Government was planning for an 800-bed hospital, and those plans are well under way. After foundations have been laid and steelwork erected, it is too late to say, "Let us try and build a hospital

complex here." Although a certain amount of preliminary work can be done on the site, such as the levelling of the ground, the job should not be started until planning is completed. We have this well in hand and the State is well aware of our hospital needs both at the moment and for the future. It is not a crime to have a surplus of beds. I would say it would be far better to have a surplus of beds than a shortage but the Treasurer of the State has to make an allocation of funds and for this he must work out priorities. So we do not just build a hospital containing an extra couple of hundred beds.

Mr. Miller: How would it be staffed, anyway?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: There could be a shortage of nurses but I am saying that there are so many other avenues requiring finance—Main Roads, education, beach protection, sewerage and other areas all desperately in need of funds. So we should build an 800-bed hospital and not become too lavish as the money is required in other avenues. We do not take into consideration whether a hospital is a church hospital or any other type of hospital. We are doing a job for the State and we treat all hospitals alike.

While on that subject, I should like to thank the sisters and doctors who work in the various church hospitals such as the Mater and St. Andrew's for the great part they play in providing a hospital system under which people have a choice. People have likes and dislikes. Some do not like the Princess Alexandra or the Royal Brisbane while others do not like the Mater. So they have a right of choice and there is nothing better for a person who is entering hospital for major surgery than to have confidence.

Mr. Frawley: The sisters and doctors do a good job.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: What the honourable member says is right. The majority of agnostics and atheists on the other side do not know what part they intend to play in this field.

Mr. Frawley: They want to destroy the church.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is so. They are becoming more and more radical. One notices it in such debates as the Address in Reply. I am not referring to every honourable member opposite, but the majority do not pay any respect to past traditions or to royalty. I do not know where they are heading. The Christian ethic is one of the very sound planks on which society is built. It has been very effective in the past. It has its shortcomings but we know of nothing better. A person who sincerely tries to follow the Ten Commandments cannot go far wrong.

As to our attitude towards the Commonwealth, in my last Budget speech I spoke to the Treasurer and half committed him. I said that Queensland would take back its income tax powers if given the opportunity. The Treasurer did not entirely agree with me. I am now saying to him and to his ministerial colleagues that it is about time we stopped moaning and groaning about what the Federal Government is doing to the States and did something about it.

We should take back our State taxing power because the man who pays the piper calls the tune. If we do not do this we are hell-bent for nationalisation. This could be one great bulwark against it. By having its own taxing powers this State could retain a free-enterprise system and people would flock here from every other State in Australia. We would not have any problems about population growth. Because of the Labor Party's socialist policy many people today are looking for a place to go. To which country can they go? With the insidious inroads that Communism and socialism are making in almost every country, there are not many places to go; but that is no excuse for us to throw up our hands and say, "Well, it is happening everywhere else; it will happen here." It need not happen here. We should do all in our power to prevent it.

Mr. Frawley: Do you know that up in Cairns they put up a motion to have a referendum to do away with the State Government and put Queensland under Federal control?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I do not know about that. Dr. Cairns's main concern is, as he calls it, the system, whatever that is. He knows what it is. It is the rock on which we are foundering—socialism.

Unfortunately I do not have the latest figures available, but those that I have been able to obtain from the Parliamentary Library show that in 1972-73 the Commonwealth Government received from Queensland the huge sum of \$925,000,000, which did not include all kickbacks and spin-offs, and in return it paid us only \$821,000,000. Any State Minister who believes that Queensland cannot stand on its own feet and that it is doing better under the present uniform taxation arrangements, under which Queensland with a lower population than the other major States receives more per head, should have another look at the facts. We would do much better on our own, and the sooner the better.

Mr. Jensen: Are you advocating secession?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Secession is not the answer. Australia has a very good Commonwealth system under which the States have autonomy, or should have it. The Federal Government should control only those activities that cannot be attended to by the States. It would be ridiculous to have each State meet the cost of providing

its own Army, Navy and Air Force. Defence must be carried out on a national scale. All the Commonwealth Government need do is control those spheres of government that affect the whole of the nation.

The present duplication is very costly. For example, Queensland has a Consumer Affairs Bureau and a Consumer Affairs Council, but because our consumer protection is far in advance of anything brought forward by the Commonwealth Government, Senator Murphy is not happy with it and now wants to introduce his own socialist consumer protection plan.

Mr. Chinchin: It's the same in legal aid and many other areas.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: It is one massive system of duplication. The Labor Party is trying to sow the seed so that one day when State Labor is elected to power—by mistake—it will vote itself out of office and hand over the control of the State to the Commonwealth. But to the Labor Party, of course, that will be Utopia.

Mr. Chinchin: Not many over there want it at the moment.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: The Labor Party has definite suicidal tendencies. To illustrate—in spite of a referendum that resulted in a vote against the abolition of the Queensland Upper House, the Labor Party committed suicide by abolishing it and voting itself out of office. I predict that if Labor is ever returned to office we will need an Upper House to protect us against the type of gerrymandering that the Labor Party engages in—and for the protection of State rights.

Mr. Murray: They have an inbuilt tendency to suicide.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Yes, they have. They are like the lemmings that tumble over a cliff and die; but some of them survive.

Mr. Casey: What would you say we have lost by not having an Upper House in Queensland?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: While we have a National-Liberal Government we lose nothing, but when irresponsibles like honourable members opposite are in power we need the safeguard. Labor members ask what useful service is performed by the Senate. The very nature of voting for the Senate is such that, irrespective of the gerrymander instituted by the Federal Government to get a vast majority in the House of Representatives, it will not get a majority in the Senate—thanks to proportional representation. It is a safeguard designed to prevent anyone gerrymandering electorates and remaining in power for ever.

The Senate's role of safeguard, as with an Upper House, is becoming increasingly important. In the whole scheme of things it is not costly. Irrespective of which party

is in power, mistakes are made. An Upper House of elder statesmen—men who have sat in this House, who know the score and the pitfalls—would play a very useful role.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Queensland can stand on its own feet. We have large exports of coal, bauxite, beef and wool. The beef export market is somewhat depressed but it is to be hoped that that will not last very long. Queensland is well endowed with natural resources. Without Queensland and Western Australia the Commonwealth Government would be in real strife in its balance of payments. This year Queensland became a claimant State to the extent of \$24,750,000. Queensland deserves a much bigger allocation in the light of the job it does for Australia as a whole.

I become deeply concerned when I see textile industries going out of business because of the Federal Government's policy. At the best of times these industries make only about 8 per cent profit.

Mr. Marginson: Eight per cent?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: As a matter of fact they have been making less than that. A few years ago 8 per cent over all was considered reasonable.

When such industries go out of business under the present tariff situation, the machinery is sold and no-one else will establish a similar business without security. Who would invest millions of dollars in a factory to earn 8 per cent?

Mr. Marginson: Why did two woollen mills at Ipswich close down when McMahan was Prime Minister?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: What were they?

Mr. Marginson: Two woollen mills.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I did not know that any closed down. The honourable member is telling me. Did they close down when wool was bringing \$2 a pound and nobody could afford to buy it? It would have to be something like that. They certainly would not be closed down because of the private-enterprise system or the tariff situation. I do not believe that any company should receive total protection, but when we import goods from very low-priced countries our industries must be protected.

Mr. D'Arcy: Is it true that you offered Norm Rix the endorsement for Albert?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I think the honourable member has been smoking another joint or perhaps he is wearing platform soles and his head is so high in the clouds that through a shortage of oxygen he is making stupid statements.

Speaking of tariff protection—how could any Australian manufacturer of footwear or textiles be expected to compete with South-east Asia, where employees receive \$A25

for a 48-hour week, where there are virtually no strikes and where costs can be kept down to bedrock? Australians may work at an equal or better production rate, but they receive \$80, \$90, or \$100 a week—four times as much. It is true that a freight component is included in manufactured goods imported from overseas, but that does not compensate for a wage cost that is four times higher.

There are those in the Federal sphere who say that Australian companies must compete. There is no way in the wide world they can compete in these circumstances. The Federal Government wants the best of both worlds. It wants people to live in this country but not to purchase goods manufactured here. That attitude is senseless. If the housewife is offered two shirts identical in appearance, one made in South-east Asia and the other made in Queensland, why wouldn't she buy the cheaper article? But that is not the point. The imported article should not be on the shelf for her to buy. If she expects her husband to be paid high wages in this country, she must buy goods made in Queensland or Australia, thereby supporting the Australian work-force. The economy is in a sorry mess. It grieves me. When I said that South-east Asia was virtually free from strikes, I did not intend to indicate that everyone in Australia who strikes is automatically in the wrong. There has been a lot of agitation lately for all sorts of silly reasons. People have been induced to strike against their wish. I do not support strike action in those circumstances.

One section of Australians has been heard to say that productivity must be increased. However, the persons saying that have never produced anything in their lives. Generally speaking, the section of the community working on the production line or in the machine shop, which is really producing this country's goods—textiles, footwear, motor-cars—has a set amount to do each day based on time-and-motion studies. Those people just cannot work any harder. Therefore, any suggestion that people should work harder has to be directed at those who have never worked in their lives. They should be producing. That might relate to some members opposite; I do not know.

Mr. Marginson: That was not necessary.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I have my doubts about where efficiency or inefficiency lies. There is inefficiency somewhere, but it is not to be found among the hard-working people of Australia.

The Treasurer has been criticised for increasing Queensland's mineral royalties. They were increased from \$4,018,740 to \$37,856,000. Our first policy was right, and so was our second. We encouraged the companies to come to Queensland by offering a very low royalty rate. When they became financially sound we decided they could afford higher royalties. I make no

apology for the decision and I support the Treasurer, particularly in increasing the royalty on bauxite to \$1 a ton.

Mr. Marginson: We were always told he couldn't do it.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: When the Opposition was moaning and groaning, the industry was not properly established. We had to allow the industry to become established and more or less get its money back before we could start to do something. If we did not work that way, we would chase every prospective industry away.

Bauxite is only 18 ins. under the ground so that the deposit is really a vast stockpile of this raw material. As bauxite contains 50 per cent alumina and as alumina contains 50 per cent aluminium, bauxite contains 25 per cent aluminium. In view of the price of aluminium, the royalty of \$1 a ton received by the State is not exorbitant even though the raw material has to be processed.

Mr. D'Arcy: The industry must have developed overnight if you could increase the royalty from \$4,000,000 to \$37,000,000.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: There must be a starting point, a datum point and a cut-off point. It did not become developed overnight. The situation was continually under review and this was simply the time at which the decision was made.

Mr. D'Arcy: Do you think the railway deficit had anything to do with it?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I reckon that all the kids the honourable member taught would be failures.

A week or so ago there was a marked lack of confidence in the Federal Government following a run on one or two of the permanent building societies to the tune of \$6,000,000. A certain amount of criticism was levelled at the Treasurer because of a remark he passed. I do not know what it was but it was probably his use of the word "run". If he had some knowledge that there was a run, should he have sat tight and said nothing so that the big investor who has the know-how and keeps his ear to the ground could get his money out while the little man got his fingers burnt? How can the Treasurer be criticised for informing the little man of something that the big fellow already knew. The Treasurer adopted the right attitude. He did not suggest that anybody draw his money out. All he did was state a fact and I commend him for doing so. I hope he was not shocked at the criticism. If a similar event occurs, I hope he will be as quick off the mark to inform the little man what is happening. Generally speaking, the big investor can look after himself.

Another scourge or creeping disease in this nation is Commonwealth hand-outs.

Mr. Lee: With strings attached.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: No, with no strings attached. I am referring to hand-outs to layabouts and dead-beats. If a person does not want to work, no longer does he have to. There is a great deal of talk nowadays about leisure. The country is running down, yet there is talk of a Minister for leisure, and, I suppose, about 200 people in a department to look after leisure. I should like to hear someone talk about work. Every dead-beat in this country is getting a hand-out.

Mr. Hanson: Haven't you got a heart? Go to St. Vincent de Paul or the Salvation Army homes and see some of the people there.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I am pleased to accept that interjection. The people in those homes are certainly an unfortunate lot. I dare say they are all receiving social service benefits. I am talking about healthy young men and women who simply do not want to work. They are dirty; they have long hair and they have a vested interest in untidiness. When they buy a pair of dungarees, they cut the bottom off one leg to make it shorter than the other, and then they make the edge ragged. They take a slice out of the backside, add a patch and make themselves look as untidy as possible. They then go on the dole and live on the beaches round Cairns because they cannot stand the winter weather. They register with the employment agency as glass-blowers and lion tamers. They are the ones I am referring to. I am not talking about times of depression or widespread unemployment. In those circumstances, help has to be given to young and old, and to the healthy and the unhealthy. But if there is work available for healthy people, they should work. If they do not work, they should not eat.

Mr. Casey: If that is the attitude of the younger generation, would you say that something is wrong with the education system?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I suppose it could be that you and I—the people of our generation—are to blame.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will please address the Chair.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I would not be surprised if the present position indirectly results from the depression from which the world emerged with the Second World War. The parents of today's young people were children at the time of the depression. They missed out on many things, and there has been a tendency to say, "I didn't have very much as a kid. I'm going to see that my children do better than I did." The result is that they lavish all sorts of things upon their children.

I think the wheel will turn, and that when the generation of which we have made such a mess have children of their own, they will say, "I'm not going to allow them to be messed up as my parents made a mess of me when I was a kid." I do not know the real reason for the present situation. It

could be the result of pornography, deviation and general laxity in everything. Today children must have their own way. Little Johnny cannot be given a hiding because it might upset his future manhood.

Mr. Marginson: Have you a solution to this problem?

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I have no solution. Part of the solution might be, "If you don't work, you don't eat."

Mr. Marginson: One of my colleagues suggested that they join the Young Liberals.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: They could not do better. One does not find Young Liberals throwing bricks through windows. Young Liberals, Young National Party members and, I dare say, the majority of Young Labor members, would be reasonable people because by joining such organisations they demonstrate a sense of responsibility.

Young people tend to make the same mistakes as their parents did at their age. When we read Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and Shakespeare, we realise that there is nothing new in world today. Whatever happens today also happened in those days.

I am greatly concerned about the amount of money that is thrown around by the Federal Government. Look at the money it gives to so-called liberation movements. Their correct title would be terrorist organisations. A smoke-screen has been put around the amount of money that has been provided. A Federal colleague told me that to his knowledge about \$1,500,000 has been sent to South Africa—probably to Rhodesia, where terrorists are killing white women and children. It is a shocking disgrace that a so-called responsible Federal Government would do such a thing. If we have that sort of money to spare, we should be giving it to the World Health Organisation, the Save the Children Fund or some other worthy organisation to whom the donation of a few dollars can mean the saving of a life.

Mr. Frawley: You can't claim a donation to the Freedom from Hunger Campaign as an income tax deduction.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is no doubt right. We have such an incompetent lot of novices in the Federal sphere! First of all they decided to cut tariffs across the board. Now they are having another look at that. They decided to appreciate the dollar by about 12 per cent.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen: You are letting them off lightly when you say that they are incompetent.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: The Premier is pretty good at taking them to task. Probably I am being kind to them when I say they are incompetent.

When they make a mess they think they can hop back to square 1. They appreciated the dollar and then they said, "We will reduce it now by 12 per cent and go back to square 1." But the problems caused by the revaluation upwards remain. They do not disappear with depreciation. When we see these blithering amateurs going from bad to worse, we realise that something had to happen in the long run. In all honesty one has to say, "They have to get better because they couldn't get worse." No doubt they will profit by their mistakes, but they will not be there much longer to try to rectify those mistakes. The Liberal-Country Party coalition will have to pick up the threads and attempt to clean up the rotten, sorry mess. I only hope that it is given a full three-year term and another term following that to get us back onto a solid footing. Inflation has increased by 40 per cent over the last two years. We will never get back to square 1. All we can hope for is a stabilising effect. Prices are not going to come down. All we can hope for is that they will not increase by more than 3 or 4 per cent in accordance with the then current inflationary rate. After all, there has always been gradual inflation.

The Federal Government should have brought down a balanced Budget, or budgeted for a surplus. But it budgeted for a deficit, the whole idea being to impose more and more taxes and take more and more money from the people to enable it to introduce its socialist policies. It is trying to reduce everybody to the same level. I will admit that nobody will starve under the Federal A.L.P. Government. But who wants that sort of breadline subsistence?

Mr. Alison: A grey mass.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is true, and who wants that? People want some encouragement to look after themselves. They are prepared to forgo something now in order to have something later.

Mr. Alison: Or to work a bit harder.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Or to work a bit harder for something. Surely people who do that should be able to reap the reward, save money and know that the nest-egg is there, without having inflicted on them an inflationary spiral in which all the hard work and savings of a couple of generations go out the door. The responsible people who have worked to build up the nation lose all their savings simply because there is an incompetent, socialistic Government in Canberra. Ideals are all right, but one has to be practical. Members of the Federal A.L.P. Government are great idealists.

Mr. Marginson: Their ideals are all right, and you cannot object to that.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Their ideals may be, but what a stupid lot of idealists they are. No-one can get 9c for 4c. That is the first thing they have to remember.

People receive pay rises but lose sight of the fact that money loses its purchasing power with every such rise. In addition, they lose take-home pay because they go into a higher tax bracket. After all, one does not spend one's gross income; one spends only what is left after compulsory tax is deducted—net income.

When we talk about gross income, we should remember that the difference between our gross income and our net income is merely something used to implement Labor's socialistic policies. People speak critically of the salary rise for members of Parliament. Previously, our take-home pay was about \$133 a week. A gross amount of X-thousand dollars is spoken of; but we could spend only the \$133 we took home. Apart from what went into the Parliamentary Super-annuation Fund, the balance was used by Labor to implement its socialistic policies, not for the benefit of members of Parliament. Everyone on a high income is in a similar situation.

Mr. Lee interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Yeronga is interjecting from other than his usual place in the Chamber.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Inflation continues to increase, and the higher taxes go the greater are the wage demands. When the plumber, the painter, the architect or the doctor increases his charges because of increasing inflation and the amount of tax he has to pay, his attitude is, "How much am I going to get out of it? My tax is 40c in the dollar, and I want a certain amount out of that." The attitude of people such as that is that they will not work solely for the Taxation Commissioner.

The present situation has arisen because the people in office in Canberra have not the nous to know that they ought to be reducing taxes to get themselves out of the mire.

Mr. Alison: They know what they are doing. They want to wreck the economy.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: People will be on such high scales of taxation that the Government will be able to refund some of the money it collects in taxes. It will hand some back, then take some more, and before long a socialist State will be created. Strangely enough, people sit back and take it. However, I think they are about to rebel, because they will not work simply to pay the tax-gatherer.

I do not claim for one moment that everything done by the Federal Government is wrong—I am prepared to concede that about 10 per cent of what it does is not wrong—nor do I claim that everything the Government of Queensland does is right.

Mr. Marginson: That's not what the Premier thinks.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: What rot! The Premier has offered his full co-operation to the Federal Government. His attitude is that he will not allow Queensland to be taken over by the Commonwealth, and I fully agree with it. I will fight to my last breath to see that this State is not taken over by the Commonwealth. If it wants co-operation of the type that existed before Labor took office in Canberra, the Government of Queensland will give it gladly. After all, that is what the founding fathers had in mind when they framed the Constitution.

There has been a great deal of talk about world inflation. A claim has been made that it has taken an upturn since the Middle East countries increased the price of crude oil, and the Federal Government contends that Australia is caught in that inflationary spiral. That is, of course, absolutely ridiculous. Australia produces 80 per cent of its petroleum requirements, and oil exploration in this country has not gone very far beyond the initial stages.

Mr. Lee: If people were given an incentive to search for oil, Australia would become 100 per cent self-sufficient.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: That is one of the points I was about to make. The whole of Australia should be explored to determine the extent of the natural resources, whether they be coal, oil, natural gas, uranium or other minerals. People will be occupying this great country of ours for a very long time, and we owe it to future generations to leave behind us a country that is worth living in, one whose assets have not been sadly depleted.

The main cause of inflation is purely and simply the Federal Government's socialistic policies. When the Liberal-Country Party was in office in Canberra, inflation stood at the low level of 4½ per cent and unemployment was minimal. Unfortunately, however, a Federal election was held shortly before things began to improve. After Labor was voted into office the people said, "At last things have started to improve." Confidence was shown in the stock market and the public said, "This Federal Labor Government is not too bad." All that was occurring, of course, was that the Federal Labor Government was inheriting the benefits that flowed from the policies of the previous Liberal-Country Party Government.

Within a few days of winning the election, the Prime Minister and his deputy set themselves up as a two-man Cabinet and threw money around as if it was going out of fashion. Every wage demand that was made was met, and they made themselves out to be big fellows—with someone else's money and at someone else's expense.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: And they discontinued our activities in Vietnam; remember that.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I fully believe in our commitment in Vietnam. The day that America pulled out could still be a sorry one, because the war in Vietnam is not over. If the domino theory has any merit, we may rue the day.

America was our friend and ally when we needed her; we could rely on her. Americans and Australians speak the same language, so there are no language barriers. Although we may have differences of opinion, there is little trouble in resolving them. I think it was Bismarck who said that the fact that America and Britain had a common tongue was one of the worst thorns in Germany's side. He could not solve that problem; there was no way in which he could drive a wedge between the two countries. If the honourable member who interjected thinks that Australia could get a Communist country to be its friend and ally in time of need, he is mistaken.

As I said earlier, America has always been with us, she will be with us again. But things have changed. All that Labor has done since it has been in office is insult our American colleagues. I have said on other occasions that an orphan going home from school alone is open to attack by every lout and bully; but he has a fairly safe passage if he goes home with a cousin or brother. In my opinion, no-one will give us a belting while Uncle Sam looks after us as a brother or an uncle would. Subservience does not come into it.

People who criticise multi-national companies talk a lot of rubbish. What does a working man get from any company other than his wages? All multi-nationals pay good wages, and other point in their favour is that financially they can withstand a cold draught. If things go badly for them in Australia, their overseas reserves are so broadly based that they are affected very little.

Mr. Casey: Despite the language problem, I thought you did quite well in Japan.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: I suppose sign language works wherever one goes.

In times of inflation, trade is really a system of bartering. In effect, Australia sells so many bales of wool or tons of beef and buys machinery from another country. There are no trade problems while we can buy goods from a country to which we are selling. When Australia sells goods for cash, without reciprocal trade, it receives currency that becomes rather an embarrassment. An American who wishes to invest \$US20,000,000 in Australia does not spend the money here. The Reserve Bank puts the Australian equivalent into circulation and it is spent here. The \$US20,000,000 lies in reserve so that this country may purchase goods from America. If another country is short of American dollars, it can then buy some from Australia. That is one way in which we can get Japanese yen or currency

of another country. In such circumstances trade becomes complicated, and that is when inflation gets out of hand.

Mr. Row: We lose on it.

Mr. R. E. MOORE: Yes we do. If the Federal Government does not do something to control inflation, we will be back to the barter system.

(Time expired.)

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

Mr. BOUSEN (Toowoomba North) (7.15 p.m.): In commencing my contribution to this debate this evening, I wish to comment on what today's speakers on the other side of the Chamber have said. Each of them did nothing but denigrate the Australian Government.

I refer first to the remarks of the honourable member for Townsville, who attacked our free hospital scheme simply because two patients he sent down to Brisbane could not get a hospital bed. An Australian Labor Party Government introduced the free hospital scheme in Queensland. That scheme continued successfully for many years under the direction of the Labor Government. It is only because of the ineptitude of this Government and its loss of interest in the free hospital scheme that our health services have deteriorated so badly. Being a private-enterprise Government, it has fostered private hospitals to the detriment of our general and base hospitals. It has been unable to cope with the increase in population and has allowed our free hospital scheme to run down. That is why the position in our hospitals is now serious. There is a shortage of nurses, a shortage of doctors, and a shortage of wards—which means there is a shortage of hospital beds. What has the Government done to arrest the problem? Nothing at all.

The honourable member for Townsville also criticised the free hospital schemes in Great Britain and New Zealand. He said that in Great Britain the situation was disgraceful; people could not get beds. He said all sorts of nasty things about Great Britain's National Health Service. Why then does the Australian Medical Association send doctors to Great Britain for post-graduate courses in the treatment of various illnesses or in surgery? Yet here was one of our learned professional men running down Great Britain's scheme!

I was in both islands of New Zealand earlier this year, meeting all sections of the people in that country. I did not hear one word of condemnation about its free hospital scheme. I doubt very much whether the doctor has visited New Zealand or knows just what is happening there.

The honourable member for Burnett blamed the Australian Government for all the shortcomings in Australia and the economic ills confronting us, including

unemployment. I therefore ask this question: what has the State Government done to arrest unemployment or bring about full employment? The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Tucker) challenged the Premier to go to the people on the issue of unemployment alone. I am sure that if this is done the Australian Labor Party will again be in government after the election, whenever it may be held.

The honourable member for Burnett also said that rail freights had not been increased in this Budget. That is true. If by some miracle the National-Liberal Government is returned to power at the next election, I say without fear of contradiction that rail freights will be increased immediately the Government is returned. Rural people would have to face increased rail freight charges.

The honourable member for Windsor said that the Australian Government intended to take over the Queensland railways. Possibly we would be a lot better off if it did. We might then get something done. Nothing is being done now. This Government scrapped the electrification scheme introduced by Jack Duggan and sold all the buildings. Now it is talking about implementing that scheme at a cost of millions of dollars more than it would have cost if it had proceeded with Jack Duggan's scheme. This Government has closed down more railway lines than it has built and has given freight haulage to road transport services.

The honourable member for Windsor also referred to the amount the Australian Government collects from Queensland in taxation and the return Queensland gets from it.

Mr. Tucker: How on earth did you ever understand that?

Mr. BOUSEN: That is right.

If he supports the Premier's desire to secede from the Commonwealth, he will find that Queensland is in real trouble. The Government would be incapable of running the State. Even at present it has to be propped up by the Australian Government.

The honourable member also advocated the return of the Upper House in Queensland. What a ridiculous statement. That would mean the election of another 50 politicians. Imagine the cost to the people of this State. We have survived successfully for 52 years without it and I see no reason for its return.

The Treasurer likes to name his Budgets. Perhaps that is the only decision the Premier allows him to make. Last year he named it the "go on" Budget. One day he said to one of his colleagues, "I reckon we will blame the Australian Government for everything that goes wrong in Queensland." His colleague said, "go on." That is how he got the name for his Budget last year.

This year he has called it the "people pleaser" Budget. Actually, it should be the "people teaser" Budget because it promises everything and gives nothing. I suppose we should count ourselves fortunate that we have a Budget at all because, the way the State was governed earlier this year, it looked as if we would have nothing left but a great big hole in the ground where Queensland used to be.

Only two months ago the "National Times", which could scarcely be called a Left-wing newspaper, described Queensland as "a State of economic chaos" and said—

"On present trends, Queensland looks like remaining one of the world's greatest quarries."

Luckily for the people of Queensland, a week later the Australian Government agreed to bail the Treasurer out and give him a record \$24,750,000 from the Australian Grants Commission. But still Government members blame the Australian Government for all of the misdoings in this State.

Even that massive sum was not enough to balance the Budget, so the Treasurer decided to accept the advice that the A.L.P. has been giving him for years. He crept around the multi-national mining companies and said, "Look, I'm terribly sorry but I'm afraid we will have to ask you to pay for the minerals we have been giving you." That is how he increased the royalties on coal being exported from Queensland. But that is only a "oncer"; he will not be able to pull the same rabbit out of the hat next year—for two reasons. In the first place, the mining companies will not accept increased royalty charges every time the State Budget gets in a mess; and, in the second place, the Treasurer's party will not be in Government this time next year. They will not have to worry about balancing the next Budget. Of course, it must be remembered that the Budget is not even balanced for this year. The economic stability of this State is highly contingent upon all companies concerned agreeing to pay the increased charges, and it seems that they are not all happy about it.

Exactly one month ago today, we saw the undignified spectacle of the entire Cabinet skulking inside the grounds of Parliament House for fear of legal action against them if they went outside. It is the longest time that some of them have spent in the House for years.

Mr. Lane: Who wrote this script?

Mr. Tucker: Not you—it's got sense in it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BOUSEN: The honourable member gave it to me just before dinner, Mr. Lickiss, to read for him.

It seems a little hasty to talk about having a balanced Budget when in fact the State Budget will be balanced only if the mining companies agree to the increased charges.

The Treasurer speaks of an enormous difference in the economic condition of the State if unemployment increases, yet, from the way in which he and the Premier carry on, one would think that they were trying to create unemployment. Every single project that the Australian Government has put forward, which would have helped to double employment opportunities in this State, has been rejected because of the paranoia of the State Government about anything that comes from Canberra.

The offer of Australian National Line shipping has been refused. Assistance in housing and transport has been knocked back. The possibility of a growth centre at Townsville has been thwarted. The Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation has been prevented from using its expertise to help the State. The psychotic fear of the elected Australian Government has become so pronounced that this Government will not even accept the proposed hospital at Mt. Gravatt as a gift.

Such is the Government's sense of priorities that, whilst people in this State are without a roof over their head, the State Government has decided to spend \$2,000,000 in the Solicitor-General's office, beginning with a string of appeals to the High Court and the Privy Council, thus making a laughing-stock of this State. That sum of \$2,000,000 will be spent in an absurd attempt to convince the people that the election of the Australian Government in 1972 and its re-election in 1974 did not happen. In fact, from the Premier's point of view, it seems that federation in 1901 never happened. He certainly does not admit that Australia is a federation of States, not a haphazard collection of squabbling colonies. Meanwhile, Queensland's citizens lack work and homes.

Mr. Lane: How is the unemployment situation in Toowoomba?

Mr. BOUSEN: We have no unemployment. I keep them all employed.

The record of this reluctant, delinquent Government in the field of land administration condemns it as incompetent and inhumane. Its worst features do not show up in the Budget; the most indefensible part of the whole sorry mess has been the Government's refusal to act. Refusals do not lend themselves to audit. Why has the Government refused to accept the Australian Government's plan to set up a commission to control land prices? Those States that have accepted this sensible plan can already point to a marked reduction in land prices. Why has the Government revoked the Landlord and Tenant Act, which provided some

protection from rapacious landlords who, taking advantage of the lack of legal restraint, do not hesitate to send rents sky-high? Why is it that when Queenslanders are without homes, and even the hope of obtaining homes, \$11,800,000 remains unspent from the housing allocation provided by the Australian Government? Will this be the fate of the \$235,000,000 that the Australian Government has agreed to make available to the States for welfare housing during the 1974-75 period?

The Government has persisted in releasing as freehold land areas that are not, and never will be, economically viable living areas for rural production. Yet it will not release Crown land to be distributed, in co-operation with the local authorities, for residential purposes.

The railways of this State, on which the primary producer is heavily dependent, are now \$38,584,578 in the red, which is \$12,440,578 more than the Treasurer estimated. He will soon see that the \$84,968,000 loss, which I predicted when I spoke on the Railway Estimates last year, is not merely possible but probable. I said at that time that the losses would be twice what they were that year, and my figures have almost proved to be correct.

Mr. Rae: Almost.

Mr. BOUSEN: There is not much difference.

This once-thriving, profitable industry has been reduced by ministerial bungling to a millstone around the Treasurer's neck. It is time the State Government admitted that it is not competent to administer the railways. The Australian Government has indicated its readiness to assist Queensland in this regard. For the good of Queensland the State Government must reject its party-political stance and accept whatever assistance is available to it from the Australian Government.

Mr. Jensen: This is because there is a Liberal Minister in charge of the railways.

Mr. BOUSEN: The honourable member could be right.

It is generally accepted that a National Party Premier would naturally, and on principle, give some consideration to his Country Party and National Party followers who, in the main, are in the rural sector. However, since the Premier—a designated National Party member—was elevated to his exalted position, he has grossly neglected their known and understandable policies of decentralisation. He and his Government have shattered the hopes of the rural sector and destroyed the social activities of country communities, which were notable for and recognised as the nursery of sociability,

co-operation and welfare. The previous joyous atmosphere of country life is now at its lowest ebb.

Mr. Sullivan: Would you answer one question? You have criticised the Premier. What about what the Prime Minister has done to the rural areas?

Mr. BOUSEN: The Minister can put his question on notice.

The deterioration can only be attributable to the drift of country people to the cities. This has been brought about by the ill-considered and blatant method of closing down and pulling up various railway lines, particularly those in farming areas. My colleague the honourable member for Cairns dealt with various railway matters this afternoon, and I do not intend to go into detail on the number of staff transferred, etc. I merely want to generalise and point out that the closure of railway lines has affected people in country areas, particularly those in farming areas. Most of the small towns on the route of such lines no longer exist. Gone are the conveniences enjoyed by people in those towns. The position is now aggravated by the withdrawal of almost all the facilities enjoyed by citizens on other lines, notably the Toowoomba-Warwick-Wallangarra line, the main southern line to Sydney. That line has been left intact, but almost all the staff have been withdrawn so that the stations are virtually useless to the public.

I know that an area officer has been appointed to visit the stations during the week. People who require railway information or service have to be regimented to attend at the stations at times when the officer is in attendance. It is not always convenient for people to go to a station during the time when the officer is there, and consequently they use other means of transport. This is another useless and senseless move which will drive the public away from the railways. Nothing can be achieved by the appointment of this officer. In fact, it is an insult to the people's intelligence. The closing down of stations and the withdrawing of staff on this line will certainly accelerate the drift of people from towns en route, with the consequent elimination of most business places which usually provide all the local community's requirements.

These old-established towns are now being rapidly phased out by decreasing population. The railways were built originally to provide a service to the people. Do not let us forget that the railways are a public utility which, together with the staff associated with them, provide the best means of decentralisation. This Government is sadly lacking in imagination and stupid in the practice of closing down and pulling up such railway lines. This, together with the removal of staff from other places is certainly a retrograde step which deprives the public of a very convenient and useful means of transport.

One of the lines most recently closed down was the Amiens branch—on 28 February of this year. This was a most inconsistent and deplorable act. The line was constructed to provide a livelihood for returned soldiers from World War I. It was a soldier-settlement area, which eventually became very productive and successful in fruit-growing on the Granite Belt. Despite the fact that this line was only 40 miles in length it boasts of such memorable names as Fleurbaix, Pozieres, Bullecourt, Paschendale, Bapaume, Messines and Amiens. These place names, together with the railway line, stood as a monument to the greatness of our armed forces in World War I, yet the State Government, by its action, has destroyed confidence and brought a sadness of heart to our war veterans.

Now let us look at the points I have mentioned about the main southern line. I refer to an advertisement which appeared in "The Chronicle" in Toowoomba on 29 March this year, which read—

"Commencing from Monday, 1st April, 1974 the railway stations at Cambooya, Nobby and Allora will be attended on a part time basis only.

"Hours of attendance will be:

"Cambooya: 8.00 a.m.—9.30 a.m.: Mondays to Fridays inclusive.

"Nobby: 10.00 a.m.—11.00 a.m.: Mondays and Thursdays. 10.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

"Allora: 1.00 p.m.—4.00 p.m.: Mondays and Thursdays. 2.30 p.m.—4.00 p.m.: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

"Further information may be obtained by telephoning any of these offices during the abovementioned hours of attendance or from the Station Master, Clifton.

"An officer will also be in attendance at Greenmount between the hours of 9.45 a.m. and 10.15 a.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays."

I want to refer also to an article which appeared in the Railway Weekly Notice No. 13/74 of 28 March 1974, which read—

"Area Supervisor, Clifton—Commencing on Monday, 1st April, 1974, an 'Area Supervisor' based at Clifton will operate on the Allora Branch and the section between Cambooya and Hendon on a six (6) month trial basis.

"The 'Area Supervisor' will be supplied with a motor vehicle and will take charge of Allora, Cambooya, Nobby and Greenmount stations during such hours as are nominated by the General Manager, Toowoomba, for the convenience of the General Public.

"In so far as Train Working is concerned, Allora, Cambooya and Nobby Stations will be worked under the provisions of Rules 229 and 422 of the Book of Rules. Allora, Cambooya, and Nobby will cease to operate as separate functional accounting stations as from

Monday, 1st April 1974, and the under-mentioned Accounting procedures will be introduced in lieu thereof from that date:—

“Consignments to and from that section of Railway from Cambooya to Hendon (including the Allora Branch, but excluding Clifton) must be treated in accordance with instructions applying to unattended sidings as laid down in Instructions 430, 431 and 432 of the Accounts Instruction Book (By-law 973), with the exception that irrespective of direction of travel all inwards consignments will be accounted for by the Base Station—Clifton.

“C.O.D. Parcel traffic may be accepted for addresses at any of the above places, but must be consigned and freighted to Clifton.

“Guaranteed Ledger and Cash Deposit Accounts presently held at Cambooya, Nobby and Allora will be transferred to Clifton.

“There may be some future amendment to Cart Weighbridge facilities at Cambooya, Nobby and Allora of which further instructions will be published if necessary.”

Those stations are now desolate.

Stations such as Allora, Nobby, Greenmount and Cambooya will be closed down, which in turn will mean that the positions of station-master and night officer at those places will be abolished. However, as I have just read out, an area officer will be appointed to attend these stations at certain times each week.

I want to refer now to the reaction of the people in those towns to the closing down of the stations.

Mr. R. Jones: Some of those officers are only there for half an hour.

Mr. BOUSEN: A person could quite easily miss out on transacting his business.

The first place from which I received complaints was Wyreema, where the station was closed down and the staff transferred to another station. As well, the goods shed was demolished. The outcome was that goods were left on the platform. A local shopkeeper complained bitterly about the fact that perishables consigned to her were quite often left on the platform for a number of hours at night. Wyreema is approximately 10 miles from Toowoomba and is the centre of a vast housing development. Although in future railway facilities will be in great demand, the station has been closed down and is now nothing more than a siding.

On my arrival at Cambooya I found that the rail freight on beer, for example, was \$8 a ton and that the road transport charge was \$20 a ton. The publican prefers to obtain his supplies by road for the simple reason that the transport operators give him a good service and deliver his goods to the door. By comparison, the

Railway Department provides no service whatever. He is prepared to pay the additional \$12 a ton to obtain good service.

Another point raised with me was the ordering of livestock wagons. Perhaps some members are unaware of the fact that anyone who orders such a wagon is required to pay a deposit. On a “K” wagon, for example, the deposit required is \$12, and on an “IC” wagon it is \$4.50. Cambooya is a fairly active stock-railing centre, and the people there are required to ring Clifton to order wagons. However, because no-one is on duty at Cambooya station to collect money, they are not required to pay the deposit. As I say, with the absence of staff at Cambooya a telephone call has to be made to Clifton to order livestock wagons. The goods shed at Cambooya has also been demolished.

At Greenmount it was found that the line through the station was spiked over, and all trains had to use the loop line. Any person wishing to join either a goods or a mixed train to Warwick or Toowoomba is required to cross over a set of lines to reach the carriage. This could result in serious injury from tripping over the lines.

Mr. R. Jones: Pity a woman with three or four kids or a pram.

Mr. BOUSEN: She would have a very difficult task. While I was there, a lady was forced to back her car across three sets of lines so that she could park near the station platform. There several kiddies loaded six cartons of goods into her car. Is this service? Country people are entitled to better than that.

Because of the poor service that is given on the main southern line, buses are operating in the area and are making a handsome profit.

Nobby was at one time a very busy grain depot, and the Railway Department installed a weighbridge there for all grain traffic in and out of the station yard. Now that the station has been closed down, the weighbridge has been handed over to a private individual.

At Allora, a town with a population of several thousand, and once a very important butter, cheese and milk transport depot, the station has been closed down, and the rail traffic is now virtually non-existent.

Generally speaking most people know how the C.O.D. system operates. Persons can order goods by phone and have them delivered cash on delivery. Irrespective of where people live on this line, a C.O.D. parcel must be consigned to Clifton. They are then notified and have either to send money to Clifton or go there themselves, and pay the amount owing before taking delivery of the parcel. Is it any wonder that the main southern line carries little goods or passenger traffic?

People living at Cambooya, Greenmount, Nobby and Hendon must have goods consigned to Clifton and pick them up themselves or arrange to have them delivered after the cash has been paid.

Mr. Davis: Who represents this area?

Mr. BOUSEN: The honourable members for Carnarvon and Cunningham.

That is tantamount to regimentation of the people.

As most honourable members know, the Railway Department has been trying to introduce container traffic. Freight on grain from Clifton to Whinstanes costs \$125 a ton by rail and \$145 by road. Most people use containers and send goods by road to Whinstanes because the train service is not suitable. In some instances containers are sent by road to Toowoomba, loaded on rail wagons and railed to Whinstanes.

The present Government seems to have conveniently forgotten that Toowoomba is a commercial centre of no small importance. The new marshalling yards will certainly be an advantage when completed, but the convenience may well be offset by frequent delays in the business area caused by traffic being halted for long periods while trains (now much longer and heavier than in former years), trundle slowly across the level crossings at Russell Street, Margaret Street, Herries Street and James Street. As a result, vehicular and pedestrian traffic is delayed for quite some time. I urge the Government to make this a really useful facility by linking Harlaxton and Willowburn stations and rebuilding the Gowrie Junction-Wyreema rail loop. The biggest mistake the Government ever made was to tear up this line. However, it is still not too late to replace it so that trains may travel from Harlaxton to Willowburn or Gowrie Junction, Wyreema, Wallangarra and so on. In this way the city centre would be bypassed, thus preventing delays at level crossings while long trains pass through the centre of the city. This would be a logical and sensible solution to the problem.

The Government must face up to the fact that, at the moment, the Railway Department does not offer an attractive career to young people. The Commissioner, who is not usually noted for his insight into the department, remarked recently on the general shortage of labour particularly that of trainees for the shunting staff and trainmen. I can offer him two solutions to the difficulty he experiences in having staff readily available.

Mr. Jensen: Do you think he's getting too old for the job?

Mr. BOUSEN: Yes. They should get rid of him quickly.

To overcome the difficulty he has to grant increased wages and better working conditions to attract people to the department. Without workers there could be no Railway Department, although the wages bill would shrink. It is time that the Commissioner

realised this and stopped longing for the old days when men worked for a pittance. Australian people have enough sense to realise that they live in an affluent society, and they demand a fair return for their labour. It is about time the Queensland Government woke up to itself.

Previous speakers have referred to the "Sunlander" and its griddle car, which operates between Brisbane and Townsville. I do not want to go into all the gory details, but about 12 months ago I travelled to Townsville and back. On the way up we had to join a queue and, when we ordered a meal at the griddle car counter, we were told, "That's off. This is all we have left." On the return journey, when I eventually got to the griddle car, they were right out of food. There was nothing left to eat. I could not get a meal. That is the type of catering provided for first-class passengers on that train. No wonder people will not travel on it when they cannot get service. The sooner it returns to the old dining-car and cooks preparing the meal as it is desired, and waitresses to serve it, the sooner will passengers be encouraged to return to train travel. What we want is a comfortable air-conditioned train with people in attendance. It is an eye-opener to see the service given on the interstate air-conditioned trains.

Queensland is in a desperate condition with a part-time Premier and a reluctant Cabinet. The Public Service is seething with resentment. The gag that the Queensland Government has applied will not allow them to express their opinions. Policemen are resigning in record numbers. The teaching profession is in such desperate need of staff that the Government is expending \$600 a head to fly in stop-gap recruits from abroad. The management consultants who studied the State's hospitals reported that morale among the nursing staff could only be described as explosive. Meanwhile, the Premier flits from cloud to cloud in his \$1,000 per week plane, coming down just long enough to enjoy a bit of royalty worship as he grovels before the Shah of Iran and Prince Charles. With all this, the Treasurer talks of a "people-pleaser" Budget. Whoever is pleased by it, it certainly is not the people of Queensland.

Mr. BIRD (Burdekin) (7.52 p.m.): Perhaps if the previous speaker had written his own speech he might have been able to follow it and it might have been a little easier for us to understand. However, I will not denigrate him for that.

I am indeed pleased this evening to be able to join Government speakers in supporting the 1974-75 Budget. I particularly congratulate the Treasurer because I believe he has made every endeavour to ensure that the Budget gives us the maximum benefits we could expect in this State without furthering inflation. We all know that the Federal Government is presently hell-bent on creating inflation throughout Australia, and it is

reassuring to know that at least in this State we have a Treasurer who on behalf of his Government is endeavouring to the best of his ability to halt inflation.

If we obtained the services of the best economist in the world and he spoke to members of the Opposition for two hours, he would still not be able to convince them that Australia's present parlous position is due absolutely to the efforts of the present Federal Government. We know that it introduced what was termed a credit squeeze. Surely to goodness there is not a member opposite who has not heard of a credit squeeze. Although the Federal Government admits that it applied a credit squeeze, the economy has got out of hand. Either the Federal Government does not know how to check inflation or it does not have the ability to check it. On the other hand, its action may be completely intentional—and that is a matter I intend to develop further in my speech.

We have heard talk about the lack of new houses being constructed, as though the Queensland Government were solely to blame. Any young married person who is seeking finance to construct a home knows whose fault it is. He could tell us in no uncertain terms. Even if Opposition members are fooled, young people in Queensland—and I suppose throughout Australia—are not being fooled about whose fault it is. They know where the blame lies. They know the difficulty they have in obtaining finance, and they know the high interest rates they have to pay when they do obtain it. They realise that, even if they can borrow the money, by the time they pay the interest the price of the house will be exorbitant and well and truly beyond their means.

Mr. R. Jones: Thanks to you blokes making a fast buck.

Mr. BIRD: The honourable member for Cairns still does not know where the fault lies.

I realise that the Treasurer has had great difficulty in bringing down a balanced Budget for 1974-75. Just look at the problems he has to overcome. Firstly there is the constant increase in the inflationary trend. It is racing on, well and truly past a gallop; it is tearing on at break-neck speed. Prices are increasing not daily but by the hour. The prices of building materials and all other goods and services are really galloping. It is no wonder that the Treasurer has had difficulty in balancing his Budget.

In spite of this, the Federal Government has the audacity to want to interfere in the affairs of Queensland and the other States when it has proved beyond doubt that it cannot conduct its own affairs. It has been incapable of dealing with anything that it has touched since it came to power, and yet it insists that it will interfere with the States and take over all of the State problems, as it calls them, and show us how to run the

States. Without doubt, that would be the joke of the century—certainly the greatest since federation.

I shall give a few classic examples. The first is the National Health Scheme. I do not propose to outline the follies of that scheme because that has been done more capably than I could hope to do it by the honourable members for Wavell, Townsville and Ipswich. They have outlined the problems and costs of national health schemes in overseas countries, where they have been found to be seriously wanting. I particularly remember a speech by the honourable member for Wavell in which he outlined the cost of the National Health Service in Britain and how the cost escalated until today it is a major problem. We know that exactly the same thing has happened in other overseas countries.

The introduction of a National Health Scheme in Australia is suspect. Other people, some of them not of my political belief, would agree with me. One would be the president of the A.C.T.U., Mr. Bob Hawke. In replying to a question asked by me, the Minister for Health said that the A.C.T.U. is looking at the possibility of setting up a health fund in Australia—when the Federal Government is talking about introducing a National Health Scheme. I would say that the A.C.T.U. president realises that if a national health scheme is introduced, in no time its cost will escalate to such an extent that it will break down. That is why he is considering the possibility of setting up a health fund similar to those in operation at present. I have some regard for Bob Hawke, and it is quite obvious to me that he has weighed the pros and cons of a national health scheme and come to the realisation that the introduction of such a scheme would be disastrous. He is therefore going to ensure that the A.C.T.U. gets on the band wagon, as it were, by introducing a health fund and building it up so that when the national health scheme folds up at least some people will still be protected.

Under its national roads programme, the Federal Government wants to take over the building of national highways throughout Australia. I very much doubt whether the Federal Government would even know where to start. The roads in Queensland suffered badly in the last heavy and prolonged wet season, and we all know that the two things necessary to repair them are finance and labour. Of the two, finance is the more important. It has certainly not been forthcoming in the past from the Federal Government, which is where it should come from. We all know the position at the present time. The Commonwealth Government is taking more money than ever from this State in petrol tax alone, and is not giving it back. The amount taken from the people in income tax has doubled in the last 12 months. But what is Queensland receiving? The Federal Government cannot see the need to improve the roads

of this State. If national highways, as the Federal Government calls them, are to be controlled from Canberra, I hate to think how long it will be before a start is made on laying down a programme for their improvement, let alone actual work.

Excellent road schemes have been in operation in Queensland for many years. The Department of Main Roads, for which I have the highest regard, has been able to push ahead with the bituminising of highways. Prior to 1957, and for several years after, there was little bitumen on the highways throughout Queensland. Today the roads are very good, in comparison with their conditions in those days, except that unfortunately they deteriorated during the wet season earlier this year. Here is another area in which the Federal Government wants to interfere when it is unable to run its own affairs. It enters this field and tries to tell us how to do the job.

The Prime Minister has admitted that his plan is to take from those who have a little more than he thinks they are entitled to and give it to those who have not, in his opinion, as much as they should have. We heard the honourable member for Windsor speak this afternoon about people who do not want to work and have no intention of working if they can possibly avoid it. They are the ones to whom the Prime Minister and the Federal A.L.P. Government are going to give the money that they take from those who have worked harder than the average person, often putting in considerable hours of overtime, in an attempt to better themselves. The Federal Government has admitted that it is its intention to take, by taxation and other devious means, money from those hard-workers and give it to those who have no intention of working and have never attempted to better themselves. If he takes from the "haves" and gives to the "have-nots" he will kill all incentive, and nobody in Australia will have the desire to work or accept responsibility. That is what will happen if the Government carries out its socialist plans. Let us face it: socialism can only work under a threat, whether by a gun or some other means. That is probably the way the Federal Government is going to get the work done in the future. It certainly will not get it done as it has been done over the many years we have known the free enterprise and incentive systems.

Mr. Miller: Many people today are working only four days a week.

Mr. BIRD: Growing numbers of people are not even working four hours a week. They would be very pleased to work a 40-hour week if they could, but their jobs have been taken away from them because of the policies of the present Federal Government.

I regret that it was necessary to make provision in the Budget for an increase in hospital fees. However, most people in

Queensland can avail themselves of the free hospital scheme. Those who cannot avail themselves of that scheme are probably covered by a medical benefits scheme, and in this way the burden on them is eased. Perhaps the increased fees will not create undue hardship to anyone in Queensland in future.

I am very pleased to note that there are no increases in rail freights or fares. This was an attempt to at least soften the effects of inflation in this State. Any increase in rail freights and fares would have added to the burdens of people in North Queensland, who would have been affected by both increased freights and fares, and it would have added to the burdens of people in the southern part of the State who most certainly would have been affected by increased rail fares.

I agree with the Premier and the Treasurer that the way to prevent further inflation is to reduce income tax. That is in line with the thinking that we should not place any further financial burden on the people of Queensland by increasing rail freights and fares.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. BIRD: The honourable member could not even see that this is a workable proposition. It is because of his type in Canberra that the nation is in its present mess. His colleagues do not appreciate what is causing inflation and the mess that Australia is in today.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North said that this Government had closed certain railway lines. They were closed because they were deemed to be uneconomic. The honourable member does not seem to realise that the Federal Minister for Transport (Mr. Jones) said that the railway position throughout Australia would have to be looked at, and that all uneconomic railway lines must be closed. Which way does he want it? Does he want to see these uneconomic lines remain open in Queensland when the Federal Minister for Transport says that they must be closed? I suggest that he bring himself up to date before getting up and making such statements in this Chamber.

I am indeed very pleased to see the increase in the education Vote to non-State schools. This has been acknowledged by previous speakers in this debate, but I should like to mention again that the per-capita payment for primary students has been increased from \$62 to \$81 and for secondary students from \$104 to \$132. I agree with previous speakers who have said that non-State schools are absolutely essential not only in this State but right throughout Australia. If these schools were to close tomorrow, the cost of providing additional State schools and teachers would be one of the heaviest burdens that could ever be placed on the people of Queensland. In fact, we are getting part of our education on the

cheap. If people desire to have their children taught at non-State schools, it is their right to do so as long as they want to. But what is the Federal Government doing? It is reducing the taxation allowance for education expenses from \$400 to \$150. This caused a dog fight in Canberra, with some Cabinet Ministers saying that the allowance must be brought up again to \$400. When it went to caucus, of course, the Prime Minister, who had dropped back into Australia for a few brief weeks before going off again to Moscow and the E.E.C. countries, decided that now was the time to crack the whip. He had been so quiet for so many months prior to his last sojourn overseas that it looked as though he was abdicating his position as Prime Minister.

Mr. R. Jones: Where have you been in the last six months?

Mr. Frawley: He was not with Gough in Tennessee.

Mr. BIRD: I wish to goodness I had been with the Prime Minister on all his overseas tours, because I would have seen virtually the whole of the world at the expense of the taxpayers of Australia. It's a wonderful thought.

However, as I had started to say, he came back here and realised that his image had suffered severely during his absence because Australia had experienced a financial setback. Indeed, it had suffered something of a financial crisis. The Prime Minister had missed out on all this, so he came back determined to get himself back onto the pedestal. He cracked the whip in caucus and, at the expense of those endeavouring to have their children educated, ensured that the reduction in the taxation allowance will stand. In effect he said, "I am the boss." Never mind about the people who wanted to give their children the best education they could afford.

I was also pleased to read in the Budget the increased subsidies that will be paid to the Blue Nursing Service. This too has been mentioned earlier. It is pleasing to see that the rate of subsidy will be lifted from \$2,350 to \$3,100 per nurse, which, with the Commonwealth subsidy, will provide a total payment of \$6,200 per nurse per annum. I have the highest regard and utmost respect for the Blue Nursing Service, and I hope that it will continue to operate for many years to come. I am, however, concerned at the intention of the Federal Government to take over the Blue Nursing Service and place it under the control of a bureaucratic department in Canberra. This is clearly the Commonwealth Government's intention as part of its socialistic plan. It simply will not tolerate the operation of services of this nature, and maintains that they should come under its control. If this is allowed to occur, a great number of people will suffer a disadvantage. I am referring to the members of the Blue Nursing Service and also to the

patients under their care. At the present time the Blue Nurses provide a wonderful personal service to patients.

Dr. Crawford: They give tender loving care.

Mr. BIRD: They certainly do; but the patients will not receive it if the service is placed under the control of bureaucrats in Canberra.

The honourable member for Redlands has condemned service clubs as being part of the capitalist system. He claimed that they have no place whatever in his socialist system. Imagine what would happen if the Labor Government were to remain in power. It will endeavour to wipe out service clubs and destroy the wonderful work that they do. The Commonwealth Government simply does not appreciate the fact that people become members of service clubs not because they have to but because they want to. They desire to give a service to the community; they show concern for their fellow man. They enjoy the companionship that is offered by membership of service clubs. Of course, members of the Opposition do not appreciate all these things. Rather do they condemn them as having no place in the socialist system.

I congratulate the Minister for Education and the Treasurer—for that matter, all the members of Cabinet—on their continued implementation of the pre-school scheme. I suppose I am fortunate in that the town of Ayr, in my electorate, has two pre-school centres. One was provided by the Education Department at the East Ayr State School, where a completely new building was erected, furnished and staffed by the department. The other is at was formerly the kindergarten conducted by the Ayr Kindergarten Association. It has been taken over by the Education Department and converted into a pre-school centre. I am pleased to learn, too, that a start will be made on the provision of a pre-school centre at Home Hill. I have very little to complain about in this direction.

This year finance is being provided towards the setting up of the Lower Burdekin rural training school at Clare. Several years ago a decision was made to establish the State's third rural training school in the Lower Burdekin area, based on irrigated agriculture. It is pleasing to note that this year about \$1,800,000 has been allocated in the Budget to construct roads and the first of the buildings at the school, and that next year a further \$2,000,000 will be made available to complete the school so that it may open for the first pupils in 1976. I still maintain that the decision to build the rural training school in the Burdekin area was the wisest that could have been made. I have no hesitation in saying that the authorities will never regret it. I am pleased to learn that the school will be named the Arthur Coburn School in honour of my predecessor in this Chamber, the late Arthur Coburn, who represented the area for 19 years.

I am also pleased that the Queensland Cabinet accepted with alacrity the Commonwealth Government's proposal to construct a weir at Clare on the Burdekin River. It was well known that the Federal Government had said that it would provide \$3,000,000 towards the construction of this weir, of which \$300,000 was to be made available in the first year, and had requested the State Government to pick up the tab for the remaining \$1,580,000, making a total of \$4,580,000 over all, based on today's costs. No-one knows how costs will escalate, but I can only assume that, as in the past, the Federal Government has made no provision to meet them, and that they will have to be borne by the State Government.

Mr. Davis: You don't want it?

Mr. BIRD: The honourable member for Brisbane thinks that North Queensland is the other side of Caboolture.

Mr. Frawley: He does not even know where that is.

Mr. BIRD: I could well believe that.

I am disappointed that construction of weirs on the Haughton River has had to be delayed. For the last few years we have been hoping that these weirs would be commenced—in fact, it was hoped that they would be complete by now.

People who know the district understand that the river runs for only a short period and that when it stops running the sands in the river and the aquifers adjacent to it do not take long to dry out. They understand how valuable the weirs would be to people engaged in the sugar industry on land bordering the banks of the river. Those who know the position understand what happened. They know that no provision has been made for the construction of the Kinchant Dam outside Mackay. The Queensland Government submitted proposals on the Kinchant Dam to the former Liberal-Country Party Government in Canberra. They were rejected, and for political expediency that decision was reversed by the present Federal Government, which decided that it would take part in building the Kinchant Dam by providing \$5,000,000 towards the cost of the project if the Queensland Government met the bill for associated works. On present estimates the additional associated works will cost about \$10,000,000. We realise that the Queensland Government could not be expected to raise \$10,000,000 without forgoing other projects on its books. It would appear that one project to suffer is the construction of the weirs on the Haughton River.

We know that the Clare Weir is only part of the Urannah Dam project. It will not really provide us with a great deal of water. The main purpose of the weir at Clare is to raise the water level and so reduce pumping costs. We will be continuing to press for the early construction of the Urannah Dam because we feel that nothing less than that will really ease the water position in the Lower Burdekin district.

I do not want the Committee to have the idea that we are in dire straits with water supplies; but, if there is to be an increase in sugar production in that area, it will be at the expense of the rice industry if additional water is not made available. We are all aware of the wonderful work of the State Government in supporting the people who commenced the rice industry in the Burdekin district. The financial and other assistance the Government gave them was indeed commendable. It would be a tremendous blow to the district if it were suddenly found that the rice industry had to fail and be forced out of business simply because increased cane assignments took precedence and no water was available for rice-growing. Therefore, although the Clare Weir may to some extent protect the rice industry, at the earliest opportunity a major dam must be constructed on the Burdekin River system. The only one that we can foresee at present is the Urannah Dam.

I do not believe that the \$26,800,000 allocated for water conservation in Queensland is enough. In future years I would like to see the allocation to the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply at least doubled, and possibly trebled. I would like also to see the Federal Government give a great deal more. When Dr. Patterson addressed the Urannah Dam committee recently, he said that Queensland is the only State that requires major water-storage projects. If that is so, surely he should be able to assist us in obtaining more finance for these Queensland projects. Considering the amount of money taken out of the Lower Burdekin district every year, in taxation alone, it will be appreciated that the Federal Government could return a considerable amount to the district for the construction of works of this type.

There is a need for forward planning, not only for water conservation but also for drainage. We hope it will not be very long before there is an expansion in the sugar industry. If we continue to secure additional markets such as those won in South Korea and Malaysia recently, there will be a need for expansion in the sugar industry.

We are wondering exactly what is happening with the markets allegedly won in China some time ago. We heard about them and I have no doubt that sales of Australian sugar have been obtained in China. The unknown factors at present are how long the contract will run and the price.

It is unfortunate that up till now we have not negotiated a long-term sugar agreement that is mutually satisfactory to the Japanese and us. It is also regrettable that we have been unable to secure a new agreement with Britain because of her ties with the European Economic Community and the difficulties she is having within the community. The member countries say they can provide Britain with sugar at a low cost and she is not permitted to buy it any longer from

Commonwealth countries. I have no doubt that we will win further markets for our sugar and that an expansion will be necessary.

The sugar industry is worried about the expected difficulty with finance. If the expansion is to be of any magnitude, new farms will have to be brought into production and the sugar industry is worried about where the finance will come from to put these new farmers on the land. If they manage to borrow the money to get onto the farms, to clear them, to level them and to put them under cultivation, the high interest rates they will have to pay could upset the economics of the industry, which, for a long time, has been able to keep its costs down and remain fairly stable. I can understand the concern of those in the sugar industry at present because of the shortage of finance and the ruling high interest rates.

We know that the Federal Government took away the development allowances that farmers enjoyed in past years. We are also concerned about how these farmers will be able to establish themselves unless the allowances are restored.

The Prime Minister has said that there is a world-wide food shortage and that additional food must be produced. I am hopeful that he will therefore realise that, given the incentive, water and other facilities, Australia can produce a tremendous amount of food for overseas countries.

I fail to understand why there is a need at present for Australia to import food. We also import motor cars, textiles, furniture and many other commodities simply because they come from cheap-labour countries. Obviously the Prime Minister is more concerned with employment opportunities there than in Australia. This seems absolutely ridiculous. It is very pleasing indeed to see that the unions are at long last fed up with the position and are starting to kick over the traces. They are determined that their members will be looked after.

A study of "Hansard" would reveal that I said not long after the A.L.P. Government came to power that this very thing would happen. I said that this was the type of thing it would do. My predictions have come true. As a result of its policies, unemployment is growing hour by hour. There are those in the Opposition who have claimed that this is the fault of the Queensland Government. If they read the newspapers, they must be aware that that is the position Australia-wide at present. If Queensland could be shown to be in any way responsible for what is happening in the other States, I should be very surprised indeed. I hope that the Prime Minister will show some common sense in the not-too-distant future and begin to think about his fellow Australians instead of worrying about his mates in Communist countries whom he is trying so hard to woo.

Honourable members will recall that during my speech in the Address-in-Reply debate, I mentioned the attitude that had been adopted to primary industries in socialist countries. I pointed out that the Communists had allowed primary industries to fail, and that they were now endeavouring to get people to return to these industries by offering them great incentives. There was a certain amount of hoo-ha from the other side of the Chamber when I said that. I also said that Australia would go the same way. That is exactly what will happen, and that position is a couple of months closer today than it was when I mentioned it previously. I hope that in 12 months' time I do not have to rise in my place in this Chamber and say, "Our primary industries have almost been wiped out, and primary producers have been brought to their knees. They are now below the poverty line." I do not want to say, "I told you so."

I agree completely with the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt, who said in his speech in this debate that the Federal Government has a carefully planned programme to wreck the economy of Australia so that it can say that the capitalist system has failed. Every day one or other of the Federal Ministers says that the present system has failed. The others join in the chant, "It's not our policies that are wrong. It's the system that is at fault." It is strange that the system did not fail prior to 1972. But it has certainly failed since the A.L.P. Government has come to power. I do not think for a moment that the people are so naive that they will believe that it is the system that has failed. If it fails, it will be because it has been forced to fail.

Mr. Chinchon: It was all right for 150 years.

Mr. BIRD: That is right. It had its shaky times in earlier years when socialist A.L.P. Governments were in office in Canberra, but the country managed to shake them off. Labor Governments rushed into State-owned enterprises all over the country. They failed, and tremendous losses were incurred.

Another classic example of the intention of the A.L.P. Government to kill Australian industry was the recent statement by Dr. Cairns that Australia will import oil from China. Has anyone ever heard anything so utterly ridiculous? A fine oil industry was being built up in this country until the A.L.P. Government came to power in 1972. How many oil strikes have been made since then? How much drilling has taken place? Absolutely nothing has happened. The Labor Government has completely killed the industry that was being built up in this country. Now it is talking about importing oil from China. That is another case of "jobs for the boys" over there, and never mind about our own.

I was very pleased to hear the Minister for Minerals and Energy is concerned about oil supplies throughout Australia. He might have exaggerated the supplies available, because he referred to two weeks' supply. The figures supplied to me give me reason to believe that only about one week's supply is available at any give time. I sincerely hope that the Minister for Minerals and Energy will wake up to his responsibilities and endeavour to improve the position. If he does not, primary and secondary industries, and, indeed, the whole country, will grind to a halt. I hope it will not be necessary to wait until we get additional oil supplies from China. Something should be done well before that time.

A statement made by the president of the A.C.T.U. during a recent "Monday Conference" programme worried me. Most honourable members probably heard him say that the ideal system is one under which the people decide, through the Government, what will be produced, where it will be produced, and when it will be produced. Of course, that is socialism, and that is his way of thinking. But look at what has happened to overseas countries that have tried that! Look at what has happened in Russia, the greatest socialist country of all, where people are told what they will grow, when they will grow it, and how they will grow it! We know that as a result of the policy Russia has had to import tremendous amounts of food. We know that the farmers in Russia are discontented and completely disinterested in producing anything. If Mr. Hawke thinks that such a system would work in Australia, and that primary producers who have worked under a free-enterprise system ever since this country was first settled by white people are now going to stand in line and be told what they will produce, where they will produce it, and when they will produce it, he has another think coming.

I am pleased to note that the Government of Queensland appreciates the wonderful work done by the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations and has again increased its subsidy to the bureau. Those who know the sugar industry will be aware of the tremendous amount of good work that is done by the bureau at its experiment stations throughout Queensland. I keep a fairly close eye on what happens at the research station at Brandon, outside Ayr. Growers on the Burdekin are very fortunate. Thanks to the work of the staff at the research station, they have some of the best sugar crops in Queensland; their cane is remarkably free from disease; they have high c.c.s. canes; and they have canes that stand up in fairly strong winds without snapping. I suppose growers in other areas can be equally thankful for the work done by their local sugar experiment stations.

I pay a compliment to the staff of the Millaroo Research Station, where work is carried out on the growing of crops of all types on what are known as Oakey and

Barratta soils that previously were considered unsuitable for growing anything. Officers at the research station have found in the last few years that rice is an excellent crop to grow in these soils to break them up and condition them for the growing of other crops. More recently they have learnt that crops can be planted on the virgin soils with a high degree of success.

I should also like to pay a compliment to the officers and staff of the Swans Lagoon Cattle Research Station and the Ayr Cattle Field Research Station. The Minister for Primary Industries would know full well that when he came up only last week to open a field day at Swans Lagoon Cattle Research Station, considerably more interest was shown in the work done there this year than in any past year. This shows the high standard of the work being carried out by the officers there and, in addition, the fact that, with the fall in cattle prices, graziers are looking at ways of conducting their properties more economically than they perhaps have in the past. There was certainly a record crowd there—far bigger than I have ever seen before. It was obvious from the interest the people displayed that they were keen to learn what had been done at the research station in the previous 12 months.

I should also like to congratulate one of our local officers at Ayr Cattle Field Research Station—Pat Thurbon—on having been chosen to travel overseas to assist one or two countries with their cattle research. I think it is indeed wonderful to have a person from the Lower Burdekin district chosen for such valuable work overseas.

Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to the Treasurer and to the Under Treasurer (Mr. Fields) who assisted him at the time in drawing up this Budget in what we consider to be a most difficult year. I also take the opportunity of congratulating Mr. Fields on his elevation to the position of Chairman of the Public Service Board.

Mr. N. F. JONES (Everton) (8.48 p.m.): After listening to the remarks of the previous speaker, it appears to me that he has placed before the Committee a number of propositions based on false premises. The first point I should like to clarify before dealing with some of the matters in the Budget I want to raise is the previous speaker's claim that this State is suffering from the Federal Government's centralist policy. What has not been said in this Chamber, and what was not said by the previous speaker, is succinctly set out in an editorial dated Sunday, 14 September 1974, as follows:—

"The bureaucratic strangulation from Canberra and the real need to cut Federal Government spending have obscured the point that six State Government bureaucracies also drag on society both economically and philosophically.

"Significantly, they have grown at a faster rate than the Commonwealth Public Service, and within their own States the bureaucrats have imposed a far more centralist policy than Mr. Whitlam ever envisaged. In the decade from 1960, the number of State public servants increased dramatically (by 78 per cent in Queensland compared with 42 per cent in the Commonwealth service)."

What about some honourable members opposite being reasonably honest about the growth in spending by their Government? Why don't they speak about what is happening in this State instead of trying to cloud the issue by continually attacking the Federal Government? The people of Queensland want to see a Government governing in this State for the people of this State. This Government is trying to set itself up as nothing more than a Federal Opposition to the detriment of the Queensland people.

Government Members interjected.

Mr. N. F. JONES: In answer to those Government members who are making a lot of noise, I point out that that appeared in a well-known newspaper, "The Australian", on Sunday, 14 September 1974.

I will deal now with the Treasurer's Financial Statement. During this debate the Committee heard a number of Government members put forward various points covered by the Budget as indicating responsibility on the part of this Government.

One of the most important subjects dealt with by the Budget is housing, and I am pleased to see the Minister for Works and Housing has again entered the Chamber. It is important because it touches nearly every section of the community. It is particularly important to those people who are paying as much as 50 per cent of their wages in rentals, and it would be reasonable to suggest that they represent at least 70 per cent of the community. What relief can this large section of the community expect from this Government? I suggest that this Budget and the Government's actions will do little to help them.

Let me clarify the position as to housing in Queensland. The State Government has failed to use the finance made available to it by the Federal Government. Furthermore, it has not put its own resources to good use. It has used its finance to look after its mates in country electorates and has shown no real concern for the over-all problem that faces the people of the State.

There is no recognition of a relationship between the need for houses and the growth of population in particular areas. In fact, in the area where the major growth has taken place in population the figures of houses constructed tends to be in inverse proportion. The major growth has occurred in the metropolitan area. Figures published by the Commonwealth Statistician show that in 1971 Brisbane had a population of 866,000, or 47

per cent of the total State population. At that time the population of the remainder of the State stood at 961,000, or 53 per cent of the total. The census reveals that the population growth in the metropolitan area from 1966 to 1971 stood at 88,000, or 60 per cent of the increase. By comparison, the population growth of the remainder of the State was 59,400, or 40 per cent of the increase. The number of dwellings completed by the Queensland Housing Commission over the years from 1966 to 1971 represents the reverse of the trend in the growth of population. The Commission's effort, as shown in the same census, amounted to the construction in Brisbane of 2,548 dwellings, or 30 per cent of the total, and in country areas of 5,922 houses, or 70 per cent of the total. This quite clearly shows that the Government is not acting responsibly. Today the Government shows the same neglect for the major growth areas.

The trend set by the Government in the provision of housing would lead us to believe that in addition to having a Country Party (now National Party) Premier we have a Country or National Party Treasurer. The growth rate in population in the metropolitan area shows that this Government's so-called decentralisation policy has been a failure.

A further example of the Queensland Government's poor record in housing as compared with that of the last Labor Government is revealed in a publication entitled "Housing and Poverty", by M. M. Jones and published by Melbourne University Press in 1972. The pattern of decline was set in the year this Government came into office, and it has been followed over the 17 years since then.

Mr. Frawley interjected.

Mr. N. F. JONES: Just listen to the facts and figures instead of singing out like an idiot.

In the last year of Labor Government in Queensland—that is, 1956-57—the figures showed that the Labor Government was completing 26 per cent of all houses or flats, or in excess of one-quarter of the total. This is the highest of any State Government in the Commonwealth at that time. Let us compare that with the first year of this Government's activities in housing. In 1957-58 the number of completions dropped by 6 per cent, and has continued to drop since this Government came into power. In 1969-70 it dropped by 10 per cent, which represents a decline of 16 per cent since this Government took office.

I feel that the trend has continued beyond the drop of 16 per cent in 1970. I estimate that if it continued it would show—

Year	Decrease in completions	
	%	
1970-71	9.7
1971-72	8.0
1972-73	6.7
1973-74	5.0

While the population increases, the Government decreases the construction of dwellings. There is a permanent waiting list for State rental homes. The figure remains constant while a large section of the community never lodge an application because of an awareness that the position is hopeless. They know it is impossible to try to get State accommodation.

Mr. Frawley: How many representations have you made for people to get State rental accommodation?

Mr. N. F. JONES: Ask the Minister. He knows. I have made hundreds of them.

On other occasions honourable members on this side of the Chamber have given figures of the number awaiting rental accommodation. It is well over 6,000, and it remains constant. We hear of people with priority and people without priority. I believe that every man, woman and child has a priority for a dwelling.

The Government hides behind its priority system in a vain attempt to cover up the shortage of houses—a shortage created by non-activity in this important area of Government responsibility. As I have said, when a person needs a house for his family, there should be no such term as "priority". We need a Government that will look to the needs of the people rather than hide behind an artificial priority system.

The Government destroys far more houses than it constructs. We have a house-hungry population and a Government that is content to knock houses down for all sorts of reasons. It is a pity that we cannot compare the total figure of houses destroyed with the total number of houses constructed by the Government. I have no doubt that if we could, we would find that the Government's record of destructions exceeds the number of houses it has constructed.

When I tried to elicit the number of houses removed, demolished, resold, relet or unoccupied because of freeway or other Department projects, the Premier said that the work entailed in gathering this information could not be justified. It could not be justified because it would have shown the real activities of the Government in relation to our housing problems! While we cannot compare the total figures, we can examine the Main Roads Department figures, which are startling. On 16 October this year, I asked the Minister for Mines and Main Roads—

"(1) How many dwellings or other buildings used for accommodation purposes have been purchased by the Main Roads Department in relation to past or future freeway construction?

"(2) How many dwellings does the Department hold an option over?

"(3) How many of these dwellings have been removed or demolished by the department?

"(4) What are the numbers in each category located on the (a) northside and (b) southside of the metropolitan area?"

In reply to the first part of my question, the Minister told me that 767 dwellings or buildings had been purchased. That represents over one-third of the number of houses constructed by the Queensland Housing Commission. He told me that 402 dwellings had been removed or demolished—by one department! If the Premier had given me the figures for every department, I am sure that the total number destroyed by the Government would far exceed the number constructed in the State by the Government for rental purposes.

The clearest example of the Government's failure in housing is shown in the Treasurer's own figures. Let us now examine the expenditure for housing under the Queensland Housing Commission Fund. In 1973-74, the amount appropriated was \$54,822,000. The amount expended in that year was \$48,500,000—a shortfall of a little over \$6,000,000. It was estimated that \$68,000,000 would be required under the Queensland Housing Commission Fund for 1974-75. In 1973-74, under the Home Builders' Account, \$9,249,000 was appropriated, and \$6,097,000 was expended—a shortfall of about \$3,000,000. It was estimated that \$6,276,000 would be required for 1974-75 in the Home Builders' Account. In 1973-74 the expenditure was \$6,097,000, a reduction of \$3,000,000. For 1974-75 \$6,276,000 was required.

The Minister today attempted to refute the suggestion that the Queensland Housing Commission had failed to use all the money appropriated to it for the period. In actual fact the amount was close to the \$12,000,000 suggested by the shadow Minister. It was \$11,984,961. That was the amount unexpended by the Queensland Housing Commission from the funds that had been appropriated for housing. The Minister says that he needs further money to commence immediately the construction of houses, yet he neglected to spend nearly \$12,000,000 of the amount appropriated by the Treasurer last year.

The Australian Government increased its advance by \$3,500,000. As a result, the Queensland Government has available to it the unexpended amount of \$11,984,961 plus the additional amount made available by the Australian Government, making a total of \$15,484,961. I wonder whether at the end of this financial year it will be found that the Minister for Works and Housing has in the vicinity of \$20,000,000 unexpended.

I believe we should compare the amount of money advanced by the present Australian Government for housing with that advanced previously. In 1972-73, at a time when the Liberal-Country Party Government was in power, the Queensland Government was allocated \$350,000 plus \$527,000 as a

recurrent grant. The grand total was \$877,000! In 1973-74 the Federal Labor Government allocated \$17,400,000 plus the \$527,000 recurrent grant—a total of \$17,927,000. That was an increase of 1,944 per cent. Honourable members opposite have the gall to charge the Australian Government with not giving Queensland its fair share. The money is being given all right, but this Government is failing to spend it in the areas of need.

In 1974-75 the Australian Government allocated \$20,900,000 plus the recurrent grant of \$527,000—a grand total of \$21,427,000, or a further increase of 19.52 per cent. In spite of that, members of this Committee decry the efforts of the Australian Government, which generously has far exceeded its responsibility to housing in Queensland. The problem is that when the money arrives at the door of the State Treasury the Government fails to spend the sums allocated for housing.

The State's present allocation would consist of the 1973-74 amount of \$58,468,755 less the \$3,327,192—in other words, a cut of 5.69 per cent—plus unexpended funds from 1973-74, \$11,984,961, giving a total allocation of \$67,126,524. That takes into account the unexpended amounts and the additional amounts provided by the Federal Government.

At the same time as the Australian Government advances increased by \$3,500,000 the State showed a decrease of 19.5 per cent. For example, this Government had cut back by \$3,300,000 whereas the Australian Government had increased its allocation by \$3,500,000. And we should remember the additional \$6,500,000 that has just been promised by the Federal Government.

Queensland's performance in supplying land for the construction of Government housing is very poor. Even the blocks developed are far from satisfactory. Every member of this Chamber knows the story about no sewerage and about waste water being spread over the yards of hundreds of residences of the Queensland Housing Commission. It is a tale well known to us all.

What about this recent attempt by the Minister for Housing to shift the blame onto the Federal Government because he wants extra finance from it for blocks of land to start building on immediately? Start to build on immediately! He could not even expend the amount of money he was allocated last time.

If honourable members study the proposition in some detail, they will find it a very interesting story. Firstly, the Minister made claims about the need for land yet a letter he wrote to me on 30 October 1973 showed without doubt that his department had not taken full advantage of its own landholdings.

The letter read—

"I refer to your Question in the House of 25th ultimo in regard to land held by the Queensland Housing Commission and would advise—

—	Surveyed Sites	Unsubdivided Acreage
Metropolitan (Brisbane and adjacent) ..	532	1,023
Provincial Cities and major Towns ..	580	792
Remainder of State ..	1,143	161

"(2) Surveyed sites are indicated in (1). The unsubdivided acreage may be expected to produce 4 sites to the acre."

Mr. Miller: Mr. Jones—

Mr. N. F. JONES: The honourable member just came into the Chamber. If he will wait a moment, he will find out what is going on.

An answer to a question asked by the shadow Minister for Housing on 8 August 1974 showed that the position has not really changed. It read—

—	Surveyed Sites	Unsubdivided Acreage
Metropolitan (Brisbane and adjacent)	524	1,303
Provincial cities and major towns	453	860
Remainder of State	1,025	141 "

Mr. Miller: If you were Minister for Housing and wanted land immediately, would you buy it at the cheapest price or the dearest price?

Mr. N. F. JONES: If the honourable member can be patient for a moment he will learn that what the Minister said about cheap land is a lot of hoo-ha.

The Minister wants to help land developers whom he and his Government allowed to rob young couples while his department sat on large parcels of land that it held back from developing. Had the Government allowed this land to be developed, a large number of rental houses could have been constructed and of course some young couples or, for that matter, other persons requiring a home would have had a chance to get reasonably priced land.

Let me outline some of the land held by Cambridge Credit—one of the companies referred to by the Minister—and some of its associated companies. It held 4,426 allotments at Springwood, 3,700 at Collingwood Park, 2,790 at Mt. Warren Park, 3,000 at Kimberley Park, 1,566 at Ashmore Village—and so the long list continues. This Government sat on a lot of land and allowed this private developer to develop land and maintain a high price, so robbing the public of this State.

Let me refer in detail to one of the developments. I can compare it with the 2,255 surveyed unused sites held by the

Queensland Housing Commission as outlined in the Minister's 1973 letter. While there is some variation in the figures, this will show what the situation was. The development I wish to compare with that was an 890-acre residential development under construction in a shire close to the metropolitan area and on the west side of the Pacific Highway. It contained approximately 2,800 residential blocks varying in size from 600 sq m (24 perches) minimum up to three times that size. The average size was 708 sq m (28 perches). The layout uses cul-de-sac design extensively for residential privacy and child safety, and wide streets for major collector roads. Crossroads will not exist. That is a description of a development that the Government allowed to proceed while it sat on approximately the same number of sites.

If the developer made a profit of \$5,000 on each allotment, which in the eyes of the developer would not be excessive, from this one estate he would stand to make approximately \$14,000,000 profit. At a time when young people could not afford to buy blocks of land from the developer, the Government was prepared to sit back on the same amount of land as was in this development and allow the developer to maintain high prices.

Mr. Miller: What price was that land?

Mr. N. F. JONES: I shall tell the honourable member shortly. I am only saying what the developer's profit would be.

The Minister claimed in a Press statement that some of this land was available at rock-bottom prices. Let us compare the prices in his Press statement with the prices given in an answer that he gave to a question asked in the House about land purchased by the Queensland Housing Commission. Let us see if the land is at rock-bottom prices. Or is the Government trying to get one of its private-enterprise friends off the hook and still maintain the pressure on the land market so that prices remain high? Under the heading, "Home sites go begging during cash 'drought'" an article in "The Sunday Mail" of 13 October 1974 stated—

"Two thousand fully-developed home sites have been offered to the State Government at 'rock bottom' prices, but it hasn't the money to buy them."

It should be recalled that the Government had housing funds of \$12,000,000 that it had not spent. It should also be recalled that the Minister was sitting on enough land to provide 10,000 building blocks. Yet he is reported on 13 October 1974 as saying that if he had the necessary money he would buy land so that he could start to build.

Mr. Miller: He didn't say "start to build".

Mr. N. F. JONES: He certainly did.

Mr. Miller: You are misquoting him.

Mr. N. F. JONES: No. He is reported as saying—

"It's beautiful land in the Rochedale and surrounding areas, where we've been offered 800 to 1,000 sites at between \$4,500 and \$6,500 each. Sites in the same area have been sold for between \$8,500 and \$10,500."

Mr. Miller: That's cheap.

Mr. N. F. JONES: Cheap if one makes that sort of a comparison. But it was Government neglect that helped to create the situation in which young people were forced to pay \$8,000 and \$10,000 for land. Now, because the Government thinks that it can buy land at "rock-bottom prices", it wishes to buy at between \$4,500 and \$6,500.

Mr. Miller: Do you think \$8,000 is expensive?

Mr. N. F. JONES: Yes, I do, when the Government is sitting on 10,000 blocks of land. If the Government was fair dinkum and wanted to do something for land-hungry people in the metropolitan area, it would have developed some of its land so that people, young and old, who wanted land could purchase it at reasonable prices.

Let us compare the Minister's "rock-bottom" prices with the prices that he gave in answer to a question in 1973. Those prices can be doubled if some members want to point out that there has been inflation. Let us look at the Minister's figures, and let us see how he neglected to develop that land and so make reasonably priced allotments available to the people. I asked the Minister—

"(1) How many allotments has the Housing Commission purchased by resumption in the last five financial years in (a) the Greater Brisbane area and (b) other areas of the State?

"(2) What was the price or the average price paid per allotment according to areas in each year?"

The Minister answered—

"Acquisition by resumption—

(1) (a) 16 allotments which resurveyed into 10 normal size building sites (b) 7 allotments plus bulk areas of unsubdivided land which will produce of the order of 603 building sites."

I do not think that the Minister has used that number of blocks even to this stage. The answer continued—

"(2) 1970/71 \$1,785 average for 10 sites."

As I said, the figures can be doubled if it is said that there has been inflation, and they will still be below the "rock-bottom" prices to which the Minister referred in the Press article quoted. How can it be claimed that \$4,500 and \$6,500 are rock-bottom prices? The honourable member for Ithaca tries to say that it is cheap at \$8,500 and \$10,500. He ought to tell that to some of the young people in his electorate.

In his answer on 25 September 1973 the Minister referred to a \$454 average for 13 sites in 1971-72. Even if that average is multiplied by four, it still does not reach the rock-bottom prices the Minister is talking about. In the same answer he referred to a \$2,533 average for three sites in 1972-73. I suppose land would be dearer when the deal involved such a small number of sites. Double that figure and we still do not reach the figures he described as rock-bottom prices. The honourable member for Ithaca and a few other honourable members opposite think that land at \$8,000 to \$10,000 is cheap for young people.

I am quoting the Minister's figures. I do not know why he changed his mind. If \$1,875 a block was not a rock-bottom price, how could he say that \$4,500 to \$6,500 a block were rock-bottom prices? Is it because he is buying off a private developer, or because he does not want to develop this other land he holds as he does not want young people to have land at a reasonable price? Is he protecting the market for the developers? Is he refusing to put the 10,000 blocks of land that he has on the market at the prices he quoted in this answer so that he can protect the high prices being charged by the developers in this State? I would say that that is what he is doing.

Let me go a little further. In the same answer he referred to an average of \$512 for 21 sites. An average of \$512 in September 1973, yet he says on 13 October 1974 that \$4,500 to \$6,500 are rock-bottom prices. Multiply that figure of \$512 by six and we still do not reach his rock-bottom prices of 13 October 1974. He referred to an average of \$1,875 for four sites. His answer continued—

"In regard to (2) it should be realised that some of the sites require extensive development works, others require less costly works while some are fully developed when purchased consequently there is no common acquisition cost."

I agree that there are going to be some development costs associated with this land, but I do not believe that the development costs are going to be six times the amount paid for the land. I do not believe the Minister when he says that he is buying land at rock-bottom prices. He is buying land from developers because he wants to look after the developers, and wants to deny an opportunity to the young people of the State to buy the 10,000 blocks he holds. What does this mean? It means that we have a Minister and a Government that have not only allowed robbery to take place, but have failed to use their own resources to protect that section of the community that requires housing and land.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. I should like the honourable member to withdraw the remark that I allowed robbery

to take place in the dealings of the Queensland Housing Commission. It is offensive to me, and I should like a withdrawal and an apology.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister for Works and Housing says that the statement made by the honourable member for Everton is untrue, and asks for it to be withdrawn.

Mr. N. F. JONES: I will withdraw it, Mr. Lickiss, but let me say this: it means that the Minister and the Government allow the developer to rob young people by charging high prices for land, while the Government sits on land it could develop at a cheaper rate.

Mr. HODGES: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is again telling untruths. This Government has never allowed any of the public to be robbed by anybody at all in this regard. The only occasion on which I have seen robbery taking place was with a member of the A.L.P. who bought a piece of land for \$15,000 and sold it for \$56,000.

Mr. N. F. JONES: Let me summarise some of the things that were said, seeing that the Minister was not in the Chamber. He might be able to take a few more points of order. The summary shows that \$12,000,000 was unexpended by the Queensland Housing Commission. I know the Minister jumped to his feet earlier in the debate today and said that this was not correct, but the figures supplied by the Treasury show that it is near enough. It is 11,000,000-odd dollars—near enough to \$12,000,000.

The Queensland Housing Commission holds approximately 2,255 surveyed sites and 1,976 acres of unsurveyed sites. There are some differences, as I said, between the Minister's letter and the answer he gave to our shadow Minister in this Chamber a few months later. On the average this land could be expected to produce at least four sites to the acre. I am quoting from the Minister's letter. That makes a total of 7,904 sites plus the 2,255 surveyed sites, a grand total of over 10,000 building sites that this Government and this Minister have sat on while the developers have charged high prices to people, young and old, who tried to buy land on which to build homes. The amount of land held is more than double the 4,426 allotments that would be expected to be developed at Springwood when it is completed by 1977.

The Minister has been making statements in the Press claiming that he needs money from the Federal Government to purchase more land. It should be clear—and it is clear—that any person in this State, young or old, who cannot gain reasonable rental accommodation or cannot afford to purchase a block of land or build a house can lay the blame at the feet of this Government.

The Minister has the land and the Government has the resources, but they have failed to use both for the benefit of the people of this State.

Now let us look at what has happened about the land commission. The Minister has been making statements that he wants extra money to buy this land at what he terms "rock-bottom prices". As I say, let us look at what happened to the land commission in Queensland and its relationship with the Commonwealth Government. The Queensland Government was advised that the Australian Government had made available \$2,500,000 and negotiations were commenced with the Queensland Government on this basis. However, a clear understanding was given to the Queensland Government that expenditure up to \$7,000,000 would be made in the first year of operation of a land commission or its equivalent. But this Government failed to set up a land commission—and it must be remembered that this figure had been referred to publicly by Sir Gordon Chalk. In fact, Sir Gordon had quoted a figure of \$21,000,000 over three years.

Because there was no agreement with the Queensland Government on the establishment of a land commission by the end of the financial year 1973-74, only a nominal figure of \$1,000,000 was budgeted for in 1974-75. In other words, because this Government refused to co-operate with the Federal Government it denied this State \$21,000,000 for land acquisition.

Mr. RAE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member is quite wrong in saying that we have refused this amount of money. We have done nothing of the sort. We are still negotiating with the Commonwealth Government, but we are negotiating on our terms which are simply that we will have the right of freehold and not leasehold as is the determination of the Federal Government at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. N. F. JONES: It is a pity that the Ministers are so sensitive tonight. If the Minister for Lands will remain seated and wait for a few minutes, I will tell him what he is doing.

Mr. Rae: He does not know his "ekker".

Mr. N. F. JONES: I was good enough to get the Minister on his feet to call a point of order. He is so sensitive because the facts are very clear. There was no agreement with the Queensland Government on the establishment of a land commission. I notice that the Minister is not denying that. By the end of the 1973 financial year only the nominal sum of \$1,000,000 was budgeted for in the 1974-75 Budget. The reason why only \$1,000,000 was allowed for was that the State Government had failed to take advantage of the offers that

had previously been made and thereby denied this State the advantages to be gained from a larger sum of money.

It has been made clear to the Queensland Government that there is a contingency that will allow the Australian Government to make available up to \$7,000,000 in the 1974-75 financial year, provided agreement is reached. Because the State Government had not previously reached agreement with the Commonwealth, the State was denied the use of this money. It had available to it another \$21,000,000, which could have been used to relieve unemployment.

The Australian Government is willing to discuss at any time with the Queensland Government all the details of the establishment of a land commission or its equivalent. A similar body is working very well in South Australia. As I say, the Queensland Government has failed to reach agreement because of its petty, narrow, State-minded outlook.

I will repeat this so that the Minister will not need to jump up and take another point of order. I think he said the Queensland Government was discussing it with the Commonwealth Government. The Australian Government is willing to discuss at any time with the Queensland Government the full details of a land commission or its equivalent. Considerable discussion has been held, and negotiations are considered to be at an advanced stage. If this is so, why did the Queensland Government not use the money that was available?

I turn now to education. At this stage, whilst the Federal Government is increasing expenditure on education it is doubtful whether the State Government has taken full advantage of the extra funds being made available by the Commonwealth. The Queensland Government is playing petty politics at the expense of the children of the State. As an illustration of the Government's petty action in relation to children, I point to a school in a fast-growing area of Brisbane, with over 1,200 students crammed into seven tin sheds, or demountables, and 14 classrooms. The classes are oversized. The remainder of the school buildings are of the old type that were built some 20 years ago, and are urgently in need of paint and repair. They constitute a fire hazard. Apart from this, the teachers at the school are forced by the Education Department to work under shocking industrial conditions.

I warn the Minister for Education and the Government that one of these days the State will be faced with a tragedy and loss of life as a result of the failure of the Government to protect students and teachers who are housed in these old buildings that are nothing more than fire traps. Up till now the Government has been blessed with good luck in that the fires that have occurred have caused damage only to buildings. The reason is that the majority of these fires have broken out after school hours or late at night.

Anyone who witnessed the fire at the Grovely State School will realise the intensity of the blaze and the complete destruction caused by it. The fire in the old wooden building would have destroyed the school in a very short space of time if it had not been for the dedication and quick action of the fire brigade. But what would have happened if the fire had occurred during school hours?

The Government has neglected to take remedial action at existing schools. Furthermore, in the construction of new schools the Works Department is not required to meet the standards laid down by the city council. State schools are not constructed under the Brisbane City Council by-laws that cover the fire-proofing of the lower floors of multi-storey buildings.

It must be obvious to all that the Government is placing children in a dangerous situation in new schools that are not built in conformity with the Brisbane City Council by-laws that protect the general public against fire risks.

The Premier has tried to justify the Government's neglect by claiming that fire drill is conducted at State schools and that escape stairs are appropriately located. He added that the Works Department had conducted a special review of fire risks and that appropriate steps were being taken. He could not give a list of the places or of what works had been carried out. I was not interested in the Premier's attempts to justify the position. I wanted to see some action taken by the Government to remove fire risks.

I asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities further questions about the so-called special review of possible fire risks. He claimed it commenced in July 1968, and that the necessary works were completed progressively. But, again, he could not give the number of schools.

In 1973, following destruction of a number of schools by fire, the Government decided to conduct a survey of schools connected to a reticulated water supply. When I asked the Minister a question in 1973—five years after he commenced the special review—he could not give details of how the mains from the schools connected to a reticulated water supply. I always believed that water was one of the main weapons used by the fire brigade in fighting fires. I sought further information from the Minister on how many State schools have located within the school grounds one or more hydrants served by at least a 3-inch main. He stated that fire hydrants are not usually located within school yards; in other words, no school has a hydrant in the school yard.

Let us look at this Government's planning, or, should I say, lack of planning. A community council should be set up comprising local p. and c. representatives, Teachers' Union members, the local alderman and State and Federal members representing

areas, should be set up. The council should meet to discuss where a school is to be erected or where major works are to be carried out at existing schools. It should be called together particularly when a site is being selected for a new school development.

The Education Department claims that it carries out a survey prior to selecting a site for a school, or, for that matter, deciding to construct a new school. Despite claims that a survey was undertaken by the Education Department, no teachers, parents, or other interested persons have ever been interviewed by any person involved in taking a survey, let alone somebody from the Education Department.

Mr. Frawley: That is untrue.

Mr. N. F. JONES: In a minute I shall show that it is true.

Recently, the Education Department and the Works Department decided to construct a new school in the Everton Park area. One of the reasons for constructing the new school was to relieve the overcrowding at the Everton Park State School. The proposed school is needed to cater for the area in which it will be constructed, and it is to be built by the commencement of the 1975 school year. The Education Department claimed that its survey showed that the new school would assist in overcoming the overcrowding at the Everton Park State School. That claim is not true. I do not believe that the Education Department or the Works Department engaged in any survey at all. Facts gathered by interested persons show that most of the new students would come from an area adjacent to the present school, and that no relief for this school would be afforded by the construction of a new school. I might add that this Government does not have any evidence to support its contention.

If the department had genuinely wanted to relieve the position at the primary school, the information I am about to outline would have been sought by it. Neither the Works Department nor the Education Department tried to gather any information concerning the number of pupils coming from any area to attend the new school. A survey taken by people in the area shows very clearly that the largest number of pupils will come from an area very close to Everton Park. About 450 children from directly behind the Everton Park primary school would attend the school. The families with the 1,200 pupils attending the school were asked how many of their children would be prepared to enrol at the new school when constructed. From the area closest to where it is to be constructed only nine children were indicated as prospective pupils. What we have at the moment is a Government intending to build a school, and using that school as an excuse for relieving overcrowding at the Everton Park State School. It had no facts before it. It is playing politics with the children who are to attend that school.

It amazes me that the Government allows an overcrowded school of 1,200 pupils with seven demountables—14 classrooms—two placed within 10 yards of the toilet. It allows the children of this school to be crammed into tin sheds and fails to make a survey or to gather any information. It just decides to build another school somewhere else and claims that that will relieve the position at the Everton Park State School when in fact there is no basis for the claim.

A number of lies have been told about the Everton Park State School. I wrote to the Minister for Works and Housing some time ago. In his reply he indicated that land was to be bought adjacent to the Everton Park Primary School to relieve overcrowding. When I checked with the owner of the land after that clear indication from the Minister, I was told that only a short conversation had been held with a member of one Government department. In other words, no indication had been given that a purchase was to be made and no indication as to the amount of money that would be paid. So I had a letter from the Minister with details about the purchase of land to relieve overcrowding in the school that were completely untrue. I refer to the Minister for Works and Housing.

Mr. Alison: I don't suppose you have the departmental viewpoint?

Mr. N. F. JONES: I certainly do, and it seems to me that the Minister for Education is completely dictated to and dominated by some of the heads of his department. That becomes clear from some of the statements that have been made.

Some time ago I asked questions in the House about the interview and assessment of children by the guidance branch. I subsequently made a statement that there should be an increase in the staff. Who do honourable members think answered the statement? Not the Minister for Education, but the Director of Special Education Services—a Mr. Berkeley, I think his name is. He said that my statement was off the beam. What he did not know was that the facts and figures contained in that statement were taken from an answer by the Minister for Education. It follows that Mr. Berkeley implied either that the Minister for Education told untruths in the House and did not supply correct information in answers to questions or that the Minister did not know what he was talking about. He denied the points I made in the statement. He said they were not correct, though those points were advanced by the Minister in answer to my question in the House.

I asked the Minister about the number of people employed by the guidance branch for interview and assessment. He said that 2,394 children were awaiting examination by the 15 officers in the Guidance and Special Education Branch. What did Mr. Berkeley say? He said that the figures were not correct.

So the Minister for Education says one thing in the House and the Director of Special Education Services outside the Chamber says something else. Either the Minister should talk to the people in his department and obtain the correct information from them or, if his directors are to make statements and attack members of Parliament, he should ensure that their statements are correct.

If information about the Everton Park school had been sought by the department, I believe it would have known the statement that the new primary school to be constructed would relieve overcrowding at the Everton Park primary school was incorrect. However, no attempt was made to gather the information so that reasoned judgment could be formed on whether another school ought to be constructed.

While the Government allows children to attend school in tin sheds and old buildings that are fire traps, allows people to be robbed by hungry landlords, destroys houses and builds freeways for the motor-car, cries poor mouth and wants more money from the Federal Government, the Premier spends \$600,000 on a new aircraft without calling tenders. What public notice was given of that purchase. Only a Press statement to the people of Queensland! The Government has no money for relief of overcrowding in schools or to remove some of the injustices it has created. It is wrong to have priorities such as that.

Who made the decision to purchase the aircraft? Who sold it to the Premier? Who were the experts with the special expertise? Who decided that the aircraft was a reasonable or correct purchase for the State? Who demonstrated the plane to the experts? How long did the demonstration take? How many days were taken to decide to spend that amount of money? How many companies were asked to include comparable aircraft in the demonstration? How many other companies were asked to supply details of an aircraft for purchase by the Government?

I can state clearly that no other aircraft was inspected and that no expert compared the performance of this type of aircraft with that of any other. I have not the expertise to compare aircraft, so I asked some experts to compare the aircraft purchased by the State—a Kingair 200—with the Merlen 111A. I believe it is important that that comparison be recorded, because it shows that the Premier either did not receive any advice or did not take notice of any advice he was given.

The first comparison should be of prices. The Merlen 111A, equipped to a standard similar to that of the Kingair 200, is 10 per cent lower in price. The Kingair 200 costs \$680,000, the Merlen 111A \$598,960.

The experts reported—

“Design—The M3a is a proven design going back several years but the K200 is a new one—at this stage unproven—and no

doubt with the normal design bugs inherent in any new design.

"The M3a is a fail safe design as opposed to the safe life technique used with the K200. This means that major structures of the M3a can fail but that the aircraft is safe to operate until the next inspection period when the failure will be detected. On the other hand the K200 with its safe life design gives vital components a 'life' at which time they must be replaced or repaired, etc."

Mr. FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. Is the honourable member allowed to read a letter word for word in his speech?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no valid point of order.

Mr. N. F. JONES: The Premier can read "Hansard" tomorrow to see what he missed out on when he went ahead and purchased the aircraft from his mates.

They continued—

"Systems—All main systems of the M3a are at least duplicated and in some cases triplicated e.g. the undercarriage can be lowered by three separate means.

"In relation of the systems of both aircraft the M3a is a scaled down airliner while the K200 is an enlarged general aviation aircraft.

"Fuel—The M3a carries 697 pounds more fuel than the K200 and burns less per hour (at 20,000 ft. the difference is 100 lbs. per hour). Consequently the M3a has a greater range and areas that have no regular supply of Avtur can be visited without the necessity of an intermediate service stop, its long range allowing the M3a to carry return fuel. In fact a M3 has flown from San Antonio in Texas to Cologne in Germany with only one refueling stop. It flew a total distance of 5421 miles at an average speed of 322 miles per hour.

"Engines—The M3a is fitted with AiResearch engines as opposed to the K200's Pratt & Whitneys. The AiResearch have a life of 4000 hours between overhauls compared with the P & Ws 3000 hours. The P & Ws tend to lose output during their life due to their compressor becoming less efficient whereas the AiResearch engines do not."

These details should be recorded in "Hansard" because I do not believe the Government attempted to look at any other plane before making the purchase.

They concluded by saying—

"Cabin systems—The M3a has a higher pressurisation capability than the K200 i.e. the system can maintain the cabin at sea level pressure to an aircraft altitude of 16,800 feet but the K200 is only capable of maintaining it to 13,800 feet.

"The K200 has only a freon type air-conditioning system with the pump on one engine only. The M3a has cooling turbines and air bleeds on each engine for better more efficient airconditioning."

The K200 obviously was designed to compete directly with the M3a, so they are similar in performance, the only major difference being, as stated earlier, the range and the cabin pressurising and air-conditioning systems. In addition, the take-off and landing distances required for the K200 are greater than those required for the M3a.

The industry reports that, with that in mind, one wonders why the decision to purchase the K200 was taken without consideration of any other aircraft available with similar or better price and performance. Not only the industry wonders; the people of Queensland also wonder.

Mr. AHERN (Landsborough) (9.46 p.m.): In the present economic climate, the Treasurer is to be commended on his Financial Statement. It is an excellent Budget, and he has not succumbed to the temptation to increase costs generally, as other State Governments have done. The Budget recognises the inflationary pressures present in Australia today, and the Government has wisely decided to carry the added costs of railway operations and general increases in costs in a number of service areas. It realises that increases would only add to the fires of rampant inflation that are raging in this country, and it has decided to tailor its expenditure to the means at its disposal.

Certainly mineral royalties are a major feature of the Budget. They have helped to balance it, and they have shown the wisdom of mineral development in this State. Royalties have been increased to such an extent that they will provide approximately \$37,900,000, and they have helped Queensland to become the most favoured State in Australia in almost every field of taxation. That is a great tribute to the Government.

There have, of course, been big problems for Governments and the community in general to face, and they have been referred to during this debate. There is the present gross economic irresponsibility of the Federal Government. In a number of areas, it seems to be blundering along creating great problems for itself, the State Governments, and the country generally. The present situation is that there is no money and no confidence in the economy. This is creating serious problems for the State Government, and it will create similar problems for the Federal Government, too.

The Federal Government, through its Reserve Bank policy, has deliberately created tight liquidity, and it has been very slow to relax its restrictions. Allocations to the States, and also to local government loan programmes, have deliberately been cut back by the Federal Government. The tariff reductions of 25 per cent have finally had the effect of creating a gross surge of money out

of the country, and this has added to the liquidity problem. The situation now being faced is one that cannot be overcome quickly. The credit squeeze will be with us for some considerable time, and in the short term State and Federal Governments will be able to do little about the stagflation that is being produced. That is very much to be regretted.

The Treasurer therefore had immense difficulty in bringing down a reasonable Budget. The Federal Government has also pursued a policy of gross antagonism towards, and straight-out abuse of, the private sector. This, too, has created great problems for the present and the future. That was the economic climate in which the Treasurer approached the preparation of the Budget.

I do not intend tonight to encompass the entire area covered by the Budget. All I want to do is highlight briefly a couple of points that I think are worthy of consideration. The first concerns the roads programme, which is a great problem area in Queensland and, indeed, throughout the nation.

We are providing for an 11.3 per cent increase in expenditure by the Main Roads Department. This is very good. It will increase expenditure from \$74,300,000 to \$82,600,000. But let us face it: in this industry inflation is running at more than 20 per cent. Last year we increased main roads expenditure by 5 per cent. Our road programme is being cut to ribbons by inflation. It is one area that we ought to be very concerned about.

This Government has done a great job throughout the length and breadth of the State in providing bitumen-surfaced roads for a great number of people. Unfortunately, in the last couple of years inflation has crippled the programme. This year we have had Federal Minister Jones compounding the difficulties we faced. The Commonwealth aid for roads programme was presented to us—discussed not, but presented. Taking into account the inflation experience in the industry, I say that the quantum of Commonwealth aid moneys across the board is not as much per annum as under the old scheme.

When we consider the malicious categories that were thrust ponderously upon us—national highways, export roads, beef roads and so on were dedicated within the Vote provided for us—we find that our programmes for rural arterial road systems have been cut in half. Is it any wonder that local authorities throughout the State are complaining bitterly? Thank heavens the Main Roads Department has been in a position to say, "We will cushion the effects, wherever we can, of this stupid policy in relation to Commonwealth aid moneys for roads." But we still have the situation that inflation is cutting down the effects of at least 10 years of our good record in assisting people in remote areas of Queensland.

We have somewhere between 20 and 30 per cent inflation experience in the industry, but we are able to increase expenditure by

only 11.3 per cent this year. Last year it was 5 per cent. We are going out the back door. The Commonwealth aid programme compounded the problems. We have to do something about this in future. We have to allocate a great deal more money for roads in various categories. At this stage we have recognised that it is not feasible to increase motor vehicle registration fees, but they may have to be increased when the inflation experience slows down a little. Our main roads construction and maintenance programmes cannot exist in the present situation. They must go out the back door if we do not do something further in the very short term.

The other area I want to briefly canvass is housing. This subject has been raked over continuously in the debate. The honourable member for Everton made some ponderous remarks about it a few minutes ago. Clearly, increased land costs, higher interest rates and increased costs in the construction industry have shot to pieces the housing policies that have existed in this country. That is a fact of life.

Mr. R. E. Moore: All in two years.

Mr. AHERN: Within a very short period of time, anyway. Today young people cannot afford to take advantage of the offer of building societies to advance 95 per cent of the valuation of the house and land. The public sector cannot afford to take over the whole housing programme in Australia. The Queensland Housing Commission cannot expect to provide all housing in future. Unfortunately, throughout the State great long queues of people are queuing up at Housing Commission offices applying for Housing Commission houses. A few years ago many of these people would not have thought of doing so and did not need to line up at the Queensland Housing Commission, because building societies, banks and so on were able to provide an excellent service. That is not on today.

The housing policy has been shot to pieces, and I ask the Government, within the limited power available to it, to review the situation and perhaps lengthen the terms of loans. Let us look at the prospect of gearing the repayments on borrowings to a person's income in the early years of a loan. Let us look at other ways as well, because we had a very proud policy in Queensland that left us with the best programme of home-ownership in Australia if not in the world. Now we are going backwards because of the incredible policies that the Federal Government has been implementing. We have to do something about it and I again ask the Government, with the limited powers we have, to look at the problem.

I want to say something now about the Narangba development. This is near my area and it has been the subject of some public comments, including references tonight. It is certainly not the best concept to provide

cheap accommodation, at least for young people. If we have money for this type of project and if we believe philosophically that the Government should be buying up land and developing it—and that is what the Federal Labor Government wants—the Narangba proposal is totally wrong. We should be looking at the marginal benefit of adding to towns such as Redcliffe, Caboolture and Caloundra which already have infrastructures, with water schemes already provided, sewerage schemes already connected—

Mr. R. E. Moore: Shopping centres.

Mr. AHERN: And shopping centres.

The marginal gain in these places would be much greater, but the Federal Government wants something about which it can say, "This is ours." I suppose it will put a great big monument on it. It might even be called "Urenville" or "Cairns County" or something like that. A whole new infrastructure will have to be built for "Urenville" at Narangba and the number of allotments that will be provided there is probably half the great number that would be provided marginally in areas such as Redcliffe and the other places I have mentioned. I really think we should give some consideration to this matter.

The honourable member for Everton spoke about the establishment of a land commission. He said that we would not co-operate in constituting a land commission. Mr. Lickiss, you know very well that we have had a Land Administration Commission in Queensland for 25 years and all the Commonwealth needed to do was come up here and co-operate with us. The Land Administration Commission is doing in my electorate at this point of time the type of development the Commonwealth wants—and to good effect.

The honourable member also spoke about providing cheap land for housing. He does not realise that with the conditions that are imposed by local authorities today and authorised by this Assembly, it would cost something like \$4,500 an allotment to bring it to saleable condition. If we want to assess the true facts of the situation, Lord Mayor Clem Jones is selling allotments in the city of Brisbane for \$12,000. So his concept of providing cheap land in Brisbane is right out the back door as far as I am concerned.

The honourable member, in his argument, confused raw land with developed land. We all know that he is able to confuse a situation very quickly and handle statistics in such a way as to confuse everyone. He spoke also of developers, labelling them as robbers. I want to make it very clear that the developers in my area are partners. Developers accept a considerable risk in their developments and some of them are at present going broke in various areas in Queensland. This is a risk area, and co-operatively they are playing a very legitimate part in the over-all programme of providing housing for the community. This type of

thing should be encouraged. We certainly should not brand the developers with an arbitrary term like "robbers".

I turn now briefly to the Treasurer's Budget proposals for local government. He has given earnest consideration to the needs of local authorities. He has said, wisely, that he will review the subsidy scheme. That news is welcome, because such a review is needed. Although the system that exists has served us well, it has led to confusion and problems. For example, one local authority in its total sewerage scheme might make extensions that are approved as being eligible for a certain subsidy; but once it goes outside the terms of approval the subsidy is not paid. This causes many political problems as well as confusion. I think it would be better to provide a more equitable working basis for the scheme.

The Treasurer said also that he would provide approximately \$5,000,000 by way of grants to local authorities. This information, too, is welcome, because the State Government is in an ideal position to know the problems of local authorities. Three Government departments are working in the area of local government, determining the priorities, and they are doing a good job. If anyone is to provide grants to local authorities, the State Government is in the best position to do so. The Federal Local Authorities Grants Commission money should be given to our grants commission to disburse, because all that the members of the Federal Grants Commission did when they came to Queensland with their brief cases was make gross errors. They remained here for about a fortnight and in that short time presumed to try to assess the needs of 131 local authorities. Those in my area were wiped completely.

Mr. R. E. Moore: When they got a sun-tan they went home.

Mr. AHERN: It would be a joke if it were not so serious.

As I say, the local authorities in my electorate missed out completely, and they deeply resent it. If indeed there are any terms of reference set down for the commission, I am sure no-one could understand them. As I say, the State Government is in the best position to implement a grants scheme.

The Treasurer added that he would be allocating another \$45,000,000 by way of loans to local authorities. This is an excellent proposal and one that will provide us with additional money at a time when local authorities are in urgent need of assistance. I ask the Treasurer to keep these matters under review, because the situation changes continually, sometimes for the worse.

I refer briefly to State succession duty. In his Financial Statement the Treasurer said that from this tax the State will receive \$22,000,000. In the past this tax has been described in many ways. It has

been claimed to be a tax on widows; it has been condemned as a mean tax and it has been described as a tax on death. It is a most hated tax. The position is that in its recent Budget the Commonwealth Government instituted a most malicious and snide form of increased probate duty. It said that capital gains tax will apply at the point of death and that death will constitute a sale. This will almost cripple anyone with any assets at all, and we must do all in our power to prevent the imposition of this vicious tax.

Mr. Bjeike-Petersen: They are highway robbers.

Mr. AHERN: They certainly are.

In view of the Federal Government's action we should introduce a new tax to replace probate tax. I say that because I do not like the tax and because there is a better way of collecting \$22,000,000.

Road permit fees are another form of tax that vitally affects National Party members. The Treasurer said that the State collects \$7,300,000 in this field. This tax is paid by very few people, and mainly by those living in remote areas. It does not affect residents of Brisbane. It affects some people very significantly while affecting others not at all. It is a sectional tax. The Federal Government has compounded the inequity by abolishing the fuel subsidy. People in remote areas are again being hit very severely. We should look at this form of tax, which raises \$7,300,000, in the light of the Federal Government's decision to remove the fuel concession.

Probate tax and road tax combined yield about \$30,000,000. If I were preparing the Budget I would institute a tax of 5c per gallon on fuel to replace both probate tax and road tax. About 600,000,000 gallons of fuel are used annually in Queensland. A tax of 5c per gallon would yield about \$30,000,000. Those two sectional taxes could be abolished and the fuel tax substituted. It would be paid by virtually all people in a fair and even way. At the same time, on world standards, fuel would remain relatively cheap.

The impact of the tax would be inflationary, but the other two taxes are also inflationary. Petrol stations and outlets would have to be licensed and, to some extent, outlets would have to be restricted. The imposition of this tax in place of the other two would be a sensible move. I strongly advocate it, and ask the Government to look into it.

In today's circumstances our State Budget was very impressive. I congratulate the Treasurer on being able to introduce such a marvellous Budget. No other State in Australia has been able to match the wonderful job he has done or come anywhere near it.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at 10.9 p.m.