

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 1974**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

## WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 1974

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. J. E. H. Houghton, Redcliffe) read prayers and took the chair at 11 a.m.

### PAPERS

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

#### Reports—

Queensland Institute of Medical Research, for the year 1973–74.

Queensland Radium Institute, for the year 1973–74.

Director, Department of Children's Services, for the year 1973–74.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Report of the Perpetual Trustees Australia Limited for the year 1973–74.

#### Orders in Council under—

The Co-operative and Other Societies Act of 1967.

The State Electricity Commission Acts, 1937 to 1965.

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

#### Regulations under—

Elections Act 1915–1973.

Children's Services 1965–1973.

The Regional Electric Authorities Acts, 1945 to 1964.

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

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### SUPREME COURT REGISTRY DELAYS ON WINDING-UP PETITIONS

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (11.4 a.m.): During the course of the last week, serious allegations have been made concerning the registry of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the lodging of petitions for the winding-up of a number of companies. While these matters do not come under my direct control, I have taken steps to have an investigation made so that I can inform honourable members of the true position.

The claim that "delays in Supreme Court administration are allowing directors to loot the assets of failing Queensland companies" is not correct. A conference has been held between the President of the Bar Association, the President of the Law Society, the Chief Justice and the Registrar of the Supreme Court to discuss these matters, and I am

informed that misunderstandings or difficulties which appear to have arisen will be satisfactorily resolved. I therefore assure honourable members, and the people of Queensland, that there is absolutely no cause for alarm with respect to the claims which were given prominence last week.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

#### LIQUIDATION OF K. D. MORRIS & SONS PTY. LTD.

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

How much money has the State Government Insurance Office loaned to K. D. Morris & Sons Pty. Ltd. and will further funds from this source be used as a statesman-like step to avoid complete collapse of this company?

*Answer:—*

"I would refer the Honourable Member to my answer yesterday to a question asked by the Honourable Member for Yeronga. However, I can add that last evening I had a further conversation with the provisional liquidator (Mr. Rees) and he informed me of very satisfactory progress towards an understanding between the company and the various creditors, plus an understanding with the company's bankers, and he was hopeful that a method of operation would be possible whereby all work would continue, and there would not be any major upset involving retrenchment of employees."

(b) **Mr. Newton**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Works,—

(1) How many State Government contracts are at present being carried out by K. D. Morris and Sons Pty. Ltd. for his department?

(2) In what areas are the contracts being carried out and what is the nature of the projects?

(3) What was the tender price accepted for each project and what progress payments have been made to date?

(4) What assistance can be given to the firm for an extension of time to complete the projects, without any harm to nominated subcontractors accepted for the projects?

Answers:—

(1) "Nineteen."

(2 and 3)—

" Name of Project	Work	Accepted Tender Price	Progress Payments to Date including Variations and Progressive Adjustment for Rise and Fall
		\$	\$
Seven Hills Technical College .. ..	Erection of Art School Stage III .. ..	318,724.00	188,101.00
Allenstown State School .. .. .	Erection of new Library .. .. .	67,193.00	63,710.83
Allenstown .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	99,661.00	106,492.36
Mount Isa .. .. .	Erection of Police Station .. .. .	345,720.00	345,677.57
Barkly Highway .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	116,590.00	15,945.20
Woollooin/Warilda Childrens Home ..	Erection of new Dormitory .. .. .	384,739.00	157,987.00
Queensland Institute of Medical Research	Erection of new Building at Royal Brisbane Hospital	1,050,938.00	150,857.90
Oxley Police Academy .. .. .	Erection of Dormitory Block I .. ..	252,710.00	276,924.14
Coorparoo State High School .. ..	Erection of three storey Block " E "	328,346.00	281,394.00
Yeppoon National Fitness Camp .. ..	Erection of Huts and Laundry .. ..	110,024.00	Nil
Townsville South .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	74,260.00	16,382.58
Currajong .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	120,800.00	31,446.75
Aitkenvale .. .. .	Erection of Hostel for Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs	205,580.00	185,711.37
Bajool Government Chemical Laboratory	Construction of Magazines .. ..	159,612.00	156,352.63
Vincent .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	106,120.00	87,491.50
Oonoonba Animal Health Station .. ..	Erection and Completion of new Laboratory	585,650.00	205,429.01
Mount Isa State High School .. ..	Erection and Completion of Administration and Library Block	271,250.00	273,543.30
Aitkenvale .. .. .	Erection of Pre-School .. .. .	123,940.00	9,165.88
Rockhampton North State High School	Erection of Science Block Type C73 ..	127,480.00	126,180.35"

(4) "Extensions of time will be considered in accordance with contract provisions and relevant circumstances."

NITROGENOUS FERTILISER SUBSIDY FOR SUGAR INDUSTRY

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

As the sugar industry is the largest single user of nitrogenous fertiliser in Queensland and the payment of the subsidy on this type of fertiliser is essential to maintain the lowest possible price to the consumer, will he ensure that every assistance is given to the industry in any submission put to the Industries Assistance Commission for retention of the subsidy?

Answer:—

"Yes. Every possible facility is being made available by my department to assist all industry groups, not only the sugar industry, in the drafting of submissions to the Industries Assistance Commission for the retention of the nitrogenous fertiliser subsidy. In addition, officers of my department will be presenting evidence direct to the commission on behalf of the State's rural industries in general. This will supplement the evidence to be submitted by the respective industry groups."

COMMONWEALTH-STATE SUGAR AGREEMENT

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

Has he received any advice from the Minister for Northern Development as to the result of negotiations concerning the domestic sugar agreement which terminated at the end of September?

Answer:—

"The Commonwealth-State Sugar Agreement of 1969 which was extended to September 30, 1974 by exchange of letters between myself and Dr. Patterson has lapsed. The Queensland Government has continued to make sugar available in Australia at the prices specified in the expired agreement. I have written to Dr. Patterson indicating that in the circumstances I considered it desirable that an early meeting be arranged at which the question of a new agreement could be discussed. I would add that my Director-General has been advised that information prepared by Queensland for Dr. Patterson following our discussions in July last is under examination by the Commonwealth."

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, SARINA; PRE-SCHOOL CENTRES

Mr. Newbery, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) In view of the great progress which is being achieved in the development of pre-school education, what is the estimated

time of completion of the pre-school in Sarina and what is the estimated total cost?

(2) How many children will the school accommodate per day?

(3) What is the procedure for the enrolment of a child?

(4) How many single pre-school units have been completed?

*Answers:—*

(1) "It is anticipated that the Sarina State Pre-school Centre will be completed in readiness for the opening of the 1975 school year. The estimated total cost of the centre is \$138,953.00."

(2) "The centre will cater for 100 children in four groups of 25 each day."

(3) "Announcements concerning enrolment procedures, including the date for the opening of the list, will be inserted in the local newspaper and distributed through the associated school during the first week of the 1975 school year."

(4) "As at October 30, 1974 a total of 118 units have been completed with a further 116 units at various stages of completion."

#### WASTE OF CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT

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

(1) Is he aware that, at a time when many Australian families are reducing the amount of beef purchased because of its cost, vast quantities of edible nutritious cheaper cuts are being thrown out to be ground or boiled down because there is no longer an export market for this type of meat?

(2) What steps can be taken or have been taken to stop this immoral, planned policy of deliberate waste of briskets and parts of the flank or skirt at a time of economic hardship for many in our community?

(3) As this deliberate waste keeps meat prices unnaturally high, will he act in an effort to help pensioners and large families and to promote greater meat sales?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I am aware that certain cuts of meat, such as brisket, are in some instances being ground or boiled down. Such cuts are not in popular demand for local consumption in view of reduced prices prevailing for better class cuts. Their main outlet has always been the export market. Quite frankly, I believe that the brisket is one of the sweetest parts of the beast.

**Mr. Burns:** So do I.

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** If the honourable gentleman could encourage his constituents to eat it and there were a demand for it, I am sure it would not be boiled down to make fertiliser.

*Answers (contd.)—*

"There is no evidence that the cost of beef has caused a reduction of beef purchased for domestic consumption."

(2) "The matter is purely a trading one dictated by the economy in relation to the return to the processor."

"I might add, for the benefit of the honourable member, that the economic hardship in the beef industry is mainly to the producer, not to the consumer."

(3) "The Australian Meat Board is the appropriate body to promote meat sales."

#### MARVIN INDUSTRIES PTY. LTD.

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

(1) Has the Consumer Affairs Bureau received a complaint from an Aspley resident concerning the activities of Marvin Industries Pty. Ltd., Brisbane?

(2) If so, did this complaint concern a door-to-door sale in which the work was commenced without delay to avoid the seven-day cooling-off provision of the Act?

(3) Does Marvin Industries Pty. Ltd. supply the wall-cladding called Benalux, which is also supplied by the group owned by the Festa family?

(4) Who are the principals of Marvin Industries Pty. Ltd. and have they ever had any previous connections with fly-by-night wall-cladding operators and, if so, in what firms or companies?

(5) What steps have been taken to assist the Aspley complainant to achieve justice?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs advises that a complaint has not been received at the Consumer Affairs Bureau."

(2) "See (1)."

(3) "From information obtained it appears that Marvin Industries Pty. Ltd. are the distributors of 'Benlux' which is described as heavy duty paint."

(4) "The directors of Marvin Industries Pty. Ltd. are Vincenzo Festa and Maria Festa both of 129 Roghan Road, Boondall. They are also the directors of V. & N. Home Improvers Pty. Ltd. In neither case do the objects of these companies make any specific reference to wall cladding of homes or any similar activity."

(5) "See (1)."

CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

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

(1) Is he aware that parents and Grades 10 and 12 students were considerably annoyed last year at his department's insistence that all Grades 10 and 12 students had to attend school up to a date nominated by the department if the students were to be entitled to their leaving certificates, even though, in many instances, students had finished their examinations some time prior to the official finishing date?

(2) Will he ensure that this year it will not be necessary for students in these grades to attend school past the day of their last examination in order to be entitled to the leaving certificate?

Answers:—

(1) "The Department of Education does not control end of semester dates. These are the responsibility of the Board of Secondary School Studies, which is a statutory body completely independent of the Department of Education. There is no justifiable reason for annoyance by parents or students at November 29, 1974 being set as the date for the end of the semester. This date applies to *all* secondary schools in Queensland, and all students in grades 10, 11 and 12 in the State will finish the year on that day. It is not correct to say that students are entitled to Junior and Senior Certificates as soon as formal assessment procedures are completed; nor is it correct to claim that student assessment is completed before the end of any semester—in fact, many schools do not complete their assessment programs until the last days of each semester. Students therefore become entitled to receive the appropriate certificate after the completion of the relevant semester. Hence, there is a requirement for students in grades 10 and 12 and also in grade 11 to attend school until November 29. It would be highly undesirable to allow students to leave school after formal assessment procedures are completed (i.e., written examinations) because the timing of these procedures is such that students could leave schools at varying times. Amongst other things, this could seriously disadvantage many students in their quest for vacation employment."

(2) "It is not intended to make any change to the end of semester date for 1974 for the reasons just stated."

FUNDS FOR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING SOCIETIES

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

(1) When will additional funds be available for co-operative housing societies to help ease the critical housing shortage?

(2) What funds have been made available this year by the Commonwealth Government and what restrictions and conditions has the Commonwealth Government placed on the funds?

Answers:—

(1) "Following a re-assessment of the revolving moneys likely to accrue this year in the Home Builders Account and in the Approved Housing Institutions Advances Account from repayments by societies on earlier loans a further allocation of \$2.6 million will be made to societies within the next week. As a result of discussions in Canberra between State and Commonwealth Housing Ministers on October 11, 1974 a supplementary amount of \$4.2 million will become available to Queensland as soon as legal aspects are in order."

(2) "The initial allocation of new money for societies in Queensland in 1974-75 under the 1973 Housing Agreement was \$6.27 million to which must be added the proposed supplementary amount of \$4.2 million which I have mentioned. The main restriction is a means test which requires that to be eligible for a loan from these funds a society member may not be in receipt of an income in excess of 95 per cent. of average weekly earnings per employed male unit during the December quarter as declared by the Commonwealth Statistician. This currently means a maximum permissible income of \$113.90 plus \$2 for each child in excess of two children."

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS

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

In view of the current high unemployment situation and the concern of parents and students regarding job opportunities for this year's school-leavers, what additional efforts has he made through the Apprenticeship Board and other agencies to encourage employers to employ full complements of this year's school-leavers?

Answer:—

"There always has been and still is close liaison between my Department of Industrial Affairs and the Commonwealth Employment Service through the Apprenticeship Promotion Committee for maximum efforts to be undertaken to encourage employers to employ their full complement of apprentices. This is evidenced by the fact that as at June 30, 1974, of the 128,767 apprentices in training in Australia 22,253 were in Queensland. Thus it can be seen that although Queensland has only 14.32 per cent. of the Australian population it has 17.28 per cent. of the apprentice population which is a better

record than any other State. The general downturn in the economy as a result of socialist oriented policies from Canberra will mean of course that job opportunities for school leavers this year will be restricted. The remedy of course is to reverse the present Canberra policies."

#### REGIONAL OFFICERS, STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

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

(1) Have applications recently been called through the *Police Gazette* for the positions of Regional Co-ordinators and Liaison Officers for the re-formed State Emergency Service, such applications to be from first-class sergeants of the Queensland Police Force who wish to be seconded to the State Emergency Service?

(2) Were applications also called through the Press and the *Queensland Government Gazette* so that other members of the Public Service or suitably trained persons in the community, such as those in the old Civil Defence Organisation or ex-servicemen, could also apply?

(3) What special qualifications do first-class sergeants of police have which suit them for this job?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes. However, the positions were advertised as District Operations Officer."

(2) "No."

(3) "Police officers in a day to day situation are actively involved in minor and major emergencies and disasters. Together with other statutory requirements in the community. Police sergeants, first class, through years of endeavour and training in the police force have acquired the necessary experience and skill to efficiently carry out the administrative, liaison, co-ordination and operational duties of the position. These sergeants 1/C are potential district inspectors and as such they will have operational control during emergencies."

#### DELANEY'S CREEK STATE SCHOOL

**Mr. Frawley**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

Does his department propose to close Delaney's Creek State School at the end of this school year? If so, will pupils from that school be compelled to enrol at Wamuran or Woodford?

*Answer:—*

"My department has no plans at present to close Delaney's Creek State School."

#### REDCLIFFE CITY TOWN PLAN

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

(1) Will approval of the Redcliffe City Town Plan be expedited?

(2) What has been the cause of the delay in the examination of the plan?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The delay in finalising approval of the plan was due initially to inadequate town planning staff within the Department of Local Government, and subsequently to the need for the Redcliffe City Council to take action to prepare and adopt a town planning by-law, ancillary to the town plan, which would adequately control high density land uses. It is understood that the by-law making procedure in respect of such by-law is now complete, and that the by-law will be submitted to the department shortly."

#### BOAT RAMP AT EVANS LANDING, WEIPA

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

(1) Has the boat ramp at Evans Landing, Weipa, been completed? If not, when will it be completed?

(2) Will he have a survey made in this area for the purpose of providing another protected boat ramp to accommodate the ever-increasing number of boats, which help overcome the isolation of the area?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The boat ramp at Evans Landing has been in use for the last four weeks but the lower slabs will not be placed and the ramp completed until March 1975 when very low tides occur. The ramp is most popular."

(2) "The future need for boat ramps at Weipa is being kept under constant review."

#### ACTIVITIES OF MR. E. DEERAL, DEPARTMENT OF ABORIGINAL AND ISLAND AFFAIRS

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

(1) Was Mr. Eric Deeral present at a recent conference held in Brisbane?

(2) Where is he employed and what is his actual position?

(3) Is he at present visiting communities and Torres Strait islands and, if so, with whom and for what purpose?

(4) When will he return to his normal work?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) "Mr. Deeral is employed by my Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs, with headquarters at Cairns, as a special roving consultant to Aborigines and Islanders and as an advisor to me as I informed this House on November 15, 1973. He has been to Brisbane several times recently and is currently travelling in northern areas, including the Torres Strait, in the course of his normal and usual duties."

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, ABORIGINES AND ISLANDERS

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

(1) Is he aware of any residents living on communities or on the Torres Strait islands having been advised not to apply for unemployment benefits?

(2) Will he make sure that all chairmen and managers are requested to assist unemployed residents to make applications and comply with the regulations relating to unemployment benefits?

*Answers:—*

(1) "No."

(2) "Chairmen, councillors and departmental officers are well aware of the availability of unemployment benefits and every assistance is granted those wishing to test their eligibility for this as well as all other social security benefits for which they consider they are eligible and have an entitlement. The director of my department has, in fact, made representation to the Commonwealth Department of Social Security on numerous occasions when Aboriginal and Islander applicants have complained of rejections or delays in the grant and payment of unemployment benefits. I would remind the Honourable Member that it was only as a result of strenuous representations made by my Government that Aborigines and Islanders became entitled to full social service benefit payments including unemployment benefits, and indeed were, no doubt, the instigators of benefits being extended to all Aborigines and Islanders throughout Australia. My department will consequently continue to urge any individual who feels that he has an entitlement to make the necessary application and support him in his efforts."

CEMENT SHORTAGE

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

(1) Is he aware of the continuing severe problems being experienced by the building industry as a result of the present cement shortage?

(2) Are any new moves under way to prevent this problem from completely crippling the building industry, which is at present in severe difficulties?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes."

(2) "The current shortage of cement has been largely due to three factors— firstly, industrial unrest at the Darra plant of The Queensland Cement & Lime Co. Ltd.; secondly, the frustrations the company has experienced in its endeavours to extend its manufacturing capacity; and thirdly, the dramatic increase in demand which has occurred in Queensland for cement in recent years. With the current down-turn in the building industry resulting from the application of Commonwealth economic policy, there is already evidence of some lessening in demand. From enquiries I have made, I am satisfied the Company is doing all within its power to overcome the present situation."

TOOWOOMBA BASE HOSPITAL

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

(1) Is he aware of the urgent need to replace old sections of the Toowoomba Base Hospital?

(2) Will he expedite procedures for the approval of plans and finance?

(3) Is he aware of the continuing nuisance caused by smoke from the hospital chimney and what action is being taken to eliminate the nuisance?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) "The Toowoomba Hospitals Board has been given approval to have working drawings and specifications prepared for a new medical block at the Toowoomba Hospital. I am confident that the hospitals board will use every endeavour to expedite the completion of such plans and specifications. The hospitals board has already raised loan finance towards the cost of the project."

(3) "Following on advice received from its consultants and also from the Director of the Air Pollution Control Centre the hospitals board is to carry out further work on the chimney stack at the Toowoomba Hospital after which further tests will be carried out by an officer of the Air Pollution Council."

PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE, SOUTH TOOWOOMBA

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

When will work be completed on the pre-school centre at South Toowoomba and when will it be opened?

*Answer:—*

"This project is programmed for completion mid March 1975, and the opening of the centre is a matter for the Department of Education."

#### TEACHER AIDES

**Mr. P. Wood**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Education,—

(1) As he is aware of the exploitation rates of pay for teacher aides, why has he allowed this situation to continue?

(2) Will he grant an immediate and substantial increase so that teacher aides will receive a just return for their work?

(3) How many teacher aides have resigned from (a) secondary schools, (b) primary schools, (c) school libraries and (d) pre-school centres, since the scheme began?

*Answers:—*

(1) "I do not accept the Honourable Member's statement concerning 'exploitation'."

(2) "The rates of payment for teacher aides are being investigated."

(3) "This information is not readily available as appointments are made in the regions themselves and aides are employed on a part-time basis."

#### MIGRATION OF AUSTRALIANS TO NEW ZEALAND

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

(1) Is he aware that recently a prominent member of the New Zealand Government made a statement that, as there was an unprecedented influx of Australians migrating to New Zealand, the New Zealand Government was planning to introduce legislation to make it more difficult for Australians wishing to enter New Zealand?

(2) Is he aware of any reason why Australians are showing a desire to migrate to New Zealand?

*Answers:—*

(1) "Yes. It is interesting to note that the Prime Minister of New Zealand has drawn attention to the dreadful conditions that prevail in Australia. His comments are outlined in a cutting that I have before me. The comments made by one Labor Prime Minister in relation to the policy of another Labor Prime Minister are very interesting."

(2) "The reason is obvious. There is now a complete lack of confidence at all levels as a result of the policies of the present Commonwealth Government."

**Mr. Tucker** interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The Prime Minister of New Zealand, whose policies are the same as those of the Leader of the Opposition—perhaps his are slightly ahead of those of the honourable gentleman—has said the same thing. Even prominent industrial organisations are turning to South-east Asia for investment opportunities. This fact was revealed in this morning's Press reports concerning M.I.M.

**Mr. Tucker:** You've chased them out of this State.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** The Labor Party's aim is to chase them out of Australia, and by achieving that aim it is creating more unemployment. The Labor Party is the greatest wrecker this nation has ever seen.

*Answers (contd.):—*

"Even prominent industrial organisations are turning to South-east Asia for investment opportunities in preference to persisting in the present unhappy and unhealthy economic climate in Australia. And they cannot be blamed for doing so. As I have said, it all adds up to a complete lack of confidence in the Federal Government and its policies. Australians have no alternative to throwing it out."

#### EFFECTS OF FILM, "THE EXORCIST"

**Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to recent reports regarding the adverse medical effects of the film "The Exorcist" and to the controversy that medical reports were difficult to obtain in this context?

(2) As he may recall my describing this film as being an exercise in terror for profit only, will he initiate a full investigation of the impact of this film on those citizens who have been affected, to include those youngsters who have been counselled by officers of Teen Challenge?

(3) Does the brief of the Film Review Board need to be amended in any way to cope with new evolving problems in the community brought about by this type of film?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) "I am aware of recent Press reports concerning certain alleged adverse affects of the film 'The Exorcist'. It is considered that it would not be feasible for the Department of Local Government to carry out a full investigation of the impact of this film on those citizens who it is claimed have been affected. I will, however, refer the Honourable Members' comments to the Films Board of Review for any action it considers necessary under the *Films Review Act 1974*. In terms of this Act the Board may, if it considers a film to be objectionable within the

meaning of the Act, by its order prohibit the distribution of the film in the State notwithstanding that such film may have been exhibited prior to such order."

**INCREASED MEDICAL BENEFITS REFUNDS**

**Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked The Treasurer,—

(1) As the charges for intermediate and private beds in public hospitals have been increased in the current State Budget and are justifiable in order to cope with escalating costs, what action will he take to persuade the Commonwealth Minister for Social Security to upgrade the allowable medical benefits refunds immediately to a realistic level in line with the complete refund levels which pertain in southern States to public, intermediate and private beds?

(2) By which means could a progressive adjustment of the refunds be organised as Queensland's difficulties with the Minister for Social Security do not appear to pertain to the southern States?

*Answers:—*

(1) "The question of increases in payments by the Medical Benefits Funds in respect of hospital patients fees is one for determination by the Funds and the Commonwealth Department of Social Security. I understand that negotiations are presently proceeding between the parties and that a new scale of benefits is expected to be announced in the near future. In announcing the new scale of charges, the Queensland Government exhibited its desire to assist private hospitals, and the matter is one which now rests with the Commonwealth Government."

(2) "Regarding the Honourable Member's second Question, I do not concede that difficulties with the Minister for Social Services are unique to Queensland. The position is that in the past Queensland has had a low hospital fee structure in comparison with the southern States and the Medical Benefits payments have been correspondingly low. It could be expected that, as a result of the recent increases in State hospital fees, the payments by the Funds will be restored to comparability with those in the south."

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**K. D. MORRIS**, CHAIRMAN OF BUILDERS' REGISTRATION BOARD

**Mr. TUCKER**: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: In view of the current circumstances surrounding K. D. Morris & Sons Pty. Ltd., what effect will these have on Mr. K. D. Morris's continuing as the Chairman of the Builders' Registration Board?

**Mr. HODGES**: At this stage, nil.

**ELECTRICITY SUPPLY REORGANISATION**

**Mr. R. JONES**: I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: What is his attitude to the reorganisation of the electricity supply industry in Queensland? Will he support the concept of the seven regional boards that was upheld by the Minister formerly in charge of his portfolio? As the newly appointed Minister will he reassure staff and employees directly involved in the reorganisation planning?

**Mr. HINZE**: As late as yesterday I had discussions with the Commissioner for Electricity Supply, Mr. Doug Murray. As this is a rather complex, far-reaching proposal, I am quite sure the honourable member for Cairns will appreciate that nothing further can be done about it before the election. It will be considered after the election.

**COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC MEASURES**

**Mr. GUNN**: I ask the Treasurer: Did he hear the recent statement of the Prime Minister that anything done to assist the economy now would take at least six months to have effect? In view of that statement, would it be correct to assume that Australia's present economic chaos could have been prevented by positive Federal Government action several months ago?

**Sir GORDON CHALK**: I would say in reply to the honourable member that, had appropriate action been taken by the Federal Government six to 12 months ago, there would not be the unemployment that presently exists in Queensland and throughout Australia. I believe also that had funds been released earlier by the Reserve Bank, as happened recently, that would have assisted industry to retain its liquidity.

Generally, since the Labor Party assumed power in 1972, inflation has been permitted to increase, causing a drying up of liquidity. In turn, that has affected many business organisations, K. D. Morris & Sons Pty. Ltd. being a prime example of a worth-while construction company carrying out its full responsibilities in a workmanlike way but being strangled by lack of liquidity. I say to the honourable member that I do believe the Commonwealth Government could and should have taken appropriate steps at least 12 months ago to release funds through the Reserve Bank.

The other point is that the Commonwealth Government has over the years been receiving increased income tax because of wage increases. However, those additional funds have been handed out in such a way as not to produce greater productivity. I believe that there should have been a draining off of a considerable amount of the income tax that has been received and that it should have been put into sinking funds rather than

handed out in such a way as not to be productive. I believe that a Liberal-Country Party Government in Canberra would have rectified the situation.

**A.L.P. CALL FOR REFERENDUM TO  
ABOLISH STATE PARLIAMENT**

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I ask the Premier: Has he received any representations from the A.L.P. regarding a motion submitted to the Labor-in-Politics Convention in Cairns by the Murrumba division of the A.L.P. that a referendum be held in Queensland to abolish the Queensland Parliament and place Queensland under Federal control as a Federal territory?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** This is a very relevant question because it is A.L.P. policy. I intend to draw the attention of the people of this State to the fact that the organisation in Queensland known as the A.L.P., which is affiliated and associated with the socialist Australian Labor Party throughout the nation, carried a motion at its convention that its policy is to abolish the State House. The A.L.P. will go to the people and seek endorsement and then abolish this House. These things the people of Queensland are not prepared to accept. I assure the honourable member for Murrumba that that motion carried at the A.L.P. convention will be one of the things to which I will be drawing their attention over the length and breadth of Queensland.

Honourable Members interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I remind honourable members, as I did yesterday, that I will not tolerate interjections from either side of the House while any member is on his feet speaking. I asked for the co-operation of members, and I look for it in that direction.

**Mr. Tucker:** Tell him not to be so provocative.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition under Standing Order 123A.

**Mr. Aikens** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I also warn the honourable member for Townsville South under Standing Order 123A.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I reiterate that if anything is provocative in this State, it is the policy of the A.L.P. It certainly provokes many people.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** That is not our policy.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It was carried at the A.L.P. convention at Cairns and supported by everyone on the benches opposite.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Oh, rubbish! Tell the truth.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It is all very well for the honourable member to call it rubbish. I assure the Leader of the Opposition that I will tell the people of Townsville what the A.L.P.'s policy is. The honourable gentleman may laugh now, but he will not be laughing after the people have had their say.

**ELECTION OF MR. H. HAUENSCHILD TO  
A.L.P. INNER EXECUTIVE**

**Mr. LANE:** I ask the Premier: Has he seen Press reports in the last few days indicating that an official of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, Mr. Harry Hauenschild, was elected to the Inner Executive of the Australian Labor Party, replacing Mr. Tom Chard of the Building Workers' Industrial Union? Does this indicate the growing strength of the Communist Laurie Carmichael, the Federal Secretary of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, and the decline in influence within the Labor Party organisation of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this House, Mr. Newton, who is a mouthpiece for the Building Workers' Industrial Union?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** It is quite obvious it does demonstrate the growing strength of the Communist Party within the Labor movement. Honourable members opposite cannot deny that fact.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Then how did he get there? It is the reason why moderate people such as Mr. Hanlon, Mr. Dean, Mr. Hanson—

**Mr. Sullivan:** Mr. Wallis-Smith.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** Yes, and Mr. Wallis-Smith—are getting out of the party. If they are not getting out now, it will not be long before they have to get out.

**Mr. DEAN:** I rise to a point of order. Did the Premier say that I am a Communist?

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

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I said that, because there are Communists in the organisation to which the honourable member belongs, men of the high integrity of the honourable member would be happy to get out of the A.L.P. I also mentioned the honourable member for Port Curtis, because it would be impossible for him to remain in the A.L.P.

**FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES**

**Mr. HARTWIG:** I ask the Minister for Primary Industries: Can he inform this Parliament if the future outlook for primary industries is as the Prime Minister indicated

when addressing a luncheon in a southern State? As reported in today's "Courier-Mail", he said—

"I want to convince you that the Australian Government has your interests at heart and—given good will and good sense—the future is bright for primary industries."

As thousands of dairymen and beef producers have either left the industry or are threatened with destruction, how does he reconcile the Prime Minister's statement with fact? Can he interpret the statement about good will and good sense pertaining to primary producers at this time?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I inform the House that in my view some questions are far too long. I ask for the co-operation of honourable members in shortening them.

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** It is good to hear the Prime Minister talking about good will and common sense. It is something we have not experienced in the rural sector since his Government took office. The state of primary industries is chaotic. The honourable member for Warrego is a pretty astute businessman. He was well aware of the rural policies that a Labor Government would inflict on people in the rural sector. It may be only a coincidence, but he showed good judgment and got rid of his primary industry interests in the Warrego electorate before he copped the axe.

Let us hope to God that what the Prime Minister is saying will prevail, and that some good sense and good will will be shown by the Commonwealth Government. Never before in my lifetime has there been such a lack of confidence in and antagonism towards the Commonwealth Government as the result of policies inflicted on the people. What has happened is not the fault of people in primary industries.

In my opinion, and in the opinion of so many people in the beef industry, there is no doubt that the collapse of that industry was brought about by the revaluation of the Australian dollar, which forced our best market, Japan, to look to other sources for her supplies. Once the damage has been done, it is very hard to repair it. In the interim, very many people have been hurt financially. Let us hope we can see some common sense and good will on the part of the Federal Government.

ATTENDANCE OF A.L.P. ANTI-ROYALISTS AT FUNCTIONS FOR PRINCE CHARLES

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Premier: Can he inform the House of the names and the number of A.L.P. members of this Parliament who are known to be staunch supporters of the party's policy of abolishing all forms of monarchical government and of establishing Australia as a republic, who were present at the recent functions in Brisbane and fawned on Prince Charles?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I am sure the House would be very interested to have a rundown on honourable members of this Chamber together with their outlook and policy. After being in this Parliament for 27 years and listening to policies enunciated by Labor and by members of this House, it is very easy to sum up exactly who is who and what is what. I am sure that the honourable member for Townsville South, who has been here for three years longer than Sir Gordon Chalk and I, would also have a very clear picture of who is who and what is what.

I suggest we leave this until we are on the hustings. People will then be really interested to know who is on the side of Queensland and who is on the side of the socialists in Canberra. I do not think there will be very many, if any, honourable members opposite who will not be on the side of Canberra.

RAIL FARE CONCESSIONS TO PENSIONERS

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Welfare Services: Following obstructionist tactics by the Federal A.L.P. Minister for Social Services (Mr. Hayden), can he inform the House of what steps must now be taken by unfortunate pensioners who are being hit left, right and centre by the A.L.P., to secure the half-fare concession issued by the Queensland Railway Department?

**Mr. HERBERT:** This attitude of Mr. Hayden's is an example of the complete stupidity that seems to affect several of the Federal Ministers. Up to the change of Government, if a pensioner applied for a rail pass, an arrangement had been made for the officer in my department who handles them to ring the appropriate officer in the Commonwealth Department and ascertain by phone whether or not the person was a pensioner, and the matter could then be settled immediately.

Mr. Hayden has now decided, for some reason beyond my comprehension, that this is an invasion of privacy. Consequently, a pensioner who applies to my office asking for a rail pass has to go around to the Commonwealth Department himself. He cannot send anyone else; he must go himself and get a certificate to inform us that he is in fact a pensioner. The certificate is then presented to the department to enable him to obtain the rail pass.

This means that elderly, sick people and pensioners in need of an urgent pass to get somewhere in a hurry because of an emergency, have to traipse all over town purely and simply because the Federal Minister—it is a ministerial instruction—seems to think there is something wrong with having a Commonwealth officer tell a State officer on the telephone whether or not a person is a pensioner.

## SEWAGE DISPOSAL SCHEME, GOLD COAST

**Mr. D'ARCY:** I ask the Minister for Local Government and Electricity: As he stated in the Gold Coast Press this week that he is against ocean outfall of sewerage, I am wondering how he managed to change his opinion since his answer to me in this Parliament last Friday. Was my advocacy so successful? Now that he is opposed to the disposal of sewage into the streams and ocean on the Gold Coast, what action is he taking to stop the effluent that the Gold Coast City Council is already discharging into those creeks?

**Mr. HINZE:** The honourable member for Albert would know that the disposal of sewage effluent by the Gold Coast City Council has been a matter of great concern to the council for a long period of time. One of the fastest-growing cities in Queensland is being starved for funds by the Commonwealth Government so that we on the Gold Coast find ourselves unable to carry out all the things we would like to do. This week I did make a statement to the effect that I would be using every endeavour to stop the disposal of effluent into the ocean at Currumbin because of the effect it will have on the tourist industry. The matter is still under investigation by the department and the Gold Coast City Council. Reports have been submitted by both the Co-ordinator-General's Department and the Local Government Department, and the contents of those documents are still the subject of discussion. That is the only way I feel I can answer the honourable member's question at this time.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The time allotted for questions has now expired.

## FEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS

## RETURN TO ORDER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Return to an Order made by the House on 1 August last, on the motion of Mr. Wright, showing all payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors during the 1973-74 financial year, stating the names of the recipients and the amounts received separately.

At 12 noon,

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

## SUPPLY

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—ESTIMATES—  
THIRD AND FOURTH ALLOTTED DAYS

(Mr. Wharton, Burnett, in the chair)

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1974-75

JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL

CHIEF OFFICE

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (12.1 p.m.): I move—

“That \$1,664,770 be granted for ‘Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Chief Office.’”

The Estimates for the Department of Justice provide for a real and substantial improvement in the services which the department offers to the people of Queensland. They will ensure that the quality of service which the people rightly demand is adequately provided, and they will further the Government's commitment to bring the law closer to the people.

The effectiveness of the campaign to make people more aware of the services of the Department of Justice, and its subdepartments, is accurately demonstrated by the fact that the work-load of the department in many areas has increased by 30 per cent in the last year. This increase is significantly higher than normal annual growth. The greatest increase has occurred in the administration of the legislation passed by this Parliament.

The “Let's Look at the Law” series of newspaper advertisements has undoubtedly contributed substantially to the increasing public recourse to the services of the Department of Justice. Because of this series and associated campaigns, citizens have a much better appreciation of how laws are made for their convenience and benefit and how they can have ready access to them.

Ultimately, the maintenance of public respect for, and confidence in, the law and the rule of law depends upon its relevance and use to the people it serves. If people can have total confidence in the equality and availability of the law, then our system will remain free from internal challenge.

The laws administered by my department all concern people. Many concern every citizen; some concern particular groups or individuals; but the one common factor in all the laws administered by the Department of Justice is their importance to people. It would be an exercise in futility for the Parliament to make laws for the benefit of people but for those laws to be inoperative or ineffective because people were unaware of their existence or oblivious to their benefits.

The degree of public interest in this campaign has exceeded even our best hopes but demonstrates that people are interested in the law and are prepared to use its services when they are required. The campaign has attracted Australia-wide, and even overseas, interest. In addition, as honourable members may be aware, the “Let's Look at the Law”

series was recently awarded a certificate of merit in the national Hoover Awards for Marketing. I am informed that this was the first occasion on which any Government department in Australia received a Hoover Award. In their comments, the judges made special reference to the fact that the "Let's Look at the Law" series was achieving in a unique way its purpose of creating a better understanding of the role of the law in everyday life.

This series has also helped to inform the community of the role of this Parliament by publicising both new laws and proposed new laws.

My department has also produced a series of informative booklets explaining the operations of major laws such as the Consumer Affairs Act, the Liquor Act, the Legal Assistance Act, the Hire Purchase Act and the Sub-contractors Charges Act. The very considerable public interest in these booklets has more than justified their publication.

During the current financial year, the Government's programme to relate the law to the people—and to give people a better understanding of the activities and services of the Department of Justice—will be pursued with vigour. In this area, Queensland is leading Australia, and we are determined to continue to do so.

I turn now to particular aspects of the Estimates that deserve special mention.

#### Chief Office

The growing public demand for the services of the Department of Justice, coupled with a considerable increase in the number of laws that have to be administered, has placed a substantial additional work-load on the Chief Office.

During the current year greater attention will be given to maintaining efficiency of service, and the strengthening of those sections which are carrying the increased work-load.

There has been a notable increase in the number of representations and requests from honourable members, the professions and the public being received at Chief Office. My Under Secretary has already taken adequate action to ensure that these representations are handled promptly and efficiently. Whenever possible, answers will be provided almost immediately. All representations are to be treated seriously, and will be given the careful and courteous attention that they are entitled to.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Chief Office is the administration of the Trust Accounts Act, which governs the Trust accounts of solicitors, conveyancers and public accountants. As a result of the new Act, there has been a noticeable and welcome improvement in compliance with the requirements of the Act by the professions.

As I have previously indicated, deliberate refusal to comply with the Act will lead to prosecution. Delays in submitting the audited six-months return will not be tolerated.

The Queensland Trust Accounts Act is widely regarded as the best in Australia. The chances of major fraud or misappropriation with respect to trust accounts have been substantially reduced. Citizens who have funds held in trust accounts in Queensland can be confident that their funds are now afforded adequate protection by the Trust Accounts Act.

The legal division has, in recent years, been expanded to meet the tremendous increase in the legislative activity of my department. In the first session of the Fortieth Parliament a record 28 departmental Bills became law, whilst in the second session 33 Bills became law—an all-time record. Queensland has rightfully earned for itself the reputation of being the leader in legislative activity in Australia, and many of our measures, particularly in the field of consumer protection, have been followed in other States and in the Commonwealth Parliament.

Despite the popular belief, the department is almost self-supporting, financially. During the current year, total expenditure by the department and its subdepartments is estimated at a little over \$18,058,000, whilst receipts are estimated to total a little over \$18,020,000.

The accounts section of Chief Office continues to be responsible for the payment of salaries and other expenditure by the department and its 16 subdepartments.

In order to facilitate more efficient operations, and an improvement in the service to the public, a management services branch has been established within Chief Office.

#### Solicitor-General's Office

The growth in crime has placed additional burdens on the Crown Law Office, and particularly the prosecutions section. In order to help relieve the burden—and to give the private profession greater experience—the Government has instituted a system whereby private barristers are commissioned to act as Crown prosecutors in criminal cases. The system has been well received by the legal profession, and it will be continued during the current year.

Consequent upon the appointment of a resident District Court judge at Rockhampton, a resident Crown prosecutor has been appointed to that city.

During the last year an in-depth Public Service Board investigation into the prosecutions section was carried out, and the comprehensive report which resulted is currently under examination.

Since the election of the present Federal Government, the Solicitor-General and the advisory section of the Crown Law Office have been called upon almost daily to advise the Government on major constitutional and legal issues arising from legislative and administrative actions of the Whitlam Government.

The need to scrutinise carefully all Commonwealth Legislation has been accentuated by the fact that the Federal Government has refused to consult with the States on legislation that has grave consequences for State jurisdiction and constitutional status. Regrettably, there does not appear to be even the slightest indication that the attitude of Canberra is changing, or that it is prepared to take the States into its confidence on this legislation. The need for an effective advisory service will therefore continue if the rights of this State are to be adequately protected.

#### Courts of Queensland

The courts of Queensland are divided into three categories—the Supreme Court, the District Courts and the Magistrates Courts service. During the current year, the Government will continue to pursue a programme of reducing delays and eliminating unnecessary and costly procedures in the courts. Already, amendments to the Justices Act, approved early this year, have resulted in a considerable and desirable reduction in many Magistrates Courts procedures.

The Law Reform Commission, as part of its current programme, is undertaking an extensive review of the rules and procedures of the Supreme and District Courts. Arising from this review, the Government hopes to be able to make substantial changes in court procedures during 1975, changes which will reduce both delays in hearing cases and the basic costs of litigation.

The use of tape-recording in the Magistrates Courts has expedited hearings and obviated the need to appoint additional magistrates, despite the increasing volume of court work, particularly in the criminal jurisdiction.

#### Judiciary

The law in Queensland continues to be well served by a fair, independent and competent judiciary. Many judges also hold positions of leadership and responsibility in community, cultural, service and sporting organisations.

In the last year I have had a number of opportunities to address the Full Court and on each occasion I have stressed the importance of the role of judges in community affairs.

A number of judges also serve on Government committees such as the Law Reform Commission and the Parole Board.

It is a matter for regret that the Federal Government has not sought the services of more Queensland members of the judiciary for the 125 commissions and committees of inquiry established since 1972. However, perhaps a compensating factor is that, unlike New South Wales, our courts have not been disrupted by the absence of a large number of judges on Federal inquiries.

#### Legal Aid

In no other area are the humane and contemporary policies of this Government more obvious than they are with respect to legal aid for the people of Queensland.

In the provision of all forms of legal aid, Queensland continues to lead Australia. We have re-asserted that leadership by a massive expansion in the services of the public defender and by a continuing programme of co-operation with the legal profession and the Legal Assistance Committee in the provision of legal advice and assistance.

The services now provided by the Public Defender are more comprehensive, and more effective, than those available elsewhere in Australia. As a result of amendments to the Poor Prisoners Defence Act, the number of cases being handled by the Public Defender's office has increased by a staggering 300 per cent in less than three months. It has been estimated that the Public Defender and his agents are now handling in excess of 80 per cent of all criminal cases in the Supreme and District Courts. Such a mammoth increase has placed a serious strain on the resources of the office of the Public Defender. Action has already been taken to increase the professional and clerical staff attached to the office, and the services of the private profession will be increasingly utilised in meeting the requirements of public defence.

Now, no person without adequate means is denied legal representation at either trials or sentences in the Supreme and District Courts. It can be truthfully said that, in Queensland, no person goes without legal representation because of cost. This is a fundamental tenet in our commitment to achieving "justice for everyone".

#### Law Reform Commission

The Law Reform Commission is now functioning more effectively and purposefully than ever before. The commission is currently examining such important and complex matters as the Supreme Court Rules, the Justices Act, the Magistrates Courts Act and the administration of estates. In addition, work has been done on a revision of some aspects of criminal law.

For the first time, members of the private profession have been engaged to assist with particular tasks, and the commission has actively sought the views of interested bodies and individuals on matters it is examining. I have no doubt that the current activity of the commission will manifest itself in the legislative programme of the Forty-first Parliament.

#### Probation and Parole Service

Queensland's record in regard to the administration of probation and parole continues to be the best in Australia. Our rate of successful completion of both probation and parole periods is the highest in Australia. So that effective probation and

parole services can be provided throughout the State as well as in Brisbane, approval has been given for the establishment of regional parole offices at Cairns, Redcliffe, Ipswich and Southport in addition to those already functioning at Townsville, Rockhampton and Toowoomba.

The probation service is indeed fortunate to be staffed by men and women of dedication and ability, under the leadership of Mr. Col Bevan, the Chief Probation Officer. As honourable members may know, Mr. Bevan was recently named as Queensland's "Boss of the Year", an honour for which he was nominated by the staff at the Probation Office.

The Parole Board of Queensland, under the chairmanship of the Honourable Mr. Justice M. B. Hoare, continues to discharge its important responsibilities in a most responsible manner.

Regrettably, there have been a number of totally ill-founded attacks on the Parole Board, including totally irresponsible criticism of the board by two Federal Ministers who ought to have known better. The Government will not tolerate any attempts to interfere with the independence of the Parole Board from any group, including Ministers in the present Federal Government.

#### Public Curator Office

The Public Curator Office continues to provide a useful service to tens of thousands of Queenslanders in the administration of estates, the preparation of wills, and the provision of free legal advice and legal assistance. During the last year almost 10,000 people were given free legal advice by the Public Curator.

My department is concerned at a number of problems being faced by the Public Curator Office which principally arise from the difficulty to attract or train qualified staff. During the current year, attention will be given to overcome problems created by the shortage of qualified staff so that the Public Curator Office will be able to adequately meet the continuing and growing public demand for its services.

The Public Curator, Mr. W. R. A. McAlpine, retires on Thursday after almost half a century of distinguished service to the Crown. In addition to his dedicated service as Public Curator, Mr. McAlpine has held many leadership positions in community and church organisations and the Queensland university. I take this opportunity to place on record the Government's gratitude to Mr. McAlpine for his services over so many years.

#### State Electoral Office

The State Electoral office is well prepared to conduct the coming election with a maximum of efficiency. The complete computerisation of roll preparation has been operating very smoothly, and a State-wide roll canvass was carried out earlier this year which

resulted in a maximum enrolment for the 7 December poll. Following the decision of the Government to lower the voting age to 18, almost 100,000 young Queenslanders have been added to the roll.

The computer selection of prospective jurors is to be extended to country centres next year.

At the end of this year, the Principal Electoral Officer, Mr. H. E. Radford, will retire after 49½ years in the Public Service—the last 14 as Principal Electoral Officer. The coming election will therefore be his last official duty, and I record the Government's appreciation for his services over such a long period.

#### Titles Office

I am pleased to be able to inform honourable members that the long delays experienced by the community in dealings with the Titles Office in 1973 have been reduced. This has resulted from two factors—the end of the land boom caused by the credit squeeze, and effective measures to improve the output of the office.

The number of documents being lodged daily reached a peak of 1,421 in July 1973. This created enormous problems which could not even be overcome by the working of protracted overtime. Additional staff were appointed, and the amount of training—both by lectures and on-job training—was considerably increased. Without the energy and the dedication of all officers, it would have been impossible to reduce the backlog and overcome the delays.

I am greatly indebted to the registrar and his staff for their loyalty, tolerance and extra effort during what was a very difficult period. As a consequence, the majority of documents not requiring requisition are registered now in a week or less, and the time for issue of new titles has been minimised.

Whilst the Titles Office is now in a more satisfactory position than it has been for some time, the office will be kept under constant review to avoid any future problems.

#### Licensing Commission

The provisions of the new Liquor Act, including the creation of a Licensing Court, have all been successfully implemented.

The Licensing Commission now acts as an advisory body, as well as exercising authority on more minor matters. The transfer of the judicial powers to the court has enabled the commission to provide a more effective service to licensees, prospective licensees and members of the public. Honourable members can be assured that the commission will take all action necessary to enforce the provisions of the Act, particularly the elimination of excessive noise emanating from licensed premises.

An informative booklet explaining the provisions of the new Act has been prepared for distribution to all organisations and individuals who come in contact with the Liquor Act.

#### Consumer Affairs Bureau

The range of services provided by the Queensland Consumer Affairs Bureau to all consumers is without equal in Australia. A vigorous programme of consumer education, pursued by the bureau in the last year, is having most successful results. The Consumer Education Officer has spoken to numerous women's groups on the importance of consumer education, and a series of pamphlets has been produced and given wide distribution. The bureau's most recent pamphlet, dealing with colour television, has been particularly well received in the community.

The Consumer Affairs Commissioner was recently able to reach agreement with members of the Retail Traders' Association concerning the undesirable practice of marking-up of goods. Frequent and useful discussions between the bureau and the retail trade have been held, and the level of co-operation from responsible retailers remains very high.

A number of successful prosecutions for breaches of the Consumer Affairs Act have been launched, particularly with regard to the winding back of odometers. Many undesirable advertising practices have ceased as a result of the bureau's activities, and the "mock auction" system has been eliminated.

As yet, there have not been any major problems created by the existence of similar Federal legislation regarding consumer affairs, although I have no doubt that confusion will arise as the Federal Trade Practices Act comes fully into effect.

The Queensland Small Claims Tribunal—the first in Australia—has been an outstanding success. The fact that it is fulfilling its aim as a consumer's court can be gauged from the fact that the number of claims being lodged by consumers has doubled in recent months. During the first year almost 1,000 claims were lodged; yet in the first three months of the current financial year, almost 400 claims have been lodged by consumers. This has necessitated the appointment of a second referee for a month to enable all claims to be heard in a reasonable time.

The small claims tribunal concept, based upon the Queensland example, is now being followed in all other Australian States, and is undoubtedly one of the significant advances in consumer welfare in this decade.

#### Corporate Affairs Office

I have deliberately left the Corporate Affairs Office until last because I want to comment on some of the quite irresponsible allegations that have been made concerning the current reorganisation of the office.

In the time that I have held this portfolio I have never sought to hide the fact that I have been less than satisfied with the over-all

performance of the office in the discharge of the responsibilities conferred upon it by this Parliament. The responsibility for the performance of the office clearly rests with the system, not with the men and women who are employed at Corporate Affairs.

The development of the office has not kept pace with the requirements of modern company law administration. The ability of the office to properly administer important Acts of this Parliament has been limited by a shortage of experienced and qualified officers and an administrative system which was outdated. We recognised this long ago, and took appropriate measures to ensure effective and permanent solutions. A thorough investigation of the procedures of the Corporate Affairs Office was undertaken by the Public Service Board, and it resulted in the production of a very thick and weighty report.

As a direct consequence of the report of that investigation, immediate action has been taken to completely restructure the office. Applications have been called for 28 new classified positions, with an emphasis on the inspectorial and investigative areas. The aim of this far-reaching programme is to ensure efficient and effective administration of company law in Queensland, and to provide greater protection for investors, shareholders and the general community.

These changes will also enable Queensland to play a more effective role as a foundation member of the Interstate Corporate Affairs Commission. As a result, there will be increased co-operation between the Corporate Affairs Offices in the member States. This can only lead to more effective administration of corporate law in Australia.

The government is determined to provide adequate protection for the public, and sufficient deterrent to would-be company criminals. Unquestionably, the reorganisation now in progress will contribute significantly to that end during the next 12 months.

#### Future Problems

The record of my department and the sub-departments, in their service to the people, is a proven one. The increasing public demand for the services of the Department of Justice is being met to the general satisfaction of all concerned. However, despite this success, one grave problem looms ahead—the real threat of a Federal Government take-over of traditional and existing areas of State administrative responsibility.

My Under Secretary, and all senior officers, have gone to great lengths to improve both job security and satisfaction for our employees. Opportunities for promotion and advancement have been expanded wherever possible. It would, however, be only fair to warn that the real progress that has been made in this regard could be destroyed overnight by a Canberra take-over of areas of State responsibility. For example, the implementation of the proposed national

Companies Act would jeopardise the whole future of the Corporate Affairs Office in this State.

Whilst new positions are being created at the office, and new opportunities given to energetic employees, these are both ultimately dependent on the retention by the States of responsibility for company law. A national Companies Act, in the hands of a centralist Labor Government, could end the existence of State jurisdiction and authority with respect to all company law. Where would that leave the Corporate Affairs Office in this State and other States?

As I have said many times, we will resist and oppose a national Companies Act by every means at our disposal. There will be two reasons for doing so. The first is the undoubted danger of power over company law in the hands of a socialist Government in Canberra; the second is that the Queensland Government is determined to preserve job security of its employees, and will not tolerate any Federal intrusion which could jeopardise that security. I give that commitment to our employees in a complete and unqualified manner.

The experience overseas has been that centralism means a drastic staff reduction at State level. I think the employees of the Queensland Department of Justice are entitled to an unqualified assurance that their employer will not stand by and allow any Federal Government to usurp areas of State responsibility—action which could endanger their job security.

A definite threat to State jurisdiction also looms in regard to consumer affairs because of the Trade Practices Act, and to the courts service because of the Superior Courts Bill and the Family Law Bill. Again, a federal take-over in these areas could jeopardise the jobs of State employees.

Every employee of the Department of Justice can be assured that whilst I am Minister, and this Government is in office, a centralist take-over of areas of current State responsibility will be firmly resisted. Not only will the Queensland Government defend its constitutional rights, and honour its responsibilities to the people of Queensland, but it will also take all necessary steps to protect the employment security of all its employees.

No department of the size and nature of the Department of Justice could function effectively and successfully without dedicated officers at all levels from the Under Secretary down. I am most fortunate to have an energetic under secretary in Mr. Nelson Langford, and a team of officers who discharge their responsibilities with courtesy and enthusiasm.

More than any other department, the Justice Department concerns people, and hundreds of people are interviewed by officers every day. The number of complaints from members of the public concerning alleged discourtesy by officers is so small as to be

insignificant. In fact, I frequently receive letters from citizens expressing appreciation for the courtesy that officers of the Justice Department, junior and senior alike, extend to them.

Frequently officers are called upon to perform difficult and exhaustive tasks in handling public inquiries, but at all times they do so efficiently and courteously. I am quite certain that the standard and quality of service provided by the officers of the Department of Justice for the people of Queensland could not be higher. So, in proposing these Estimates, I take the opportunity to express to all our employees my thanks for a job well done. They can be justly proud of their efforts in the service of Queensland.

In the confident belief that the department will continue to live up to its motto of "Justice for Everyone", I am pleased to submit these Estimates for the consideration of honourable members.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (12.30 p.m.): The role of the Opposition in an Estimates debate is to carefully scrutinise the operations of the departments within a particular Minister's control, and to constructively criticise the proposed expenditure for the forthcoming financial year. The portfolio of the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has often been held up in this Chamber as one of the more sophisticated and difficult realms of government. Furthermore, in this Parliament the Minister for Justice has been portrayed as one of the more hard-working and energetic members of the Cabinet.

It is my intention to speak on the Minister's performance at a later stage, but firstly I intend to make some observations on the Estimates of Expenditure for 1974-75 as presented by the Treasurer in his Budget. In summary, honourable members will notice that \$17,198,683 will be required for 1974-75. This is an increase of 18.6 per cent on the previous financial year, and, as anyone knowing the type and sphere of administration of the Justice portfolio would expect, most of this money will be spent on extra staff. In 1973-74, 1,800 people were employed. This number will be increased by 8.6 per cent to 1,955 for the new year.

I think that all honourable members will agree that many of these lifts in manpower have long been overdue, and it is good to see that at long last some recognition has been given to the staff shortages that have plagued departments such as that of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs, where there will be 49 additional staff, and the Public Defender, where the number of expert staff is to be increased from eight to 22. In the Titles Office, the staff is being lifted by 27 to 293. Honourable members will recall the extreme difficulties that were experienced in that office during the housing and land boom.

These increases can easily be justified, and one could well ask why the Consumer Affairs Bureau was not similarly expanded.

A glance at the Estimates will show that in the new financial year only one extra person will be employed in the bureau, taking the total staff to 27. The Consumer Affairs Bureau has worked hard—we all admit this—but I suggest that the success rate of less than 30 per cent of complaints fully resolved is nothing to crow about. Obviously, the powers given to the bureau under the Act need to be strengthened, but so, too, does the over-all organisation, which surely includes the extension of its operations throughout the State. The bureau should be decentralised and, instead of using industrial inspectors to perform this function in provincial areas, full-time bureau officers or inspectors should be appointed and stationed in all the major provincial cities.

**Mr. Tucker:** That is a very important point.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It is; it is very important. At the moment, there is too much delay in the handling of consumer complaints, and I am very much concerned that the faith that the people of Queensland had in the Consumer Affairs Bureau when it was first set up is gradually declining because of its low success rate and the time lag in having complaints resolved.

People also have difficulty in ascertaining whether or not they have any legal grounds on which to pursue complaints. I said before—and I will say it again—that whilst I believe that an important contribution is being made by the Small Claims Tribunal in arbitrating and resolving many consumer disputes, a legal advice section should be included as part of the bureau, at least in Brisbane. Legal advice is available from the Public Curator's Office under section 43 of the Act. We all know this. We know, too, that private solicitors will give legal advice, and very rarely do they bother to make a claim under the legal aid scheme in Queensland. But much would be gained if the consumer could contact a legal expert in the bureau for advice instead of being told that if the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs cannot handle his complaint he should contact a solicitor. This further delays the process of resolving the complaint and it is certainly difficult for the consumer involved.

**Mr. Tucker:** It is amazing the number of people who are told that.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** On the point made by the Leader of the Opposition, dozens of letters are received by members who make representations to the Consumer Affairs Bureau to the effect that they should advise the consumer to consult a solicitor.

Another part of the Minister's expenditure that is worthy of comment is the allocation to the office of the Commissioner of Prices. Surely this office must be an embarrassment to the Minister for Justice. It must be one of the greatest jokes of administration in this State. The office is a misnomer, as the Commissioner of Prices is really the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs and he has only

one investigator—one sole person. As we all realise, price control is virtually non-existent in this State, so one could reasonably ask what that investigator is doing to earn his \$8,000 a year. He certainly has no price-control matters to worry about. It might be said that he is administering the Profiteering Prevention Act. Let us get away from that point, because we know very well that that Act is not implemented in this State; in fact, its provisions are also a joke.

If the Government were really honest, it would dissolve the office of the Commissioner of Prices and be done with it, instead of holding it up in front of the consumer and saying, "We have a Commissioner of Prices here." There is only one investigator, who does nothing. He cannot handle the problems that arise, and there is no real price control, anyway. The office is used purely and simply as a gimmick for political purposes. Queensland certainly needs a system of price control and profit justification, but it is blatantly obvious to all members of the Opposition that the State will not be given it unless the Labor Party is elected to power.

Price control has worked on a national basis. It is working effectively in other States, and there are very strong arguments in favour of its extension in this State. For example, the October figures released by the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics substantiate my claim. The Consumer Price Index for the September quarter showed that the highest rate of increase—5.7 per cent—occurred in Queensland. Regardless of the Premier's criticism of South Australia, the highest rise in the cost of living took place in his own State.

**Mr. Aikens:** What was the rise over the year?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It was 16.1 per cent back to last September, and I accept the fact that the nation's average is 16.3 per cent. If we include the last quarter, we will see that prices have increased alarmingly. The figures are frightening, and they stress the need for this National-Liberal Government in Queensland to shoulder its responsibilities and combat inflation, which is uprooting our standard of living.

It has been stressed on earlier occasions, and I repeat it now, that only the States have the power to control prices. The Premier should, therefore, get down from his high horse and stop blaming Canberra for price increases. Sky-rocketing prices constitute a problem in Queensland. It is futile for the Premier and his Government colleagues to blame workers' wages for them in the light of the massive profits that are declared year after year by the food manufacturers, the processing firms and the retailers. A recent example is the profit declared by R. M. Gow and Co. Ltd.

A question that is continually bugging people in country areas is this: why is it that food prices vary so much from town

to town when the prices charged for other commodities, such as cigarettes, are the same all over the State?

**Mr. Chinchen:** Can't you understand that?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I shall quote some figures to the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt. Recently, the Central Queensland Consumers' Association conducted a survey of prices charged in 14 towns in the Central Queensland region. To say the least, the results of the survey, carried out on 30 everyday items, are disturbing. It was to be expected that not every store would sell all the products surveyed. However, in the stores that are listed—six have submitted results—22 products were sold by all of them.

The total cost of these 22 items in the respective towns was as follows—

Town	Cost
Longreach .. .. .	\$12.34
Clermont .. .. .	\$12.19
Moura .. .. .	\$12.07
Moranbah .. .. .	\$11.81
Theodore .. .. .	\$11.60
Gladstone .. .. .	\$11.01

The greatest difference between the total prices charged for 22 items was \$1.33, or 12 per cent. A comparison was also made with the total cost in Rockhampton, and it was found to be approximately 24 per cent lower than the highest total cost. It is unreasonable to expect consumers in outlying areas, such as Clermont and Longreach, to pay for foodstuffs 25 per cent more than they cost in Rockhampton.

The Queensland Government is completely apathetic to the problems confronting people who reside outside the metropolitan area. It is time the Government realised that it has a responsibility to protect people from profiteering, and also to help retailers in western districts keep prices down. It is certainly not shouldering its responsibility in this direction. An examination of the exorbitant freight charges that are imposed on ordinary household needs will substantiate my claim.

The Premier has expressed support for consumer price subsidy. I am sure most members have received a letter from a woman in Jondaryan asking whether or not we support the Premier's policy. If the Premier supports such a policy, why has he not introduced it? He has certainly had plenty of time to do so. But he is, of course, only playing politics.

**Mr. Tucker:** He is waiting for instructions from the League of Rights.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It certainly tells him to do many things.

I said earlier that the Minister for Justice enjoys the reputation, at least among Government members, of being the most hard-working Minister in Cabinet. If such a reputation is based on the number of Bills introduced into this Chamber, I say that

that reputation is well deserved. Since I became his shadow Minister he has introduced dozens and dozens of Bills, many of which have been lengthy and complicated. I am prepared to pay the Minister for Justice full credit for the legislative role that he plays.

On considering the other aspects of his administration and the difficulties that have arisen, it could be suggested that the Minister for Justice may simply be overworked. It could be further said that, because of his heavy legislative load, he has been unable to devote the required care and attention to other aspects of his portfolio.

As the Minister left the matter of corporate affairs until last I shall deal with it first. I cite the example of the unsatisfactory circumstances that surround the operations of the Corporate Affairs Office generally, and the problems arising in the administration of the Companies Act in particular. In recent months the Companies Act has come under repeated fire and criticism from management and legal experts and other interests in the community. Claims have been made about criminal elements and criminal involvement in Queensland companies. It has been said that creditors lack protection. I am sure honourable members will recall that on 15 October I asked the Minister to explain why he had said on 26 September that he did not know about any of the problems relating to criminals in Queensland companies, yet 10 days later, in "The Sunday Mail" of 6 October, he had said that he was alarmed about the entry of standover men and other criminal elements to Queensland companies and was planning amendments and changes in the Companies Act and its functions.

Real problems have arisen in the operations and structure of the Corporate Affairs Office. I am concerned about the allegations of a "clean-up"; I am concerned about the way in which the restructuring of the office is to take place and the reclassification of positions. Morale in the office is extremely low. Comments by many people who work there disclose that the findings of the McKirdy report are being attacked as being subjective rather than objective. The Minister bypassed this report and referred to it as a Public Service investigation. It is alleged that Mr. McKirdy, who set the new qualifications in the office, is an applicant for one of the top positions. It amazes me how that could be allowed, but knowing what goes on in this State and the injustice that exists, no doubt it will be accepted as O.K. But it should not be O.K. If a man is given the task of drawing up qualifications and he stipulates that certain legal or accountancy qualifications are required, surely he should not become an applicant for one of the top positions.

An allegation which ties in with the application by Mr. McKirdy has been made that the commissioner and the two assistant commissioners will be the scapegoats for the many problems in the Corporate Affairs Office of Queensland.

It is also alleged that the Minister has taken no real interest in corporate affairs management. I have been told—the Minister may refute this if he cares to do so—that he has not been near the office for over two years. If he refutes the allegation I ask him to tell the Chamber when he visited the office and to which officers he spoke.

The Corporate Affairs Office needs restructuring and we must look into the Companies Act. Firstly, we must give some proper teeth and power to the people whom we expect to administer the Act. Is it any wonder that no prosecutions have been successful when the powers of the inspectors are limited? Whenever officers in the Corporate Affairs Office launch a prosecution, Crown Law officers tell them that it will not stand up, that it has not a hope of success. When an inspector tries to do something about mismanagement or defalcation in a company, he finds that his powers are extremely limited. He can certainly collect documents but he cannot ask directors to answer questions that he may desire to put to them. Many problems have arisen. If we are to overcome the difficulty, surely we must look into these matters.

I note that the Minister tends to use outsiders to conduct investigations. When we have inspectors—and the Minister is increasing the number of inspectors—why should we use people like Mr. Connolly to investigate various companies?

When action is taken it is taken too late. The other day the Minister revealed to the Chamber that earlier this year the problems facing Carrigans became known. I believe that application is to be made on 1 November to wind up this company. Why was not action taken before? Why was it that on 9 September this company was receiving money from people who had lay-bys with it and was sending notices to people saying that goods would be forwarded forthwith? Obviously Carrigans realised that they could not carry out their contracts, or could not perform their obligations, yet they told people not to worry and gladly accepted their money and said that the goods would be dispatched on the next rail service.

**Mr. Jensen:** Do you think these company directors will be gaolod?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Our attitude to company directors is to put them in ivory towers. The same leniency is shown towards directors of insurance companies and other people involved in dealings under the Companies Act. We seem to put them up on a pedestal as though they are not criminals.

**Mr. Jensen:** They shoot them in Singapore and other places.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I do not say that we should shoot them, but I certainly say that we should gaol them.

Because of the way in which the Act is administered and its lack of teeth, investors and creditors are always at substantial risk.

I agree with Mr. Carey, I think it was, who recently attacked the looseness of the Act. Not enough powers are given to inspectors, and I suggest that the Minister should use his special power to carry out inspections and investigations when he deems it necessary, instead of rising in the Chamber, as he did a few moments ago, blaming the Federal Government for the problems that exist in Queensland's Companies Act. That amazes me.

He has a report that he says took two years to compile. It is a very comprehensive report. He held up his hands to indicate how thick it was. He mentioned the difficulties that exist in that field and said that he is having a restructuring exercise carried out. He is reclassifying all the positions, yet he blames the deficiencies on the Federal Government. That is amazing. It certainly amazes all members of the Opposition.

I am concerned, too, about other areas of administration under the responsibility of the Minister for Justice. I cite first of all the Consumer Affairs Council. I think it concerns most people that too little notice is taken of that council's recommendations. It has taken the Minister up to three years to enact legislation to outlaw many unethical practices. I illustrate, as examples, pyramid selling, warranties, door-to-door sales and unsolicited goods. These are some on which the Consumer Affairs Council and the Consumer Affairs Bureau about three years ago recommended that action be taken. It took the Minister three years to do something about them.

We notice, too, that the Minister was not very anxious to have the Council's report printed. Only the other day I had to move that it be printed. As well, the submissions are secret. While reference is made in the report I have read to certain recommendations that have been made to the Minister, we are not aware of them. One wonders why not. Is it that the Minister is afraid of another rebellion, as he had from Professor Gates, the previous chairman of the council? Is he afraid that he might have to sack the council again? The Minister obviously hasn't the time or isn't really interested in what is happening.

That is ideally illustrated by the action he has taken on the bread industry report. He has done nothing. An in-depth study has been made into the bread industry in Brisbane and other parts of Queensland and vital recommendations were put forward by a committee the members of which, I believe, are held in high esteem by most people; yet the Minister has done nothing about it. Let us find out what is wrong. Is the Minister too busy? Is he really interested? If he is, and if the problem is that he just does not have the time, he should be given assistance.

**Mr. Tucker:** I think he is too busy tracking Sir Gordon Chalk.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** That may well be. I know there is a leadership race proceeding.

There are other areas, too, in which procrastination has taken place. Firstly there is the desirability of extending legal aid to Magistrates Courts for minor criminal offences. The present legal aid available is such that assistance can be granted for preliminary hearings of criminal charges by stipendiary magistrates where the crime carries a prison sentence exceeding 14 years. These charges include major offences such as murder, manslaughter, rape and robbery.

Many young people today are being brought before the courts for drug offences. There is no way in the world that their offence attracts a maximum of 14 years; but time after time those people appear unrepresented before the courts because they cannot afford legal assistance. I suggest that we ought to stop procrastinating and extend the legal-aid provisions to the Magistrates Court.

Jury fees ought to be increased. Time and time again we have asked for that. We moved for disallowance of an Order in Council under the Supreme Court Act in an effort to have the fees increased. Months and months ago the Minister made promises, but still we find that the fees for the first 10 days remain at \$12.50 per day plus parity.

The Minister has refused to extend the coverage of the Small Claims Tribunal, the limitation of which remains at \$450. He gives no recognition to the ever-increasing cost of the every-day goods used in the community. He does not seem to understand that there is a real need to extend the maximum amount.

No action has been taken to increase the quantum of ex-gratia payments for victims of criminal offences or to simplify the procedure for obtaining them. Some time ago the Minister said that the amount would be increased to \$5,000. I could be wrong, but I believe that has not been done. It has to be done through Parliament. I hope I am wrong, because we wish to put before him a couple of cases. However, to my knowledge it is still \$2,000.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. PORTER (Toowong) (12.50 p.m.):** This is a very diverse and very varied portfolio and it is not possible, in the brief time available in the Estimates Debate, to deal with many of its facets. Although it is a favourite trick for members of the Opposition to denigrate this Government and all that it has done, it is important for this Committee and for the people of the State to bear in mind that, in this particular portfolio, as in so many other areas of Government, this State has introduced many notable firsts.

It has pioneered methods and techniques that are admired throughout Australia and are being copied by the other States. It is quite a favourite procedure for gentlemen of the A.L.P., particularly those in Federal office at the present time, to pretend that this is a hick State—a kind of

banana republic—led by people who are so backward that they really belong to the last century.

Let us bear in mind that in the area of this particular portfolio we have been first in the field with a whole host of extremely worth-while social innovations. Legal assistance began here. The Small Claims Tribunal was a first and is now being emulated by other States. The Status of Women Inquiry was the first one conducted in Australia. The various items of consumer protection, such as door-to-door selling protection, were a first in Australia. The Bill to provide personal privacy, which was introduced in the time of the previous Attorney-General was a first. The measure on false advertising was also a first. I could go on outlining a whole host of fields in which we have been the innovators or pace-setters. This is quite remarkable and something well worth remembering.

The honourable member for Rockhampton was frothing at the mouth as he poured out a torrent of wild words but he said very little relevant to the situation. He tried to make out a case for price control. The simple fact is that price control does not work. Mr. Whitlam has said it does not work. Mr. Hawke has said it does not work. In addition, wage control does not work. They do not work in any country in the world where they have been employed.

The point of making the last quarter the sole factor for comparison is of course a very wild and foolish way of using statistics. In any one quarter, there are always particular reasons for things happening. The thing to do is to take the price rise situation over a reasonable period and compare it with a similar previous period. On that basis, Queensland fares very well; in fact much better than the Australian average and infinitely better than South Australia where price control operates or Canberra where price control operates in many fields.

Unfortunately it is not possible to deal with all of the substantial responsibilities of the Attorney-General, so I propose to concentrate on a couple. First of all I want to make some comment on the vital area of crime and punishment. There is no doubt that most people feel that in this area more needs to be done than Governments are currently doing. Most people feel that they are not sufficiently protected against the enormous growth of violent crime that is disturbing the security of literally every person and every family in every part of the country.

Unfortunately we seem to be following what happens in larger countries such as the United States. We always do, with about a five-year or a 10-year delay. It is interesting to note that only a couple of months ago the American Attorney-General (Mr. William Saxbee) warned that a rising crime rate had plunged the United States into so much trouble that it was possible

that crime would inundate the American society. He pointed out that the nation would be faced with the prospect of falling apart unless it was able to cope with this enormous problem of rising crime.

He made the excellent point that the crime increase was 6 per cent in 1973 but was boosted by a gain of 16 per cent in the last quarter of 1973 and was increasing in the current year of 1974 at a greater rate than in 1973. He believed that one of the major reasons—or perhaps a series of major reasons—for this was permissiveness of all sorts, failures on the part of parents to discipline their children, alcoholism, pornography, and violence on television and in theatres that pours out in an endless torrent. And I must say that I heartily agree with him.

Since some of these are areas of concern and responsibility for the Attorney-General, I mention them, as I have mentioned them in a similar context at other times, believing that more must be done than we are doing currently. We must somehow get away from the dreadful nonsense of portraying as heroes those people who are murderers, despoilers, rapists and robbers. Something must be done to ensure that common sense comes back into all the media of communication, entertainment and education, which, unfortunately, do have such an effect on the mores of society.

I would hope that we in this country, and in this State in particular, will remember that the select committee on which some of us in this Chamber served as members found that, overwhelmingly, people believed that they were more threatened today by violent crime than ever before, and that, equally overwhelmingly, they believed it was the responsibility of government to give them, as members of a lawful society, the protection to which they thought they were entitled.

**Mr. Aikens:** Many of them were afraid almost to the point of terror.

**Mr. PORTER:** Indeed they were; and in country areas the terror was very real.

So I believe that a Government conscious of its responsibility to the people will not only make sure that more realistic penalties are imposed for violent crimes but also make sure that the penalties will indeed fit the crimes. It will put aside as a great deal of nonsense any belief that penalties should be compounded of too much mercy, too much concern with rehabilitation, and too much preoccupation with whether or not they are a deterrent. In my opinion, once these matters are considered, we get into the area of fantasyland. What has to be considered is: what does the crime merit because of the amount of viciousness that was involved in it?

Punishment must be properly merited, properly earned and properly awarded. Any other method of trying to assess punishment

leads us, I believe, into a great deal of error. That is not said to denigrate the role that rehabilitation eventually plays, or the role of parole, and so on. But the primary consideration in society's protection must be punishment merited, punishment awarded because it is merited.

Equally, Mr. Wharton, I believe that there must be very substantial changes in court procedures to ensure that justice is swift, that justice is obvious, and that justice is indeed justice for all. And clearly one of the areas in which reforms must be made, difficult though they may appear, is in dealing with charges of rape. The select committee heard so much evidence indicating that in that area many, many victims did not lay charges or, if they laid charges, they underwent so traumatic an experience that it scarred them for life. It is a dreadful thing for a modest woman to be not only a rape victim, but also to be a victim of trial procedures, as she tries to secure justice. I believe this is an indictment of any form of civilised society, and something must be done about the matter.

It is interesting to note that in this country, as in America, women are now forming societies through which they are trying to secure some form of proper justice for victims of rape. I heartily applaud their intentions, even though I may not be able to agree with the woman in America who shot one of the assailants and would have killed the other if she had found him. I can understand why she did it, but I am not in accord with the method she used.

It must also be remembered, Mr. Wharton, that during the past year the Attorney-General and his officers have been under extraordinarily heavy and unique pressure in endeavouring to cope with the existing Federal Government.

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

**Mr. PORTER:** I attach great importance to the point I was making before lunch that the Attorney-General and his officers have had very heavy demands made on them in the constitutional field ever since the Whitlam Government came into office. Those demands have been created by the insensate, constant and vicious attack that the Federal Labor Government has been making in its endeavours to smash the Federal system and destroy the States. It has adopted all manner of devious, back-door tactics in an endeavour to achieve what the people have said flatly at the polls it must not do.

Of course, it is very popular for honourable members opposite to pretend that this is not so, that it is an exaggeration on our part, and that we are a lot of eccentrics for suggesting that this is the case. The fact is, of course, that we are far from alone in saying it. I want to refer briefly in passing to a speech made on Sunday, 16 June by the South Australian Labor Premier, Mr. Dunstan, to the A.L.P. conference in Adelaide. He very viciously

attacked the Prime Minister and his Government for eroding the power of State Governments. He said—

“The Federal Labor Government was centralising the decision-making process at the expense of State governments . . .

“Mr. Whitlam’s policies were designed to upgrade local government and give it access to Federal revenues at the direct expense of States.

“Mr. Whitlam had broken undertakings given in 1970 that State governments should be given financial assistance to help them meet new commitments as a result of services and population growth.”

Those words sound amazingly familiar, yet they were spoken by an A.L.P. Premier. They are exactly the same as we are saying. It is because of these moves by the Federal Government that the Attorney-General and his officers have had to do a great many things to assist this State to checkmate what Canberra’s Marxists have been trying to do. The result is that this State has always kept two jumps ahead in the fight to retain its sovereignty. If State sovereignty goes, the Federal system goes. We certainly have kept ahead. As a matter of fact, every time that Mr. Whitlam has tangled with the Premier of this State he has been done like a Sunday dinner. He will be done again on 7 December.

We have retained our individual State right of appeal to the Privy Council. That has been one of the moves we have made—and an essential one when we remember what is proposed through Senator Murphy’s Superior Court and his proposition to give the Governor-General new powers which would literally turn Australia overnight into a republic.

We had the resolution passed by the Assembly on the status of the Torres Strait Islands, which, of course, was directly designed to circumvent what the Federal Government was proposing.

We have had the petition to the Queen so that she can remain the monarch of this State—another move designed to stop our becoming a republic.

We have the Bill now before us to ensure that the Federal Government will not use its treaty-making power to overcome the sovereign rights of the State.

All these things have meant a very heavy demand on the Attorney-General and his officers. There have been visits to the United Kingdom, conferences with special constitutional experts, the advisers this Government has retained—and very valuable they are—conferences with other States, including the Labor States. All of this has been time-consuming. Of course, they have been vital operations. It is very foolish—indeed, it is more than foolish; it is highly dangerous—to pretend that the Federal system, on which our whole social, political and economic systems are based, is not at risk. It is at risk, and Federal Labor people

plainly say so. Dr. Cairns called for a change of the system. Mr. Hawke followed him up and bluntly said,

“The capitalist system, this free-enterprise, private-ownership, profit-maximisation system is not my system. It is not the system of the trade union movement. It is not the system of the Labor Party.”

If any honourable gentleman opposite wants to dissociate himself from that statement, this is his opportunity to do so. But of course, the Opposition is very carefully quiet about it.

Dr. Cairns, in giving the 1974 Chifley Memorial Lecture in September, said—

“What is needed is not just a way to control inflation but a way to reform society.”

That is the idea—change the system. So, without doubt, what this State is doing is not only vital to the State itself but is of tremendous importance to Australia because we are getting from the other side, “Smash the system; give us the power in Canberra!”

It is very good for this Committee to reflect on the aphorism that “all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely”. None of us wants a system where all the power is centralised in one place. We want a system based on the traditions and patterns that we have inherited from Britain. We most certainly do not want a system characterised by the things that Senator Murphy is trying to do with his proposed Human Rights Bill, which in fact abolishes rights, or Family Law Bill, which is a diabolical attack on the family institution.

We on this side of the Chamber believe passionately and devoutly in free institutions and independent people. We know that, in the long run, these will guarantee further progress in ideas and inventions. After all, what have the systems that honourable gentlemen opposite always praise and want us to emulate done? What new ideas has Soviet Russia produced in the last two generations? Or Communist China? Where is the great surge of discovery that has come from the Arab world or from liberated Africa, or indeed, from Latin America, which has had a form of independence for 200 years? The plain fact of the matter is that all we have had from those countries, all the ideas that have come from them, have been distinguished chiefly by no more than infinite variations of very ancient themes of violence, cruelty, suppression of freedom and destruction of the human spirit.

What this State has done through its various moves to checkmate the Federal Government—and the Attorney-General and his officers have contributed much to it—has been to recognise that we belong to the British system of free parliamentary institutions and that the strength of English society has always been based on a proper balance between the needs of the State and the rights of the individual. That balance, in

its turn, has been maintained and refined down the centuries by the acceptance of a rule of law to which all contribute and by which all, including the State, are bound. That law, founded on wisdom and accepted by consensus has been modified by consent down through the years. Everything worth while that the English have achieved for themselves has been built upon this great tripod of what one might properly call the "liberal ethic"—the rejection of violence, and the reaching of public decisions through free discussion, voluntary compromise and the slow evolution of moral principles, all stamped with consensus.

These are the things this State is standing for, that it is fighting for, that are reflected in the operations of this particular portfolio over recent months, and they are the issues that will be crucial at the coming State election. Let no-one pretend otherwise. Honourable gentlemen opposite will well wish that they were not the principles on which the election will be decided, but this is what it will be all about and I am certain that, because these are the principles the people recognise as being under threat, the result on 7 December will be a very definite and decisive one.

(Time expired.)

Mr. Newton interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! An honourable member is not permitted to interject while he is walking through the Chamber.

Mr. DAVIS (Brisbane) (2.25 p.m.): The remarks made by the honourable member for Toowong have been heard so many times before that they do not even call for comment. I certainly have no intention of replying to this tomtit.

As this session is drawing to a close and as the people of Queensland look forward eagerly to the State election, after which their interests will be protected by an A.L.P. Minister for Justice, the time is opportune to review the sorry record of the Minister who controls this portfolio. His total lack of action will be revealed in sharp contrast by the willingness of a Labor Minister for Justice to do all in his power to stop the plundering of investors by corporate crooks.

On many occasions I have asked the Minister for Justice to take action in matters of corporate affairs, and my requests have fallen on deaf ears. The Minister's failure to take action as well as the action he has taken could best be summed up in words similar to those uttered by Sir Winston Churchill during World War II. It could well be said that never in the whole history of corporate justice has so much been owed by so many corporate crooks to a Minister who has launched so few prosecutions. Under the Minister's administration there is one law for the rich and another for the poor. There is one law for the blue-collar worker and the underprivileged and another law for the privileged corporate crook.

Those who have been responsible for what the British Tory leader, Mr. Heath, has described as the "ugly unacceptable face of capitalism" have had a field day in Queensland while this Minister has occupied the Justice portfolio. They have enjoyed immunity as total as that given to ambassadors. Not one corporate crook has been prosecuted by the Minister despite reams of evidence of their misconduct that has been presented to him. It is not a case of a few corporate crooks being allowed to go scot-free. Rather have they all enjoyed immunity for the simple reason that while he has been Minister for Justice he has not prosecuted one of them.

Whereas the poor person who is down on his luck or the father who is experiencing financial difficulties and succumbs to the temptation to steal a few dollars is prosecuted with unremitting zeal by this Minister, the man who robs the community of hundreds of thousands of dollars by thumbing his nose at the provisions of the Companies Act is allowed to go scot-free. In fact as recently as last week it was reported that Reinvestments Ltd., a company in which thousands of Queenslanders and Australians have shares and debentures, could be in serious financial trouble because nearly half of its assets had been lent to a company with a capital of only \$2.

The loan, involving the sum of \$2,000,000, had been made by company directors who are members of the Ian Murray gang of crooks. Their reputation is well known. The loan made by Reinvestments Ltd. from public funds by the Murray-Deloughery pair of rogues to a company that they also controlled, and whose capital of \$2 could not by any stretch of the imagination be considered sufficient to justify such a loan, is reminiscent of intercompany loans made by them between Toledo Minerals and associated companies in Queensland, which they controlled in 1972. Of course, the Minister took no action whatever on that occasion.

If he had taken action in 1972 against Murray and Deloughery on the evidence presented to him of numerous breaches of the laws of this State, they would now be behind bars and would not be able to continue robbing the public, including those Queensland shareholders and debenture-holders in this the latest company to fall victim to their plundering. Instead of giving them their just deserts, the Minister in effect gave them the freedom of the State. As a result of his failure to take action, the message went out loud and clear to the other crooks, "Go ahead, boys. Ignore the law. Don't worry if there are any complaints, because the weak, ineffective Minister will plead problems of evidence or some other lame excuse for taking no action."

It is most unfortunate for the State that the Minister has been so weak when it comes to prosecuting corporate plunderers. Just how bad the situation is can be judged by certain comments from people who are not

members of the Australian Labor Party. The sources I refer to are members of the Liberal Party, such as the president of the Institute of Credit Management, a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the financial Press including that of the great bastion of liberalism, the Packer Press, "The Bulletin". Not one of those people would be on our side in political philosophy.

I am returning to a crucial matter, that is, Weedmans' take-over. Hundreds of shareholders in Weedmans were dismayed by the Minister's failure to take action despite requests and evidence produced from this side of the Chamber. It will be recalled that on a number of occasions during debates I asked the Minister to do something about the Weedmans issue, but he did absolutely nothing. Many Government members could have assisted. Recently I heard that three or four of them who are shareholders in Weedmans did not do anything about trying to assist the cause which was finally resolved by company litigation.

**Mr. Miller:** Who were they?

**Mr. DAVIS:** I do not want to name any of them, but I think the honourable member for Ithaca was involved somewhere along the line. He started asking questions about this matter but did nothing further about it.

Weedmans' shareholders were not impressed by the Minister's lame explanation about the difficulty in obtaining evidence.

**Mr. Porter:** That won't help you win an election.

**Mr. DAVIS:** It may not help me to win an election, but the honourable member for Toowong would be surprised to learn how many letters I have received—

**Mr. Miller:** Produce the evidence.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I have them here.

Mr. Lickiss, you would be surprised to know how many letters I have received from constituents who live in the electorates of the honourable members for Toowong and Ithaca—and most of them are Liberals—telling me what a marvellous job I have done in fighting for a cause that I knew was right. I was told that, when people like the honourable members for Ithaca, Mt. Gravatt, Yeronga and Toowong—the so-called blue-ribbon Tories and great supporters of private enterprise—were asked to assist, they did absolutely nothing. It was left to the Labor Party, to people like me, to battle for private enterprise.

**Mr. Chinchin:** That will be the day.

**Mr. DAVIS:** That is what I did.

In reply to the questions I asked about the Weedmans' take-over, the Minister indicated that the matter was under investigation. But he did absolutely nothing about it.

Mr. Justice Lucas of the Supreme Court of Queensland described the action which I referred to earlier this year as "entirely reprehensible". He was very critical of the southern directors of the company and stated that the take-over was based on a lie. That is exactly what I said earlier this year in the March session. The Minister does not have to accept my word or that of the aggrieved shareholders. He has only to read the transcript of the case. Our belief that there has been serious malpractice has now been confirmed by the views of the Supreme Court. Despite that, the Minister continues to take no action.

It is true that as a result of great persistence and the courage of two shareholders who spent a lot of money in taking legal action, and incurred the risk of massive legal costs had the judgment gone the other way, Weedmans' shareholders obtained justice. Following the judgment negotiations led to an offer of \$1 a share, which was almost 60 per cent higher than the take-over offer of 63c. I congratulate the shareholders and their advisers on a successful campaign. But they received no assistance whatsoever from the Minister.

**Mr. B. Wood:** You played a big role in that campaign.

**Mr. DAVIS:** I have to agree with the honourable member. I am proud of the role I played.

In Queensland, when shareholders receive justice, it is no thanks to the efforts of the Minister, but despite them. The Minister has proved to be the greatest single obstacle in the way of corporate justice.

To turn to another source of complaint about the Minister's inaction—only last week, Mr. Carey, the president of the Institute of Credit Management, in an interview on the A.B.C. television show "This Day Tonight", described how the company structure and the principle of limited liability were abused by some unscrupulous directors who would put one company into liquidation today and continue operations tomorrow with the same equipment, under the name of a new company with a paid-up capital of \$2.

He made the point that the Minister for Justice had not launched any prosecution. That was not my statement; it was Mr. Carey's. I ask the Minister how he can justify his failure to take action against those crooks despite clear provisions in the Companies Act covering directors who incur debts which they know they are unable to pay. How many times has my colleague the honourable member for Rockhampton also raised this matter?

Having referred to a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland and the president of the Institute of Credit Management, I will now turn to another source of evidence of the Minister's failure. This source is one which should carry a good deal of weight

with Government members, for it is "The Bulletin", a newspaper that is part of the Packer chain, which strongly supports the Liberal Party.

Following the commencement of the Inter-state Corporate Commission, "The Bulletin" published an article giving many examples of how the Minister in this State had deprived the office of the Corporate Affairs Commission of the qualified legal and accounting staff it needed to do its job properly. The main theme of the article was that the Ministers in New South Wales and Victoria should put pressure on the Queensland Minister to bring staffing of this State's commission up to the standard of staffing in the other two States. That is one of the points that I have made and which the Minister, with the supreme confidence of the really ignorant, continues to ignore. This is the Corporate Affairs Commission that the Minister talks about so much, but about which "The Bulletin" said, "You had better get your office up to date."

Recently, apparently in a death-bed repentance just before the election, the Minister advertised a series of senior positions in the commission. Although it is good to see some action at last, there is no real reason why this action could not have been taken long ago. If we had a Minister really interested in justice, the appointments would have been made without any prompting from me, my colleagues or "The Bulletin".

At this stage it would be appropriate to pay a tribute to Mr. Keogh and his staff in this Corporate Affairs Commission for their devoted work. Despite extreme staff shortages and lack of support from the Minister, who has not even provided one full-time legal officer, the staff have handled a great number of complaints and queries with courtesy, patience and skill, as I am sure every member on this side agrees. From the completely negative attitude of the Minister, it is safe to assume that recommendations for action that the commission has made, despite lack of staff and facilities, have, because of the Minister's lack of determination, been to no avail.

After the way in which the Justice Department has been so sadly handled under the administration of the present Minister, it would be fair to say that fortunately after 7 December we will have a new Minister for Justice, representing the party to which I belong, who will have the backing of the Australian Labor Party. He will administer the Justice Department with a policy of equality before the law for all—rich and poor, white-collar worker and labourer. We will even look after business houses and the persons who invest in shares.

**A Government Member interjected.**

**Mr. DAVIS:** No, we won't give it away.

There is something else I will say. We will not tolerate the ridiculous situation of public money being wasted. I ask honourable members to consider this advertisement which appeared in "The Sunday-Mail", costing at least \$500 to \$550 depending on the page it was on. What does it say? It has been inserted by the Minister for Justice, who has his ugly face in the middle of it, and says, "Your solicitor: he's there to stand up for your rights. And give you valuable advice." What the hell has that got to do with the Department of Justice?

**Mr. Campbell:** How would you know?

**Mr. DAVIS:** The Minister said that the Department of Justice has nothing to do with his portfolio. Why does the Government spend money on advertisements for solicitors?

**Mr. Lane:** Would your party stop the programme?

**Opposition Members interjected.**

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. DAVIS:** The next thing that should be done is insert the statement "Paid for by the Government." The Department of Industrial Development—

**Government Members interjected.**

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. DAVIS:** It would insert an ad for your favourite grocer or your favourite motor mechanic. We are paying at least \$550 to advertise this man.

**Government Members interjected.**

**Mr. Wright:** Your main point is that the Act should be clearer and should be simplified.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! It would be a good idea if the honourable member for Rockhampton allowed the honourable member for Brisbane to make his own speech.

**Mr. DAVIS:** This sort of thing is a complete waste of public money. All it is is a political act on the part of the Minister. I point out that I am using only this one article which appeared in "The Courier-Mail" at a cost of \$550.

I now wish to comment on the Liquor Act, which comes within the Justice Department Estimates. A little research revealed that this matter was discussed in 1954 when Mr. W. Power was Attorney-General. Our esteemed Premier, who was then in Opposition, said—

"I should like to mention the alcoholic percentage in liquor in America. The permitted maximum alcoholic content is 3.2 per cent, whereas in Australia a fair average would be 5 per cent. The reduced alcoholic content does not alter the keeping qualities of the drink."

Throughout that speech he suggested that the alcoholic content of beer should be lowered. The alcoholic content is still approximately 5 per cent. The Premier pretends that he is a temperance man. During his speech in 1954 he discussed the pros and cons of alcohol, pointed out that its effects were detrimental and said that a lower percentage of alcohol would be much better for the community.

However, it is now 20 years since he made that speech. During that time he has been in Government for 17 years and in Cabinet for eight or nine years. He big-notes himself by saying what he will do about reducing the alcoholic content of beer but when it comes to introducing anything definite he is like so many members of the Liberal and Country Parties—a lot of hot air. He could have done something of advantage by reducing the alcoholic content of beer. If any other honourable members want a good laugh, I suggest they read his speech in 1954. At that time the Minister for Justice was doing something for Justice.

The Estimates for this year disclose that there are many things the present Minister should do something about. Over the years, I have referred to Weedmans. Many years ago the Minister was told about the corporate crooks operating in this State and throughout Australia. If he had had the stomach—I was going to say “the guts”, but I will not—to do so, he would have taken on the corporate crooks instead of sending the matter to the Crown Law Office and being given 55 reasons why he should not deal with people like Ian Murray and Deloughery who at present are robbing shareholders of millions of dollars. The Minister stands condemned for weak, ineffectual leadership of his department. If ever a person should be on the side of the Minister, it is the honourable member for—Mr. Frawley.

**Mr. Frawley:** You can't even remember where I come from.

**Mr. DAVIS:** Normally I refer to him as Frawley the fool, but I did not want to put it that way today. The honourable member for Murrumba has a few shares—not very many since he got rid of his tow-truck business.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (2.45 p.m.):** It is with a great deal of pleasure that I join in the debate on the Estimates introduced by the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, because the honourable gentleman has instituted a very progressive approach to legislation and to administration generally since he assumed control of the Department of Justice. He has proved to be particularly hard-working and a great taskmaster in driving his parliamentary committee. As a member of the Minister's committee, I am used to spending many hours each week in deliberations, investigations and research. I take this opportunity of complimenting the

legal assistants and other legal officers who assist the committee so well and so impartially and guide its deliberations.

**Mr. Frawley:** It is the hardest-working committee in the place.

**Mr. LANE:** Without a doubt, it is the hardest-working committee. It needs good legal advice and, indeed, it has received just that during the time I have had the pleasure of serving on it. It has certainly demonstrated its real concern for people.

I am sure that when Parliament reconvenes after the election on 7 December and the various committees are appointed, there will be a queue from here to the Treasury Building of those wanting to serve on the committee of the Minister of Justice.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** You know that 7 December is Pearl Harbour day. It will be Pearl Harbour day for somebody, won't it?

**Mr. LANE:** It certainly will.

Members of the Minister's committee have travelled the State, and even travelled interstate, in connection with legislation introduced in this Assembly by the Minister. As an indication of the legislative programme that has come before the committee for consideration, I remind honourable members that during 1972-1973—the first session of the Fortieth Parliament of Queensland—28 Bills introduced by the Minister for Justice were given three readings in this Legislature. Many of them were quite progressive and showed a real concern for people. It was indeed compassionate legislation. The Consumer Affairs Act, with its several amendments, the Guide Dogs Act and many other Acts relating to law reform demonstrate what an important department the Department of Justice is.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** The Small Claims Tribunal has brought justice to consumers.

**Mr. LANE:** That is so. A person is now able to appear personally before that tribunal and obtain justice on many matters that may seem of small concern to the great business interests of this State.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** The next step is to give similar recourse to small traders.

**Mr. LANE:** The Government will give a similar type of justice to small traders by introducing at some future date a small debts tribunal similar to the Small Claims Tribunal, which, of course, is consumer oriented.

I wish to comment on the efficient working of the Licensing Commission, which also comes under the administration of the Minister for Justice. It is one section of the department that is really close to its job. The officers of that section seem to have a good knowledge of the establishments they are required to supervise in every corner of of this State however far-flung. As an administrator Mr. McQuillan is indeed efficiency personified.

I acknowledge the new approach in the recent amendment to the Liquor Act. The setting up of a Licensing Court, such as exists in other States, upgrades this area of Government administration that is so important to many people in their day-to-day lives. That court has already proved that it is setting sound precedents in its decisions—precedents that will be looked back on by people whose business and income come under the control of that section of the Minister's portfolio. People who operate in the area of liquor trading are given clear guide-lines as to how they should manage their business. At least two honourable members opposite are in the liquor trade. I am sure they appreciate this new and progressive approach under the Liquor Act.

Another item of progressive Government action that should be commented on is the educational programme embarked on by the Minister. That programme has produced not only the advertisements referred to by the honourable member for Brisbane, to the noticeable embarrassment of the spokesman for justice on that side of the Chamber (Mr. Wright), but also the many brochures that are now available to the public. Indeed, those brochures are in great demand by the public, who want to know just where they stand on many matters, particularly in the area of consumer affairs.

**Mr. Aikens:** Wasn't the honourable member for Brisbane once a member of the Liberal Party?

**Mr. LANE:** No! And I wish the honourable member for Townsville South would not blaspheme in this place.

The educational programme seeks to acquaint people, in laymen's terms, with their rights as consumers about the facilities available to them through the various sub-departments of the Minister's administration. Honourable members will have seen advertisements dealing with the Public Curator Office and the jury system. Such advertisements have made a real contribution to the proper understanding of Government administration in this State. Indeed, many other Government departments could well follow the example. It is all very well for the Opposition to condemn those advertisements, but many thousands of people have sought them in reprinted form for school projects and to educate themselves with a layman's knowledge of the law so that they are better able to live in today's sophisticated society. In decrying those advertisements the honourable member for Brisbane shows a backward and reactionary approach. I notice that he is not supported by his colleagues on that side when he indicates that the Opposition would cease that educational programme if by some mishap it should ever come into office as the Government of the State. He demonstrates one of the many disagreements that exist in the ranks of the Opposition.

I refer now to the general approach the Government adopted in having a Solicitor-General's Office with a Crown Solicitor and staff. I make a general criticism of all Governments in this land. I do not think that, as society becomes more complicated, it is a good idea to have all the legal experts and the legal know-how assembled in one office or department in the governmental structure. I believe that Governments could well adopt the approach of allocating legal officers to the various departments so that those departments can get on-the-spot legal advice within their own structure. I think it is unfortunate that the Crown Solicitor's office should become remote from other departments so that when advice is sought, whether it is of a legal or technical nature, the lines of communication are too remote to suit daily needs. This is especially true of the Police Department, which I believe should have its own qualified legal officers.

There should also be an interdepartmental liaison or secondment system by which legal officers, who may need to come under the collective control of the Minister for Justice, could be spread evenly throughout the departments so that on-the-spot advice can be obtained and given. If a rotation system were adopted there would not be any need for them to lose track of the trends in thinking or to become remote from the centre of legal thought within the government administration.

I believe there is a need for decentralisation of the Government's lawyers, who should be stationed throughout the various departments. Indeed the first of two places in which I should like to see these legal officers would be in the office of the Commissioner for Corporate Affairs so that he would have at his disposal every day legal officers who could adequately advise him and give him rulings on matters of complicated company law and the various off-shoots of civil and criminal responsibility pertaining thereto. The second department in which I should like to see these officers stationed is the Police Department.

Unfortunately no approach has been adopted by this Government towards seconding staff from the Police Department into other areas where frauds may be committed. The Government may well consider then placing legal officers into the other departments. If it will not go one way with me, perhaps it will do the reverse and go the other way.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt** interjected.

**Mr. LANE:** The honourable member for Chatsworth raises the matter of free legal advice to defendants. I am rather pleased that he does so because it reminds me to speak about the duplication of legal-aid services since the heavy hand of socialism has been applied from Canberra and the Commonwealth Government has intruded into this area. It seems that the Federal Government is frightened that it might be upstaged

or outshone in terms of progressive Government administration. So it has imposed right across the nation a new legal-aid system—and because of the haste with which it was implemented how inefficient it is! Daily we see examples of ridiculous situations arising. Only a few weeks ago I was talking to a gentleman who was appearing in the Magistrates Court on a minor charge. In court he rose to plead not guilty to the charge that was read. He was quite content to conduct his own defence and put his case, as any normal, intelligent man can well do in minor matters. There was, however, a gentleman sitting on a chair to the side of the court-room, and he lept forward, saying, "I am the duty solicitor from the Commonwealth Legal Aid Service, and I represent this man." He had not even paid the defendant the courtesy of approaching him beforehand and asking, "Do you need my assistance?" Instead he simply came forward into the body of the court and said, "I represent this man." The defendant remarked, "I don't want anything to do with you. Who are you? Go away. I intend to present my own case." This officer replied, "I am the duty solicitor from the Commonwealth Legal Aid Service. You cannot say 'No' to me; I am an officer of the court. I will represent you." The court was immediately thrown into confusion, and the magistrate adjourned the hearing. It was only after the defendant took the legal officer out onto the verandah and told him to clear off—in fact he threatened to throw him down the stairs—that he was able to get this bureaucrat off his back.

**Mr. Bromley:** Which court was this?

**Mr. LANE:** The Magistrates Court in Brisbane. This is the type of ridiculous situation that a Commonwealth duplicate system such as this, administered from afar, gives rise to.

**Mr. W. D. Hewitt:** The same thing would happen if we had a Federal court.

**Mr. LANE:** During my speech in the Address-in-Reply debate I spent considerable time outlining the reasons for my objection to the setting up of a Federal court. I must say I have received many compliments from the legal profession on my remarks. The legal fraternity are adamant in their claim that there is no need for duplication of that type.

I turn now to another area of the law in which I have had considerable experience, namely, the office of the Chief Crown Prosecutor. I pay a sincere compliment to Mr. Lloyd Martin, Q.C., who as Crown prosecutor and Chief Crown Prosecutor has served this State diligently for many years. He has travelled far and wide in his conduct of countless prosecutions on behalf of the State. He has appeared in many famous criminal trials. He possesses a high degree of efficiency and integrity, and I hope that his great experience and ability will be recognised

by the State in some tangible way. He shoulders a tremendous responsibility, as indeed do all Crown prosecutors and barristers who appear daily in the courts.

Crown prosecutors are under extreme pressure from day to day and are required to study briefs into the early hours of the morning for presentation next day in court. The Crown prosecutors are probably the hardest-working legal officers employed by the State Government. Owing to the nature of their work they suffer great inconvenience, particularly when appearing in circuit courts in remote areas of the State. On such occasions they are forced to accept second-rate accommodation and to work under very difficult conditions. I point out to the honourable member for Brisbane that they have not called a strike, which would be normal in his circles.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (3.5 p.m.):** In addressing myself to these very important Estimates I shall attempt to confine myself to the subject in hand. I do not intend to discuss the possibility of Australia's becoming a republic, Queensland's seceding from the Commonwealth and so on. Such matters are quite irrelevant, and the Minister's Estimates are very important. As the departments that he controls are very close to the people, it is appropriate in this debate to comment on their administration and on their personnel. In the course of my speech I shall express my appreciation and gratitude to many of the Minister's officers.

Firstly, I direct a few comments at the Minister himself. It is passing strange that many improvements introduced by the Minister are essentially part of Labor Party policy. I have a few headings here that I noted when I was conjuring up my thoughts to make this contribution. The Small Claims Tribunal was part of A.L.P. policy and so was the small debts court. The debts ratio payment—

**Mr. Chinchin:** What a lot of nonsense.

**Mr. DEAN:** The honourable member has only to trace the departmental history of these things.

**Mr. Wright:** Opposition members were the first to raise these matters.

**Mr. DEAN:** That is what I am trying to convey to the honourable member.

Ex-gratia payments to victims of criminal offences were part of Labor's platform. Many years ago I had a notice on the Business Paper about that. It was not my original idea; I got it from reading articles about what happened in Great Britain years ago when legislation was introduced to pay compensation to victims of violence. That, again, was A.L.P. policy. Duty counsel and ways to overcome problems experienced under the Companies Act have been discussed by the A.L.P.

For many years under the present Minister—and perhaps even before that—the technique seems to have been to wait until interest in what the A.L.P. has suggested dies down, and then to introduce it as Government policy. We would be much happier if we brought it in as the Government, but we are quite happy in the knowledge that many of these things that benefit the people originated with Labor. When introducing these matters, the Minister should give credit to those who originated the idea.

It has been said that our courts do good work. That is true, but many members of the judiciary are too timid in the punishment they mete out to offenders who appear before them.

**Mr. Knox:** Do you agree with extreme views?

**Mr. DEAN:** I do not. At the moment I am agreeing with the Minister. I have here a newspaper of 3 September 1974, which reported a statement by the Minister in these terms—

“The Justice Minister (Mr. Knox) yesterday urged the courts to impose higher penalties on thugs, vandals and those who mistreated animals.

“Unprovoked assaults on law-abiding citizens ought to be regarded more seriously,” Mr. Knox told the annual conference of stipendiary magistrates in Brisbane.”

On this occasion I agree with the Minister. He continued—

“Adequate penalties must be imposed if their incidence is to be reduced.”

I am sorry that I must be critical of the courts and say that that is not taking place. I do not know what is wrong with the magistrates. We make the laws—and we have enough laws to last for the next 100 years. The police do their job. On many occasions police officers I know have expressed keen disappointment at a magistrate's leniency after the tremendous amount of work they have done in order to apprehend the community's wrongdoers.

While not attacking the magistrates personally, I suggest that they are too timid. Why? Are they afraid of an appeal against their decision? If they have the courage of their convictions, they should not be afraid of that. They should carry out their duty. I do not think any judge in another court would be sufficiently foolish to upset a just sentence. However, on many occasions, justice is not done to the victim. The way our wrongdoers are treated is on many occasions unjust to the victims. Therefore, I agree with the Minister that the courts should get tough. However, my understanding is that every day the attitude taken is less severe.

The Minister made reference, too, to the great amount of vandalism in our parks and the destruction of public property. Those

honourable members who have served in local government would know only too well the trouble entailed in collecting evidence when a vandal is caught on council property. When the prosecution reaches the court, the vandal is either fined \$5 or let off with a caution.

The contribution made by the Minister on that occasion about restitution by effort is one with which I agree entirely. In addition to some monetary penalty, the offender, if he has the necessary talent, should be forced to make repairs to the damaged property. He should be forced to do it at the week-end or at some time inconvenient to him.

**Mr. Wallis-Smith:** I think we all agree with that.

**Mr. DEAN:** Absolutely.

I appeal again to the magistrates not to be afraid to do their duty and to implement much heavier sentences in their treatment of these offenders who not only damage public property but also, most seriously of all, do personal injury to our citizens. Recently in a speech on legislation introduced by another Minister I mentioned the molestation of people in our streets at night. The police do their job and often apprehend the offenders. However, the courts do not complete the job in the way I think they should. They should adopt a much stricter attitude towards these individuals and impose much more severe penalties.

I pay respect to the staff of the Electoral Office and express my gratitude to them. In particular, I thank Mr. Radford for the wonderful job that he and his staff do at all times, not merely at election time. Mr. Radford and his staff can be contacted at any time and they will provide first-class service. Every time I have had cause to approach Mr. Radford and his staff they have not hesitated to help by supplying the information I have required.

Mention has been made, of course, of the work of the Solicitor-General's office. Our Solicitor-General (Mr. Parslow) and his staff provide an outstanding service to the community. As well as helping us, they help the public. They are ever ready to offer that advice so necessary to save inconvenience. It is only right at this opportune time that we should express our appreciation and gratitude to those officers.

Unfortunately, the time allowed to speak in this debate is very limited and although I would like to enlarge on many matters covered by these very important Estimates, it is impossible to do so. The Literature Board of Review has always been a source of disappointment to me.

**Mr. Knox:** Are they banning too many books?

**Mr. DEAN:** No. The functions of the board are “to examine and review literature with the object of preventing the distribution in Queensland of literature which, or any

part of which, is objectionable." I do not know how half the books available in stores get past the board. Evidently it has not enough inspectors or staff to carry out this job or else these publications are not brought to its notice.

**Mr. Knox** interjected.

**Mr. DEAN:** I have a list but not with me. It would be very dangerous to go through every one of them. The Minister has made a rather foolish request. It is unwise to give any publicity to objectionable material.

**Mr. Knox:** Send me your views privately.

**Mr. DEAN:** I can soon send the Minister a letter. There is something wrong with the board's application or administration. In saying that I do not reflect on board members. It could be more effective in the community.

In his speech the Opposition shadow Minister gave fair coverage to the Consumer Affairs Bureau. I do not have the time at my disposal to add much to what he said. The education system should be upgraded to include this very important subject. I hope that it will be introduced as a compulsory subject in the not too distant future. It would be an interesting subject. Students would be taught to appreciate the value of its work and how to guard against being taken in by some traders. We cannot blame all traders for all of the malpractices in our community. So I repeat that consumer affairs should be taught in our schools.

When the time comes, I hope that it will be given more consideration than the subject of alcohol abuse has been given. Education against alcohol started off with great impetus but then suddenly pressure was applied and many people were not allowed into our schools.

**Mr. Knox:** The hotels?

**Mr. DEAN:** It came not so much from the hotels as from the brewery interests. They are behind the alcohol racket. Their influence is very powerful today. They have extended their operations into the field of sport, which is a very dangerous move. The racket is getting such a go on that I am afraid we will soon be like the United States, where the liquor and oil interests have enough power to put a Government into or out of office.

**Mr. Knox:** That is terrible.

**Mr. DEAN:** It is terrible; it is tragic.

I hope that in his last few days in his portfolio the Minister will not allow some of the academics to have too strong an influence on his decisions. I am not set against academics but in many cases too much notice is taken of them. Often the ideas of the academics are all right in theory and work out on paper but fall far short of what is required when they are applied to the daily life and activities of the people. Unfortunately, many people in the community do not realise that.

Earlier in my speech I mentioned courts. I sincerely hope that it will not be long before the operations of the Magistrates Court at Sandgate are assisted by the construction of a new police station in the area. I am aware that police stations have nothing to do with the Minister's portfolio. However, delays are occurring in the court at the moment, and I believe that the provision of a modern police station would be of benefit to the court at Sandgate and would make it easier for the magistrate to deal with the heavy list of cases that come before him each week.

That is all I wish to say on these Estimates, Mr. Hewitt. It is difficult to dwell long enough on one item in such a short time. One begins to develop an argument on a certain item and then has to break off so abruptly that the "Hansard" report does not make very good reading. Therefore, I content myself with the contribution that I have made.

Finally, I again ask the Minister to keep the pressure on during the few days that he has left as Minister for Justice and appeal to the magistrates to have the courage of their convictions in administering the Queensland statutes.

**Mr. AIKENS** (Townsville South) (3.22 p.m.): No-one doubts the sincerity of the honourable member for Sandgate, but I wish he would go a little more deeply into the administration of the law. I share his concern about the fact that magistrates do not impose penalties commensurate with the crime. But what he does not know—and perhaps very few honourable members know this—is that the moment a magistrate imposes a penalty, the person on whom that penalty is imposed can go round the corner to the nearest District Court judge and have him either remove the penalty completely or reduce it substantially. In addition, there is no appeal against the decision of that District Court judge. The sooner we remove that rather odorous loop-hole from the law, the better it will be for the people.

The honourable member for Rockhampton rehearsed his election speech—or one of his election speeches—in which he harped on the fact that for the last quarter the Consumer Price Index in Queensland was .0023 per cent higher than the Consumer Price Index in South Australia. He did not mention, as the honourable member for Toowoong truthfully said, that over the year prices have gone up less in Queensland than they have in South Australia.

Although prices are a very pressing problem for the people of Queensland, I should say that the most iniquitous thing in Australia today, not only in Queensland, is the shockingly high interest rate that young people have to pay in order to purchase a home. It is no good the Federal A.L.P. Government fiddling with the issue. The interest rate will remain high until the Federal Government undoes what it did when

it jacked up the bond rate. Until the Federal Government reduces the bond rate, we will still have the shocking position that we are in today, where land is available for sale, houses are available for sale and motor-cars are available for sale and people in good jobs, earning good money cannot afford to borrow the money they need to buy them.

The honourable member for Rockhampton mentioned the shining light, the white-haired boy, of the A.L.P. in Australia—Mr. Dunstan, the Premier of South Australia. For some time, of course, Mr. Dunstan was rather a vociferous toady of Whitlam, but quite recently he changed his tune. He had to; the policy of the Whitlam Government forced him to. In his last Budget Whitlam put an extra tax of 5c on a gallon of petrol. He took away the subsidy that was granted on petrol sold in the outlying portions of the State, and as a result he crippled nearly all of the country industries of this State. Despite that, when Mr. Dunstan introduced his State Budget recently he imposed an extra 6c on a gallon of petrol, on top of the 5c Whitlam had imposed. He also slugged the smokers in addition to the increase Whitlam had put on.

Not knowing that a State election was coming on in Queensland, he then lashed into Whitlam left, right and centre. Now, of course, he has pulled in his head a little because he does not want to ruin the already very slim chances of the Labor Party in Queensland, and is asking for another Premiers' conference. He was the man who was the very oleaginous toady of Whitlam until the Queensland State election was in the offing.

The Minister for Justice has done a very good job in his portfolio. He has introduced quite a number of innovations that are in the interests of the little people. They are the only people I am concerned about. But because of his lack of worldly knowledge—and I am not denigrating him in any other way—he unfortunately allows the solicitors, barristers and judges to get away with what is commonly termed "murder". For some time we have been regaled—if I may use that word in a very sarcastic sense—by large, expensive advertisements by the Minister for Justice in the daily Press. Of course, they include his photograph—that fine, ruggedly handsome face of his. In those advertisements he tells the people what he has done by amendments to various pieces of legislation and the insertion of new laws on the Statute Book. In the last few weeks he seems to have gone quite overboard in boosting the stocks of the private solicitor. Why on earth he should do that, I wouldn't know! I do not know any body of persons that cause more distress and inconvenience to the little people than solicitors, if the little people are unfortunate enough to get into their clutches.

The other morning after getting the paper I stretched out in bed to read it. But I could not lie down because there in a full-page advertisement in "The Townsville Daily

Bulletin"—I feel sure the same advertisement was inserted in all the newspapers in Queensland—was a picture of a solicitor with a big claymore in his hand—at least it looked like a claymore—acting the role of a knight in shining armour. He was going forth to do battle for the little people. When he returned with his claymore all bloodied, with the bodies of the exploiters, racketeers and those who rob the little people strewn on the foughten field, he was going to be the champion of champions. He had everything on except the shining armour. There was the Minister for Justice using the people's money—the little people's money—to boost the trade of solicitors. If he is going to portray the solicitors in any warlike fashion at all, the most appropriate way he could portray them in the newspapers would be to have them dressed in Ned Kelly's armour.

**Mr. Wright:** They always speak well of you, Tom.

**Mr. AIKENS:** It does not matter to me whether they speak well of me or not. I have been on this earth quite a while, and I have been in this Assembly quite a while. At times it has been a case of my hand against every man and every man's hand against me, but I have lived—I have survived. A lot of people who criticised me are now nothing. Some of them have been gathered to their fathers—not as quickly as they should have been, but nevertheless they are no longer with us. That might be the case with the honourable member for Rockhampton if he keeps on barking.

What I am about to deal with is something that someone sold to the Minister for Justice. He picked the idea up and put it into operation, and he is to be given credit for it. I do not know what the solicitors said about it, but I know they will never forgive him for it. The Minister set up the Small Claims Tribunal under a very excellent piece of legislation. That tribunal is doing an excellent job under an excellent magistrate. Its real secret of success lies in the fact that no solicitor is allowed within cooee of it. A solicitor cannot get before the Small Claims Tribunal except with the consent of the party on the other side. And if he gives consent, he is not right in the head—that's for sure! Only when the solicitors and barristers are kept out of hearings do we get any semblance of justice at all. There is an old saying that when a lawyer walks into court justice flies out the window. The great Lord Brougham said that a lawyer is a legal gentleman who will protect your estate against your enemies and in the process take it for himself. That is just as much the case today as it was in Lord Brougham's day.

There is quite a lot of sickly sentimentality abroad today, as there has been for years, that punishment is no cure for crime and that the only way to cure crime is to close one's eyes to it. I thought it was waning but it is getting worse. It is fostered by a small group of

pansies at the university and also by some do-gooders around the town. The only way to rehabilitate and punish a criminal even for a heinous offence is to take him into your home, give him three seven-course meals a day and put him to bed with the finest housemaid you have. In other words, according to these people, what we have to do with criminals is to pet and pamper them.

Anybody who wants to say that punishment is not a cure for crime should go to Singapore, which I have visited recently, thanks to the generosity of Queensland taxpayers. Of course, they reaped full benefits from it. A few years ago Singapore was the dirtiest city in Asia. All sorts of appeals were made to its people. I suppose the university lecturers and professors made speeches about it. There were speeches from the pulpit, features in the Press, bands were playing in the streets, all on the theme, "Clean up our city." Singapore got dirtier and dirtier and finally punishments for littering were imposed that even staggered its residents. While we were there a man who dropped a cigarette butt on the footpath was immediately slugged a \$30 fine, which is a lot of money in Singapore. Today Singapore is the cleanest city in Asia if not one of the cleanest in the world, and only because there are heavy punishments for littering.

The situation with drunk-drivers is similar. The A.L.P. opposed the drunk-driving legislation tooth and nail. It should be known as the "Drunk-driver's party". Labor members are always supporting the case of the drunk-driver, not caring one bit about the innocent people who are run down and slaughtered on the roads. Ask the people today what their attitude is since the legislation recently passed by this Parliament. The drunk-drivers used to say, "It's all right, I can pay this." Ask them what they think about the \$350 first-up fine, and particularly the mandatory six months' goal sentence for driving while their licences are under suspension. I would say that within three months to six months we will see quite a diminution in drink-driving offences on the road.

I read a leading article in the "Sunday Sun" last Sunday putting up an argument against capital punishment. It spoke about that unfortunate woman, the relative of Sir Henry Abel-Smith, who murdered her deformed child. It said "Surely no-one would hang a poor woman like that." Naturally, in politics and journalism people put up the best possible case for themselves. Of course, they do not quote the case of Mrs. Morse, that fine housewife who was sitting in her home over the Queensland border not so long ago when along came two fellows in a car. They had shot and killed the owner of that car in order to get it. They pulled up at Mrs. Morse's home, took her away from her children, had her, I think, for 24 hours and what they did to her is nobody's business; it is too hideous to talk about. Then, having dealt with her as their animalistic instincts thought they should, they shot her through

both eyes as if they thought she could see after she was dead, and threw her in a waterhole. Surely no-one here would suggest that those monsters should not have been executed. Surely no-one here would suggest that mercy, pity and compassion should have been shown to them.

We should remember the comments of the late Dr. Delamothé, who, when Minister for Justice, said that in any criminal trial involving the death of a person the only thing that is forgotten is the corpus delicti. The corpse is dead, buried and forgotten. Again I put forward the suggestion that in all cases involving death as the result of a criminal act a counsel for the corpse should be appointed. Someone is needed to tell the jury things that the Crown prosecutor either will not or, because of the peculiar ethical rules of his profession, cannot tell them.

The edifice of justice is no different from any other structure. No matter how soundly constructed its framework might be, no matter how beautiful its architecture might be, no matter how opulent it might appear, no matter how spacious and capacious its interior might be, it will not stand for long if its foundations are rotten. And the foundations of our legal and judicial system are rotten. The sooner we strengthen those foundations, the better it will be for everyone.

As he is wont to do—and this is one of his weaknesses—the Minister went into dithyrambs about our judges. He told us how wonderful they were, how they were paragons of all the virtues, how impeccable they were. He implied, in effect, that they were almost celestially begotten and anointed of God. What a lot of stupid, useless, dangerous snobbery! Judges are no different from politicians, waterside workers or any other group of employees. Among their ranks are both good and bad.

Any man who enters a profession—whether it be medicine or the law—any man who is elected to Parliament and any man who is appointed to a council or to any other public office takes with him into his position all his private and personal idiosyncrasies, his whims, his political beliefs and his religious bigotries. Although he may try to be totally impartial—and I believe some judges earnestly endeavour to remain impartial—every now and again his private feelings, prejudices and bigotries come through his facade. This is so, too, of a judge of our courts.

We should stop crawling to the judges. It is about time that we acquainted them with the fact that we regard them as ordinary, decent citizens, just as we are. We should tell them that we know there are some rotten apples in the barrel and that we will deal with them. We should say, "You are not above and apart from ordinary people. You are paid a handsome salary and given wonderful working conditions to do a good job. As well you have a munificent pension scheme, to which

you contribute nothing. We want you to do the job you were appointed to do." Importantly, of course, we should add, "We have no intention of telling you the manner in which you will frame your judgments or the severity of the punishments that you will impose. What we will do, however, is ask you to consider the taxpayers, who pay you your salaries." Whilst some judges do this, it is common knowledge that others do not.

I intend to quote an opinion expressed in relation to the High Court of Australia, the highest judicial body in the land. When talking about counsel being asked for an opinion as to the success or failure of a case that might be taken to the High Court, this person said—

"If counsel has to advise if a certain action is constitutional he is less concerned with the Constitution than with the composition of the court."

He was saying, in other words, that if counsel takes a case to the High Court of Australia involving the Commonwealth Constitution, he is less concerned with the Constitution than with the judges who constitute the High Court bench.

Would the Committee like to know who said that? Would the honourable member for Rockhampton like me to tell him who made that comment?

**Mr. Wright:** I am sorry, I wasn't listening.

**Mr. AIKENS:** Those words were uttered by a chap named Gough Whitlam on 1 July, 1955, in the House of Representatives, as reported on page 1296 of Federal "Hansard" for that session. That is the opinion of a gentleman who was a Q.C. He may or may not be a good lawyer, but he is Prime Minister of Australia. Of course, he is only the titular Prime Minister; the real Prime Minister of Australia is Dr. Cairns, Bob Hawke or Jack Munday. I am not quite sure which one is. Probably it is a triumvirate—an unholy trinity. Any lawyer will admit that, if he has a criminal case, he tries to arrange to have it tried by a judge who is known for his leniency towards that particular type of offender.

When Chief Justice Sir William Mack was on the bench—and probably he was one of the worst judges to disgrace the bench in Queensland—every barrister with a case involving killing by a motor-car angled and did everything possible to have it tried by him. Let us get away from judicial snobbery, and crawling and cringing to the judiciary.

Let us deal with facts and do all we possibly can to help the little people. I am sure that honourable members will agree with me that many Crown prosecutors are either colossally ignorant or they run a "schlenter". On television today we saw one of the greatest fight schlenters in history—between Foreman and Mohammed Ali. Neither of them could knock a maggot

off a chop, yet they were fighting for the world's heavyweight championship. Foreman was hitting Mohammed Ali with an open glove; he did not punch him once. Ali was bunting on a beautiful turn. In the eighth round, when everybody was getting sick of it, Ali gave him a little clip on the chin that would not have knocked a sick baby off a pot, and Foreman fell to the floor and was counted out.

If we judge Crown prosecutors by their performances, many of them run a schlenter nearly as bad as that fight. It is time we did something about them.

(Time expired.)

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice) (3.43 p.m.), in reply: Before dealing with the main speakers I shall respond quickly to statements made by the honourable member for Townsville South, who quite often makes interesting and entertaining speeches.

**Mr. Aikens:** I have the people on my side.

**Mr. KNOX:** I am not denying that the honourable member has people on his side. That does not necessarily make him right. Sometimes he may be wrong and have the majority of people on his side.

The honourable member's remarks about the judiciary were quite inappropriate and incorrect.

**Mr. Aikens:** Bill, you're a nice fellow, but you just wouldn't know.

**Mr. KNOX:** I know enough about the background of the members of our judiciary to know that whatever prejudices, biases, political opinions or religious views they hold, when they sit on the bench they are judicial in their approach to matters before them. They behave in the very best tradition of what we still generally term British justice. In this country, not merely in this State, we are very fortunate to have our judiciary regarded as being beyond reproach. I speak of the Bench as a body.

**Mr. Aikens:** Are you speaking of the whole of them?

**Mr. KNOX:** Of all the judiciary in this country.

**Mr. Aikens:** Someone will sell you the Boer War Memorial if you carry on like that.

**Mr. KNOX:** That may be, but looking at the record of our judiciary as against that of the judiciary in most other countries of the world, we have reason to be very thankful for its integrity and independence. It will be a very sorry day if our judiciary ever loses its independence. It must, and will, I am sure, keep on working as one of the independent arms of government.

**Mr. Aikens:** They are losing it themselves; we are not taking it away from them.

**Mr. KNOX:** Honourable members in the Chamber know the views of the honourable member for Townsville South. Unfortunately if people who read the debate later were to see that I followed him and did not contradict him they would probably assume that he was right. Of course, on this occasion he is wrong and should be corrected immediately.

I deplore the remarks made by the honourable member about Crown prosecutors. They carry out their tasks, very difficult though they sometimes are, responsibly and in the best traditions of the law. Certainly it could never be said of any Crown prosecutor that he behaved in the way the honourable member suggested.

**Mr. Jensen:** Look at the headline story in the "Telegraph".

**Mr. KNOX:** That just shows what can be started.

The honourable member for Rockhampton dealt with a number of matters to which I should reply quickly. Firstly, on the matter of the Corporate Affairs Office dealing with criminal influence in Queensland companies, I am not aware of any criminals invading Queensland. I was speaking about the reorganisation of the Corporate Affairs Office so that the very things happening in other parts of Australia were prevented here. In fact, criminals—standover men—were moving into the company area in Australia in the same way as they have done in the United States. It was in relation to that that I gave the warning and suggested that we should reorganise our Corporate Affairs Office. The way the honourable member referred to it implied that I was speaking of Queensland specifically. The situation is common to the whole of Australia, but principally in the South. Plenty of publicity has appeared in the Press recently indicating the nature of the encroachments made by criminal elements into corporate affairs. I believe that we in Queensland have been particularly fortunate not to have that criminal element, although it appears on the horizon from time to time.

I turn now to Carrigans, which is of course a private company. Until the amendments to the Act in 1971-72, private companies were not obliged to appoint auditors. It was as a result of the 1973 amendment that Carrigans conducted its first audit. As I mentioned in an answer to a question in the House, that audit report contained a qualification. At about the time the company announced it could not continue in business, we were asking questions of it.

Again I warn people about private firms. People who deal with them are obliged to find out something about them. There are plenty of ways in which that can be done. People who invest money in that type of

organisation must make exhaustive inquiries, bearing in mind that they are private firms and not public companies.

The honourable member for Rockhampton said that only 30 per cent of the complaints to the Consumer Affairs Bureau had been resolved satisfactorily. I do not know where he got that figure from.

**Mr. Wright:** I specifically said "fully resolved". That is the way the report read.

**Mr. KNOX:** I accept that. I would like to say, though, that 60 per cent of the consumers making a complaint to the bureau obtain full redress. Just because people make reference to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, it should not be assumed that the complaints are necessarily of a nature that can be settled. It is important that that should be understood. Only about 7 per cent of complaints are found to be beyond the aid of the Consumer Affairs Bureau.

**Mr. Chinchin:** And the consumer is not always right. There are two sides to every story.

**Mr. KNOX:** Yes, the consumer is at times wrong. It is interesting to note that, of the people who refer complaints to the Consumer Affairs Bureau, 7 per cent have not been capable of being resolved and the rest have been in some way or other.

Extra staff have been appointed to the bureau. We are trying to extend the service of the Consumer Affairs Bureau into the country.

As to the report on the bread industry, the matter of bread returns was considered by the Government; but, because banning returns of bread would contribute to an increase in the price of bread, as happened in South Australia, it was decided not to ban the practice. I might say that the Prices Justification Tribunal, when examining the price of bread, had the opportunity of taking into account the findings of that study into bread returns and was not prepared to accept that as a special consideration for not increasing bread prices. The Prices Justification Tribunal already controls the price of bread in Australia, yet Opposition members are demanding price control. The price of bread has been increased by the tribunal in the past six months. So what are Opposition members talking about? Price control does not mean a reduction in prices. The Prices Justification Tribunal has not reduced the price of one single item. Mr. Hawke complained about this the other day. Out of the hundreds of matters brought before it, the tribunal has not made one single reduction in price.

Let me name some of the increases in price in the past few months. As a result of a decision by the Prices Justification Tribunal, the price of beer has been increased.

**Mr. Blake:** Where?

**Mr. KNOX:** In Queensland car prices have been increased twice by decision of the Prices Justification Tribunal, and nobody else.

Let me now outline some of the matters that are price controlled by the Federal Government. The cost of postage in this country is price controlled. The G.P.O. is price controlled. It cannot increase prices without reference to the Government of the day. The cost of postage has increased in this country to the staggering rate of 10c a letter. This was unbelievable when it was first suggested. That is what the average citizen will pay to post a letter to his mother or to send her a Christmas card. That is price controlled. Neither more nor less than 10c can be charged. The price of petrol in this country is determined by the Prices Justification Tribunal.

**Mr. Davis:** It is not price controlled.

**Mr. KNOX:** Of course it is. The Prices Justification Tribunal is a price-controlling organisation. What is the honourable member talking about? The price of petrol in this country has been increased by that tribunal. Not only that, but the subsidy that was payable in two-thirds of Queensland has been removed. This increased the price of petrol so much that in some areas of Queensland people are paying \$1 a gallon. That is under control, too. It was a decision of the Federal Government.

**Mr. Blake:** That is not because of the differential; that is because of profiteering.

**Mr. KNOX:** Is that the excuse in the honourable member's electorate? He will not survive on 7 December by saying that. He will not be able to fool the people of Isis by telling them that; they are among the people who have been deprived of the opportunity of travelling. The cost has been increased because the subsidy has been taken away. Most of the Australians affected by that Commonwealth decision live in Queensland, not in South Australia, in Western Australia (where only 40 per cent are adversely affected), in Tasmania (where nobody is affected), or in New South Wales (where some people will be affected). Most of the people worst affected by that decision live in Queensland.

Telephone charges are price controlled yet we pay the highest charges in the world. People in New Zealand get their telephones free.

What about interest rates? Australians are paying the third-highest interest rates in the world as a direct result of the decision of the Federal Government. Let us look at the cost of living and price control. Certainly price control does not mean any reduction in the level of prices paid by the community, because South Australia had the highest rise in Australia in the last 12-monthly period. It had the highest rise in the cost of living, although over 100 items are price controlled.

**THE TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. D. Hewitt):** Order! Members will not loiter in the lobby.

**Mr. KNOX:** Forty-one cents a loaf for bread! The highest price for bread in Australia is in Adelaide, under price control. There have been three increases in the price of bread in Adelaide in the last 12 months. So much for price control keeping prices down!

Now let me get back to the remarks of the honourable member for Rockhampton. I was provoked, Mr. Hewitt. The honourable member also referred to the report of the Consumer Affairs Council not being printed. I table in this Chamber numerous reports that are not printed.

**Mr. Wright:** You always leave that one out.

**Mr. KNOX:** I leave it out because it does not contain the quantity of material that the report of the Consumer Affairs Bureau produces, and it is not of as much public interest as the report of the Consumer Affairs Bureau. The only reason why I do not have it printed is that I do not want to spend public money on the copies that would be entailed. The last time the honourable member for Rockhampton moved that the report be printed, many copies of it were never handed out, and public money had been spent on that document.

**Mr. Wright:** They are still important documents.

**Mr. KNOX:** They are important documents, and they are tabled in this Chamber and the information in them is made public. There is no need to print hundreds of copies in order to convince anyone that the report is important. Its importance is recognised by virtue of its being made public in this Chamber.

The honourable member for Toowong quite rightly said that the report of the crime and punishment committee was of great significance. I said during the debate on the committee's report that I would distribute copies of it, together with the report of the debate, to a number of people. I have done that, and I have already received a number of very helpful replies. I assure the Committee that in the next Parliament, when we are returned as the Government, there will come from that report a number of administrative and legislative changes that will be of benefit to the people of this State. The select committee can be proud of its contribution.

The honourable member's comments about constitutional problems are quite correct. The Solicitor-General's office and the Government's advisers in the Crown Law Office are weighed down heavily with the work of examining legislation and giving advice on constitutional matters. Indeed, it is because

of their devotion to the task that it has been possible to take corrective action in a number of situations that have arisen. The work that has been done at the interstate conferences on these matters has led to a great deal of unanimity among the States in challenging the Commonwealth Government on this issue. I should say that next year, after the Government is returned on 7 December, it will have the mandate it seeks to enable it to go further in stopping the Federal Government—the centralist Government, I should say, because “Federal” does not appear in its name any more—from taking further authority from this State, or from any other State. We are determined to fight it, and I believe that the people of Queensland will support us on this issue on 7 December.

I was pleased to have the views of other honourable members. The honourable member for Merthyr referred to matters on which he has spoken on other occasions. He spoke of the desirability of making police available to legal offices and to the Corporate Affairs Commission. I have noted his remarks, and, as I said, he has been pursuing the matter for some time.

The views of the honourable member for Sandgate on requiring vandals to effect repairs are appreciated, and I share them. The Government will certainly attend to that matter in due course. A course of education in consumer affairs is being developed in the schools.

The honourable member for Brisbane again raised the Weedman’s issue.

**Mr. Davis:** You have not done anything about it.

**Mr. KNOX:** Again I point out to the honourable member that, by virtue of the amendment of the Act, the minority shareholders were allowed to take the action they did to protect their interests. The honourable member believes that a Big Brother should be floating around in operations of that type. The minority shareholders were able to look after their interests successfully by taking advantage of the provisions of the Act.

Let me make this point about advertisements supporting solicitors. Solicitors come under the authority and legislation of Parliament. Their profession, and its supervision, is directly related to legislation passed by Parliament. I have as much responsibility in that aspect of the law as I have in any other aspect, for ensuring that solicitors are able to maintain their independence in that profession, for seeing that they are able to give to the public the service it requires.

At 4 p.m.,

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 24 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Justice and Attorney-General.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

Justice and Attorney-General—

	\$
Chief Office . . . . .	1,664,770
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue and Trust and Special Funds	39,656,752

#### HEALTH

##### CHIEF OFFICE

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (4.2 p.m.): I move—

“That \$18,887,925 be granted for ‘Department of Health—Chief Office.’”

When the Health Department Estimates were debated two years ago, Chief Office appropriation was only \$7,947,897. Two years ago, the total expenditure approved for the Department of Health for 1972-73 was \$123,458,132. In 1974-75 funds have been provided to meet an expenditure of \$194,515,244.

Whilst money is not the answer to all our problems, as so many in the Commonwealth Government seats of power today seem to think, the additional funds that my colleague the honourable the Treasurer has been able to channel into the Health Department appropriations over recent years have enabled an orderly, and I repeat, orderly progressive development of health services in this State.

Let me say at this point that of the almost \$200,000,000 that is being provided, that portion which comes from Commonwealth sources is less than 16 per cent. I say that because from time to time in these days we are chided because we do not regularly make special motions of thanks to the Federal Government for the largesse it is providing. I want to say two things. Of that total of almost \$200,000,000, less than 16 per cent comes from the Federal Government. The next thing I want to say is that we regard it as Queensland money being returned to the people from whom it was taken in the form of taxes.

This will be the final opportunity that I will have as a Minister of the Crown to outline to members of this Assembly and place on record some of the achievements of the Department of Health—I say with modesty—over the past ten years, during which time it has been my privilege to be Minister. I propose to take that opportunity today.

During the past ten years, the Department of Health has undergone a massive change, and through new initiatives and hard and dedicated work by all who labour there,

the department has set a firm foundation for the future of the health and medical services throughout Queensland well into the next century. The work is not completed, but the developmental plans are firmly set and many are well advanced, and Queenslanders can continue to be proud of their unique health-care service, which is second to none in this country.

Because of the flexibility of the Queensland system, the Health Department has been able to lead Australia in new trends of health and medical service. Unfortunately, our development has been slower than we would have liked owing to those insurmountable problems that face all progressive health services, namely inadequate manpower resources at all levels and limited finance. I want to emphasise once again the inadequacy of the manpower resources in all disciplines and repeat once again that it is in this direction that the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth authorities should be directing their energies and the immense resources that they command. However, I can happily report, that in the past ten years, the health services of this State, in all their wide areas of responsibility, have developed as first-class, front-line-care services for the benefit and welfare of Queenslanders.

It is true that during the past decade the department has had its critics, but honourable members will realise that health is a very precious thing to people. The Health Department deals with very special people. They are unhappy people, they are people who are emotionally distraught because of illness, they want our help, and they want it immediately, with little concern for the rational practicabilities of health-care delivery. Providing a medical and health-care service 24 hours a day, 168 hours a week and 52 weeks a year, is a massive task, which is subject to constant strain, and which must suffer from occasional human failings and errors. The vast expanses of the State, the most decentralised in the nation, impose further challenges to those who administer our health services. Notwithstanding these obstacles, great advances have been made. Let me detail some of the achievements of the Health Department over the past ten years.

One—

We have mounted the most progressive and the most farsighted programme of hospital development, both new construction and replacement, ever in the history of this State. It sickens me to think that a Commonwealth Government, which came into office under the flag—false thought it is proving to be—of organised rational planning in all areas of development, is the one and only agent that expresses determination to sabotage our rational and integrated plan by intruding into this area of State responsibility in the metropolitan area of Brisbane.

Let me ask a few questions about the determination of the Commonwealth to build a "quickie" hospital somewhere in

Brisbane. Where will it be? The first suggestion was Mt. Gravatt and the next was Inala. And the last comment by the Federal Minister for Health indicated that he had not the slightest idea where it would be. He made some vague suggestion that it should be somewhere where it would serve many of the newer suburbs. This is the sort of thing we are faced with from a group of people who are constantly chiding us about a lack of planning. So I ask where is it going to be and what is it going to be. Is it to be a teaching hospital? If so, have the universities been consulted? What will be provided in this hospital? Will there be a paediatric section, will there be neurosurgery, will the Commonwealth attempt to compete with our Prince Charles Hospital in its excellent open-heart surgery field? Will the hospital dabble in renal transplants? Will a radium clinic be established? Will the professional specialists in the fields of medicine, surgery, anaesthesia, orthopaedics, psychiatry, paediatrics, gynaecology, pathology, radiology, and so on be consulted, or will they be presented with a fait accompli? What of rationalisation in the superspecialties, neurosurgery, radium, renal transplant, cardiac surgery? What are the answers? I doubt if they have even asked themselves the questions yet and, if they are talking about starting in the New Year, the whole proposal is farcical. Are the efforts of State administrators, both professional and lay, in this area over so many years to be brought to confusion through the egotism of one man? I, and those who wish to spend taxpayers' public money prudently, and purposefully, sincerely hope not.

In the next seven years, the Government will be spending in the order of \$110,000,000 to ensure that our hospitals, the backbone of the free health scheme, are up-to-date and modern in design and have all facilities for today's sophisticated health care.

The forward planning covers all areas of the State—from Thursday Island in the North, to Mount Isa in the North West, to St. George and the South West, to Southport and all major provincial cities from Cairns through to Ipswich and Toowoomba. Those projects involve \$110,000,000 of forward planning over the next seven years. There are plans aplenty, and statements to the contrary are bitter political lies. The honourable member for Lytton had the audacity to say recently in this Chamber that, because the Planning and Development Unit in the Health Department had been operating as the formal planning unit of the department for only the past 18 months, forward planning could not have been possible before then.

In doing so, the honourable member quoted from a paper presented by Dr. Powell to a seminar on "Planning in State Government Hospitals" organised by the Co-ordinator-General on 4 and 5 December 1973. The honourable member quotes from the introductory paragraph of Dr. Powell's paper and from his summary at the conclusion of his talk.

What the honourable member has not quoted is the wealth of useful material that appears between those two paragraphs. Of course the department's planning unit has been operating for only a little over two years, but to conclude from that that there was no forward planning in the hospital field prior to that date is ridiculous in the extreme.

Does a person have to be formally registered with the Justice Department as a charitable organisation before he can perform an act of charity? Does he have to be formally declared a master painter before he can paint his front fence? Does he have to be formally registered as a motor mechanic before he can change the spark plugs of his motor car? How pathetic are the honourable member's conclusions!

If Dr. Powell's paper is read in its entirety, the honourable member would be aware that this type of formal planning unit is not a new thing only in this Department of Health; it applies in most Governments all over the Western World. Formal planning units are a new approach. The honourable member will, if I refresh his memory, recall that Dr. Powell was careful to point out the methods and approaches to planning, and what was done previously in departments and organisations before the establishment of these formal planning units.

The honourable member's contribution is simply another example of a crude technique he has of quoting totally out of context for political purposes, and, in so doing, misrepresenting the facts and deliberately casting damaging aspersions on the authors of documents and the departments concerned in their production.

For the benefit of honourable members generally, I lay on the table a copy of Dr. Powell's paper and ask that it be incorporated in the "Hansard" record of this speech.

*[Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the paper on the table.]*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Is leave granted for the Minister to incorporate the paper in "Hansard"?

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

#### THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

"Only within the past eighteen months has there been set up any formal planning apparatus—the Health Services Planning and Development Unit. Because of its newness, the Unit's role is still not fully defined. Nevertheless, some points can be made.

In the first place, the Unit's concern with policy-formulation stops short of policy-decision, and still less is it involved with policy-implementation. Its tasks are to present alternatives for policy; to explore the implications of proposed policy; and to draw attention to areas where policy is deficient. It acts either on its own initiative or because matters are referred to it. In theory, its

responsibilities cover the whole range of health services, although in fact there are wide areas which it has not yet touched. In particular, it is not intended that it should be concerned with financial planning or O. and M.

By design, it is strongly research-based.

At this stage, it may be as well to refer to a number of features of Health administration and practice which strongly influence, and to some extent militate against, Health care planning.

#### 1. Factors within the Department:

(a) Without doubt one of the major factors has been, in the past, the overwhelming economic impact of the hospital service. This has tended to obscure all other areas. In Queensland, as elsewhere in the world, it is now being recognised that this has produced a very unbalanced health care system.

(b) Although the Department is a centralised department from an administrative viewpoint, there is a high degree of decentralisation of functions. The various Divisions possess considerable autonomy at an operational level, and tend to act independently of each other. Whilst this may not be of importance in the case of some Divisions, it is very much so in the case of those dealing with patients and families—since any integrated effort at this level becomes extremely difficult to implement.

(c) Given the potential for independent action on the part of the Divisions, it is inevitable that they become preoccupied with problems of organisational integrity and territoriality. Boundary problems are a potent source of conflict.

(d) All Health Departments, and ours is no exception, are slightly odd in that they combine a significant regulatory function with a client-oriented role at a very personal level—both directly, through their service Divisions, and vicariously, through the Hospital Board's and authorities which they control. There is no clear 'line and staff' organization. Centrally, there is an administrative, policy-making line which descends from the Minister through a non-medical Permanent Head, supported by a professional staff 'on tap' and headed by the Director-General (who nevertheless has right of access to the Minister and also has vast statutory powers). As we pass to the periphery, however, the operational line function becomes medical, with administrative staff support. With local variants, this pattern is common to all States (but not to the Commonwealth).

#### 2. Factors external to the Department:

(a) The boundary between what is Health and what is not Health is a blurred one. Nonetheless, the State machinery of government places some functions which are unequivocally 'Health' outside the Health portfolio—part of Children's Services, aboriginal

health, etc. Such boundary problems can be, and are, handled by interdepartmental action, but planning is not made easier.

(b) Fragmentation of the Health care system between tiers of government presents a similar difficulty. So far as Local Government is concerned there is no problem, since the Health function of this tier is governed by State Statute. As between State and Commonwealth, however, the potential for disintegrated effort at the level of the patient is very great, and coordinated effort difficult to achieve.

(c) In this regard, the Commonwealth Government is now taking major initiatives in the Health field, which significantly influence planning activities at State level. Its recently announced Community Health Program is an instance of this.

(d) Still on the question of government action, knowledge of planning in other Departments may modify Health Department planning. More importantly, lack of knowledge may mean that planning which should be done is not done.

(e) Technological change is not unique to Medicine, but the effects of change upon a Health Care system can be great—consider the results of the introduction of penicillin. Moreover, the change may be quite unpredictable, and given the long lead times in implementation of planning (see below), it can seriously disturb the system. Chermiside Hospital is a classic example. The introduction of a new anti-tuberculous drug, which could not have been foreseen at the time, meant that relatively soon after opening it was far less committed to tuberculosis than had been planned for, and so has taken on a variety of other functions, which would not necessarily have been sited there had the opportunity existed to plan for them *de novo*.

(f) Long lead times can exist between the recognition of trends indicating future needs, and the implementation of responses to these needs. Hospital construction is the obvious example; but provision of professional manpower is scarcely less important—it is a minimum of eleven years from matriculation before a surgeon is even partially trained. In this case of skilled manpower, the resultant oscillatory effort is well-recognised. Moreover, the trends themselves can be affected in unpredictable ways. This is particularly the case in fertility patterns—birth rates change for no apparent cause, with consequent distortion of demand.

(g) Health is more than usually sensitive to changes in fashions elsewhere. Doctors adopt new practices in response to innovations in other countries; technological innovation generates changes in practice; and in particular, all this is reflected by widening consumer expectations. Community Health is an ever-receding horizon.

(h) Our pluralistic system of Health care—involving state, private, and voluntary agency—means that one is only planning for a segment of the whole, even although what happens in one part must affect what happens in the others.

(i) Finally, we suffer from sheer lack of knowledge. Nobody can say, with any certainty, how many hospital beds should be provided per unit population; or how many people can be cared for by one general practitioner. Moreover, and this is the greatest lack, we have no indicators by which we can measure the health of a community and against which the results of planning can be evaluated.

Given the constraints enumerated above—and others—it is clear that medium-to-long-range planning on a total systems basis can be no more than an exercise in self-delusion. This does not mean, however, that we are forced to restrict ourselves to incremental planning 'at the margin' (which can easily degenerate into crisis response). Much planning must be at this ad hoc level, of course, but it is nevertheless reasonable to attempt longer-range planning, not across the whole system, but in those sub-systems where it is feasible, because the variables can be identified and sufficiently approximate trends established; and where it is needed because, for example, of the extent of capital investment involved.

#### The Planning Activities of the Department

##### 1. Peripherally—

Each Division, to a greater or lesser extent, has developed its own image of its future, and plans with this in mind. Such planning may, or may not, be stated explicitly and communicated to the centre.

It is obviously very desirable that each Division plans its own future but, to the extent that its future activities impinge on other areas, it is equally important to devise a means of integrated planning which allows maximum freedom to individual Divisions whilst ensuring eventual coordinated action.

##### 2. Centrally—

Planning is based upon the short to medium-term, and no attempt has been made to plan for needs beyond the next fifteen years.

Broadly, planning falls into two main categories:

(a) The projection of needs for existing services. This does not imply that services will stay rigidly in their existing patterns, but does mean that the service will be recognisably the same over the projected period.

(b) Innovative planning involves new types of service. The current example is the development of a network of Community Health Centres.

Additionally, planning must involve—

(c) Manpower planning—especially professional, and technical manpower.

(d) Identification of areas of Need or of Demand (the two are not synonymous). These may be seen in terms of geography or of demography (e.g. special segments of the population, such as children, the aged).

(e) Planning for coordination/integration/rationalisation.

(f) ad hoc planning. Because this may have long-term implications it is no less significant for being ad hoc.

#### Methods and Approaches to Planning

##### (a) Data collection—

A comprehensive data base of current resource availability and utilization is essential. At present we are limited to—

(i)—various departmental data collections.

(ii)—collections of hospital utilization by the Bureau of Census and Statistics.

(iii)—ad hoc collections.

Preliminary work is being undertaken to develop an integrated Health Services Information System.

##### (b) Population projections—

These are the nub of Health services planning. We must inevitably rely upon such bodies as Co-ordinator-General's Department and the Bureau of Census and Statistics.

##### (c) Resource Utilization—

Apart from existing data collections, use is made from time of special survey for particular purposes—e.g. a recent survey of bed utilization in the medical wards of Princess Alexandra Hospital.

##### (d) Assessing Need/Demand areas—

This is done by analysis of utilization data; by social surveys (such as one currently being carried out at Redcliffe); by on-the-spot discussions with community organisations; not least importantly—by 'keeping an ear to the ground'.

##### (e) Inter-relationships of the Health Care System—

Admitting the hazards of a general systems approach, there is some merit in attempting to determine the magnitude of flows (e.g. patient flows) between the different parts of the system. Some useful work has been done by survey to determine the contribution of private general practice to total health care.

#### Organisation of Planning

(a) As stated, the formal apparatus is the Health Services Planning and Development Unit, which consists of

Principal Medical Officer (in charge)  
Epidemiologist  
Sociologist  
Research Assistant (B.Sc. in Maths/Stats)  
Stenographer

Likely additional staff are:

Economist  
Data Preparation Assistant(s)  
Programmer

The Unit reports to the Director-General of Health.

(b) The informal apparatus of intra-departmental committees remains important. In this regard, the Department makes a good deal of use of people from other fields—notably the University and the Australian Medical Association. Joint Commonwealth-State activity is significant for planning at a number of levels—the Health Ministers' Conference; the Hospital and Allied Services Advisory Council and its Committees; and the National Health and Medical Research Council with its hierarchy of committees and sub-committees.

#### Summary

In summary—there are many constraints upon long-term planning in the Health Care field. Inevitably, much planning is, and is likely to remain, ad hoc and fairly short-term. Beyond this, however, attempts are now being made to develop a longer-term approach to planning in particular areas, noting that a total systems approach is probably an impossibility.

#### Postscript

No mention has been made of evaluating the output. This is part of the task of the Planning and Development Unit. To the extent that this involves the measurement of utilization, no particular problems exist, apart from the bulk of data. If, however, we wish to measure results in terms of the effect upon the health of the community, we are up against major conceptual difficulties for which there is no simple solution. It seems likely that, once we pass beyond measures of utilization, measures of effect will need to be worked out separately for individual problems.

Dr. O. W. Powell,  
Principal Medical Officer,  
Planning and Development Unit."

**Mr. TOOTH:** Of course, there has been forward planning in the past, but for the future, with the development of this special unit, there will come an even greater sophistication in forward planning that will be necessary to meet the requirements of a progressively demanding society.

Most honourable members would be aware of the planned developments in hospital construction throughout the State, but, in view of the references recently made to our forward planning programme, I will read out again the projects which are under construction or in the planning stages, not only in the hospital field but in other areas of the department's activities where forward planning also takes place:—

In North Queensland, the projects include:		Estimated Cost
		\$
Cairns Hospital—second high-rise block ..	..	14,000,000
Mt. Isa Hospital—five-storey extension ..	..	8,900,000

	Estimated Cost \$		Estimated Cost \$
Townsville Hospital development .. .. .	6,600,600	Boonah Hospital—new hospital .. .. .	900,000
Mackay Hospital—new block .. .. .	5,400,000	Challinor Centre, Ipswich—new hall .. .. .	600,000
Mareeba Hospital redevelopment .. .. .	2,500,000	Inglewood Hospital—new block .. .. .	800,000
Atherton Hospital—new ward block .. .. .	2,300,000	Kilcoy Hospital—more accommodation .. .. .	330,000
Townsville—dental therapist facilities .. .. .	1,100,000	Dalby Hospital—extensions .. .. .	270,000
Thursday Island Hospital—new ward block .. .. .	1,000,000	Kingaroy Hospital—alterations .. .. .	240,000
Innisfail Hospital—maternity and dental facilities .. .. .	1,250,000		<hr/>
Weipa Hospital extensions .. .. .	1,300,000		\$42,490,000
Richmond Hospital—general ward block .. .. .	1,000,000	In the city of Brisbane:—	
Tully Hospital—outpatients and administration facilities .. .. .	500,000	Royal Brisbane Hospital development .. .. .	23,500,000
Townsville—handicapped accommodation .. .. .	400,000	Mt. Gravatt—new hospital—Stage 1 (Obstetrics Unit) .. .. .	7,000,000
	<hr/>	Princess Alexandra Hospital development .. .. .	10,400,000
	\$46,250,600	Prince Charles Hospital development .. .. .	6,900,000
Central Queensland will see:—		Wynnum Nursing Care Unit .. .. .	4,200,000
Rockhampton Hospital—second major development, medical and services block .. .. .	10,500,000	Wolston Park Hospital modernisation .. .. .	3,400,000
Rockhampton—handicapped accommodation .. .. .	1,000,000	New South Brisbane Dental Hospital .. .. .	1,700,000
Blackwater—new hospital .. .. .	600,000	Royal Women's Hospital—Alterations .. .. .	1,440,000
Moranbah—new hospital .. .. .	500,000	Queensland Institute of Medical Research building .. .. .	1,400,000
Aramac Hospital—new hospital .. .. .	450,000	Maternal and Child Welfare Centre, St. Paul's Terrace .. .. .	1,300,000
Winton Hospital—new ward block .. .. .	400,000	Yeronga dental therapists facilities .. .. .	2,000,000
Yeppoon Hospital—new hospital .. .. .	1,000,000	Stafford dental clinical centre .. .. .	510,000
	<hr/>	Sandgate "Eventide" Home rebuilding .. .. .	5,000,000
	\$14,450,000	Basil Stafford Centre—accommodation .. .. .	700,000
In South Queensland:—		Holland Park dental clinical centre .. .. .	530,000
Southport Hospital—new 9-storey block .. .. .	10,800,000	Mt. Gravatt East dental clinical centre .. .. .	500,000
Redcliffe Hospital development .. .. .	8,000,000		<hr/>
Ipswich Hospital development .. .. .	5,800,000		\$70,480,000
Toowoomba Hospital—new medical block .. .. .	5,200,000		
Baillie Henderson Hospital modernisation .. .. .	3,500,000	I move on now to further achievements over the past 10 years:—	
Jubilee Hospital replacement .. .. .	1,300,000	Two—	
Nambour Hospital—new block .. .. .	1,400,000	The department has introduced new, progressive concepts in the field of mental health. Recently, a new Mental Health Bill was passed by this Parliament providing a more humane approach to the care of the mentally sick and protecting the rights of the mentally-sick patient.	
Maryborough Hospital extensions .. .. .	2,200,000		
St. George Hospital—new ward block .. .. .	1,150,000		

In the past decade, the State Health Department has made tremendous advances in the care and treatment of our mentally ill. This ongoing programme is one in which I have personally taken great pride in that I have been able to afford encouragement and assistance to the devoted people who have promoted it. It is one of the greatest developments in the health field that has been undertaken in this State.

Honourable members will note that it is an enlightened and far-reaching development, tackling the vast areas of mental illness on numerous fronts. One of the major problems that we, as responsible people in society, must continue to push is the removal of the stigma from mental illness.

Reviewing the Queensland position over the last decade, patient accommodation has been upgraded with new buildings and major renovation of the old. This process is nearing completion, and thus, along with progressive developments in psychiatric and therapeutic processes, hospitals have also been vastly improved.

The separation of facilities for the intellectually handicapped from those for the mentally sick was started in 1967 with the opening of the Basil Stafford Training Centre and the transformation of the old Ipswich Mental Hospital into the Challinor Centre for the retarded. This process will continue with the opening of new wards at the Baillie Henderson Hospital shortly, the new unit at Townsville, those planned at Rockhampton and Southport, and extensions at the Basil Stafford Training Centre. There are still a significant number of intellectually retarded patients at Wolston Park Hospital, Baillie Henderson Hospital, and Mosman Hall, although at Wolston Park, in particular, it has been possible to separate functionally a unit for the intellectually retarded from the remainder of the hospital.

In 1970, the Central Assessment Clinic was opened, and it has ensured a more equitable and rational allotment of available beds for the retarded, and their placement more appropriately in particular units. It has also enabled some intellectually handicapped children and adults to be satisfactorily maintained in the community.

Services for alcoholics have been similarly improved by their separation from the general body of psychiatric patients. The Wacol Rehabilitation Clinic was opened in 1965, and a small female unit was added in 1967. A further unit was added to the clinic in April 1973, so that it is now able to admit directly all alcoholics other than those suffering from frank psychiatric disorders as a result of excessive alcohol intake. This provides better management of those addicted to, or dependent upon, alcohol, and it relieves Wolston Park Hospital of a group of patients who never fitted well into the psychiatric setting. The planned establishment of an outpatients and assessment centre for alcoholics next year will

further improve this service. It is hoped that this will be followed in a reasonable period of time by the addition of a detoxification centre.

The Security Patients' Hospital established in 1972 now provides for better treatment and management of those mentally disturbed persons who have been involved with the criminal law, and it has relieved Wolston Park Hospital of another group of patients who were inappropriately placed.

The problem of the mentally and enfeebled aged has been met by the establishment of "Eventide" homes and senile annexes in general hospitals. Whereas in 1957 29 per cent of patients in psychiatric hospitals were over the age of 60, by 1971 this figure had been reduced to 19 per cent. The reduction was achieved by moving these people (many of whom should never have been in a psychiatric hospital) into more appropriate accommodation in places where they would be nursed without being involved in any way with the treatment of mental illness. By this categorisation, both groups were able to benefit. In that time, well over 2,000 patients had been placed in "Eventide" homes or senile annexes, whereas formerly many of them had been accommodated in psychiatric hospitals.

Over the past decade or so there have been remarkable changes in the pattern of admissions and discharges and in the number of patients requiring in-patient care. In 1957, the average number of patients resident was 4,613, but by 1973—very much more than a decade later—this had dropped to 2,872. In 1957, 1,620 patients were admitted and in 1973, 2,027. Equivalent figures for discharges were 1,693 and 2,283. It will thus be seen that there has been a material rise in the number of admissions, a somewhat larger rise in the number of discharges, and a dramatic fall in the number of patients remaining as residents. All this occurred in the context of a large increase in population. Admissions and discharges have increased, but the number remaining has fallen dramatically because people are no longer being retained in mental hospitals. They are being returned to the community, able either partially or completely to take their places once again as active citizens. That is a tremendous tribute to the work being done in these hospitals. These trends have been most marked at Wolston Park Hospital, and in recent years have also become very marked at the Baillie Henderson Hospital in Toowoomba.

In the last few years, increasing attention has been given to the rehabilitation through hostels and sheltered workshops of patients with very longstanding illnesses, both in the field of general mental illness and that of intellectual retardation.

Far-reaching upgrading of psychiatric nurse training commenced in 1972 with a greatly enlarged and improved syllabus, the appointment of nurse educators, provision of

better teaching accommodation and arrangements for student nurses to be supernumerary to the work establishment for a large proportion of their training period. The further development of arrangements for the early treatment of acute psychiatric disorders in general hospitals is continuing.

The opening of an 80-bed unit at Townsville General Hospital last November was the first step, and this will be followed by the building of a similar unit at Princess Alexandra Hospital and, as soon as this is possible, an extension of the service provided at the Neuro-Psychiatric Unit at Chermiside Hospital, with smaller units planned at Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Southport. All are designed to support and assist the integration of psychiatry and the treatment of acute psychiatric cases within the confines of an ordinary acute hospital.

We are currently recruiting regional psychiatrists to work in with our community health programme and the early treatment units. These early treatment units will be supplemented by a similar unit at the Wolston Park Hospital. The opening of the outpatient department and assessment facility at Stones Corner on Monday last is a further development of the front-line level we are using to treat patients. This day-hospital facility will do much to provide community-level care for patients and to cure many crisis situations.

Three—

We have embarked upon a programme of Community Health Service Centres to complement the services provided by our hospitals and the medical service provided by the general medical practitioner. We started this programme. We planned it in Queensland, and now, with the addition of Commonwealth financial assistance, we will be able to move more quickly in developing it. This is what we are doing. These centres are not designed—and I want to emphasise this—to compete with the general practitioner. They are planned to assist him in treating his patients. We will provide a primary medical service only in those areas in which the general practitioner finds that conditions are such that he is not attracted there to practice his profession.

**Mr. Melloy:** That is pretty general.

**Mr. TOOTH:** When those areas are identified, we will look at the type of service that will be provided in the Community Health Service Centre.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Can you name one Community Health Service Centre that you planned before the Federal Government came to power?

**Mr. TOOTH:** Redcliffe and Townsville. We planned those centres long before the present Federal Government was even dreamed of. This is the sort of highway pirating that Opposition members are given to. They are pretty desperate.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I do not want a shouting match across the Chamber. I would be careful if I were the honourable member for Lytton.

**Mr. TOOTH:** This year will see a further expansion of these successful Department of Health Community Service Centres, with a further 10 planned for development, bringing the total number to 16 centres. As I have explained to honourable members on previous occasions, these centres will provide an important service to all people in the community. It will allow for better utilisation of our health and welfare facilities, which now and for a very considerable time in the future will continue to be stretched because of the chronic shortage of trained staff in all medical and paramedical fields.

Because of the enlightened forward planning by the Queensland Health Department, this State leads Australia in the provision of these co-ordinated and community-based services. Indeed, they have been publicly commended by the Federal Minister for Health. One of the major achievements of this scheme, in the long term, will be a better utilisation of our hospitals. These centres will mean that many people currently treated in hospitals will be able to remain in the community, getting their medical care and attention within the community, and therefore able to live more full and active lives as participating people in the community.

When I speak of the community and retaining more people actively within it, I immediately think of two major achievements in reforms of the past decade. Firstly, I refer to the Community Home Care Service for the Aged scheme, which began in November 1969, which has helped immeasurably in preserving the health and dignity of the aged in many Queensland centres. I have watched with some pride this scheme develop from the embryonic stage, with two pilot centres in Brisbane, to its coverage now of some eight districts supporting some 2000 elderly citizens in our State. This is being continually developed under the guidance of Dr. Mervyn Cheong who has international recognition in this field. This scheme will continue to expand under our community care programme and prove one of the major contributions in the long-term care of elderly people in Queensland.

Four—

We established at Prince Charles Hospital a cardiac unit that has won world acclaim in its successes in open heart surgery. I do not hear that statement being challenged.

Five—

We have established renal dialysis facilities at Princess Alexandra Hospital and Royal Brisbane Hospital, and a renal transplant unit at Princess Alexandra Hospital.

Six—

Coronary-care and intensive-care units have been established at Princess Alexandra Hospital and Royal Brisbane Hospital, and at the large provincial city hospitals.

Seven—

We are introducing computer procedures into the metropolitan hospitals for data processing and patient records. As an indication of our progress in that field, I table an outline of our computer programmes and ask that it be included in "Hansard."

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

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Is leave granted for the Minister to incorporate the document in "Hansard"?

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

#### HOSPITAL COMPUTING IN PRODUCTION

"In Patients Recording and Reporting—

Hospitals Included: Royal Brisbane, Royal Childrens, Princess Alexandra, The Prince Charles and the Prince Charles Neuro-Physiatriac Hospitals

System Coverage: Recording of Patients' Movements and final Diagnoses. Reporting on—Daily Movements; Monthly Commonwealth Claim Figures; Annual Patient Statistics and Classification by disease. Disease Index and research enquiry facilities. Minimal medical auditing and work-load reporting.

Obstetrics—

Hospitals Included: Royal Womens', Mater Mothers Hospitals' Patient Summary Letters, Research and enquiry facilities

Pathology—

Royal Brisbane Hospital

Biochemistry results entry and automatic reporting. Enquiry and research facilities. (Haematology reporting system is awaiting equipment delivery).

Manufacturing Dispensary—

Continuing stock movement and stock-status reporting. Automatic stock-take facilities; Hospitals' issues and usage trends reporting.

Pay Roll—

Full pay-roll system for all employees of Metropolitan and Redcliffe Hospitals Boards (presently using a computer bureau).

Psychiatric Services—

Patient Statistics—Retrieval and Research.

Queensland Radium Institute—

Radio-Therapy dosage and treatment planning.

General—

Statistical Survey Programs for planning and development functions."

**Mr. TOOTH:** I proceed to outline further achievements in the past 10 years.

Eight—

We have placed the organisation and control of State dental services under a new Division of Dental Services, and with recent Commonwealth financial assistance, we are currently planning the development of a dental therapist programme for school-children. The dental service provided at dental clinics in hospitals throughout the State is unique in Australia. It is the envy of every other Australian State and should be recognised as an achievement of the Queensland State Health Department.

Nine—

We have established an orthopaedic unit at the Prince Charles Hospital for elective surgery. A special surgical suite of most up-to-date design has been constructed, and all the advanced procedures are undertaken. The hospitals board has been authorised to plan for the development of that hospital as an acute general hospital to meet the growing needs of the northern suburbs.

Ten—

In the nursing field—

(a) General nursing training was reduced from a four-year to a three-year course.

(b) Lectures in employers' time were introduced.

(c) Broken shifts have, as far as possible, been eliminated.

(d) The Nurses' Award was changed from a "living in" to a "living out" award.

(e) The nurses' curriculum was reviewed to increase hours of lectures and demonstrations from 140 to 800.

(f) A course in nurse-aide training has been introduced.

(g) The department has assumed full financial responsibility for the post-graduate course at the College of Nursing, Brisbane.

Eleven—

A formal Planning and Development Unit has been set up within the department, and I have already referred to it in some detail.

Twelve—

We have developed a Radiation Health Physics section, enabling the department to service all our hospital x-ray and medical electronic equipment and to provide an emergency service in these fields. Until the section was set up, the department was very often dependent for servicing, particularly in country areas, upon the people who supplied the equipment, and frequently it was difficult to obtain servicing. We are now doing the work very efficiently ourselves, with a tremendous improvement in the service that is available to country hospitals as well as to city and provincial-city hospitals.

Thirteen—

A Department of Nuclear Medicine has been established at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. A special section of the new Block 7 will probably be reserved for this facility. Indeed, I remember that when detailed plans of Block 7 were brought to me, one of the first things I noticed was the provisional allocation of, I think, one entire floor to nuclear medicine.

That brings me to a letter that I saw in a newspaper this morning in which somebody from New South Wales who had accepted our hospitality made derogatory remarks about the accommodation for nuclear medicine. It was a surprise to me that people on the staff of the Department of Nuclear Medicine had not convinced that person that the department was to be looked after with the provision of special accommodation in Block 7 when it is occupied.

Fourteen—

We have expanded our maternal and child welfare services, making them the most extensive and up-to-date in the continent.

Fifteen—

A State Council of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade has been established to co-ordinate and supervise the State ambulance services. This council is working most efficiently under the guidance of Sir Douglas Fraser, and amongst its more important achievements has been the creation of an up-to-date training school.

Now let me point out a few interesting statistics in the health field over the past ten years, and I should be very grateful if the honourable member for Lytton, as well as my shadow from Mourilyan, would note these. I am a little vague about whose shadow the honourable gentleman really is. However, these are statistics to which both honourable members should listen.

Expenditure on hospitals in 1964-65 was \$36,681,924. In 1974-75, it is estimated to be \$131,527,302—well in excess of a three-fold increase. Staff approved in hospitals in 1964-65 totalled 12,666. For 1973-74, the figure was 16,981—an increase in the total staff establishment in hospitals of 4,315. Ten years ago, nursing staff approved numbered 6,133. For 1973-74 the establishment was 8,386—an increase of 2,253. Ten years ago, doctors full-time and part-time approved numbered 721. For 1973-74, the establishment full-time and part-time was 1,235—an increase of 514.

These figures make a very interesting contrast with bed-occupancy figures. In 1964-65, daily bed-occupancy on a State basis was 7,737.8. In 1973-74, daily bed-occupancy was 7,749.3, an increase of less than 12. I ask honourable members to note that figure—an increase of less than 12 in that long period of time. Compare that with the increases in staff establishments, nursing establishments and medical establishments. The increase in the daily bed-occupancy was

less than 12, despite an increase in State population over the same period from 1,595,000 to 1,965,000. Those figures dispose very effectively of the A.L.P. parrot-cry that Queensland's free hospital services have deteriorated under our guidance.

Patients attending casualty and outpatient departments in our hospital increased from 1,885,070 to 2,589,967, indicating, of course, that there has been a transfer of emphasis from inpatient treatment to outpatient treatment. Patients in our psychiatric hospitals decreased from a daily bed-occupancy of 3,610 in 1963-64 to 2,775 in 1973-74.

Perhaps one of the most obvious of the points that have struck me during my ten years' incumbency of the Health portfolio is that the total functions of the Health Department are not really known nor appreciated either by the public at large or by very many honourable members in this Chamber. To hear the spate of abuse, criticism, character assassination and half-baked facts that seem to be the basic ingredients for speech-making by some Opposition spokesmen, one could be excused for thinking that the only area of responsibility in the Health Department is in the field of public hospitals.

I have already spoken of the advanced forward planning for updating, rebuilding and refurbishing our hospitals throughout the State, and I accept no criticism in that respect. There seems to be developing within the health spokesmen on the Opposition benches an idea that when a problem arises within a hospital, when a complaint is registered by a patient or a visitor in respect of a hospital, when a hospital board is unable to recruit its full establishment, when an employee of the board resigns, when individuals at the hospital claim discontent or disillusionment with the service—all these things are the fault of the Health Department. Once upon a time it was the fault of the system; that seems to be the catchcry now in certain Federal circles when dealing with economics.

**Mr. Aikens:** Who is the shadow Minister for Health in the Opposition?

**Mr. TOOTH:** If the honourable member tells me, I will know. I will then be as wise as he is.

Once upon a time it was the fault of the system, but now that the Commonwealth Government, under its proposed Health Insurance Bill, is attempting to promote many of our ways and methods throughout the other States of Australia, the finger no longer points at the system but at the Health Department and, more regrettably, at officers of the Health Department who, let me say, would probably not be known to or recognised by the very people who so callously and viciously slander them under the privilege of Parliament.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Poppycock!

**Mr. TOOTH:** It is not poppycock. This goes on regularly and it is a most nauseating practice. No wonder this Chamber sometimes receives the appellation "cowards' castle".

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope that the honourable member for Mourilyan will temper his language when describing other honourable members of this Chamber.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will remain quiet when I am on my feet; otherwise I will deal with him under Standing Order 123A.

**Mr. TOOTH:** A lot has been said of the activities of the management consultants, W. D. Scott and Company, who were engaged by the North Brisbane Hospitals Board and the South Brisbane Hospitals Board to endeavour, over a two-year period, to achieve certain objectives—all of them directed towards the one goal of maintaining and improving patient-care. It was understood that the exercise would be an ongoing one, and that during the period of two years certain improvements would be effected and changes would be made, both in systems and in staffing structures, and this indeed is what is happening.

Change at any time does not come with a total acceptance by those who are affected by it. People, wherever they may be, cling tightly to long-established practices, traditions, beliefs and concepts. I do not think for a minute that the management consultants envisaged that changes recommended by them, and which were accepted by the board, would necessarily be received with great joy by everyone at the hospitals. I certainly did not expect any such reception; but what the honourable members of the Opposition are hoping, by their continual misrepresentation of what the management consultants or the executive committees are doing, is that confusion and suspicion will be created at all levels of staff at these hospitals.

Let me say: give the management consultants a fair go; give the executive committees a fair go, and let the hospitals boards pursue their full functions without being subjected to the snide innuendoes that are constantly being directed against them. There have been problems within the hospitals; that is why the management consultants were engaged.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** For sure!

**Mr. TOOTH:** That's right, and it is amazing that every now and then somebody gets up and says, "The management consultants have discovered this" or "that". How dreadful! That is what they are being paid for. We expect them to find things upon which they will make recommendations. It is utterly absurd to adopt the attitude that there

is something startling when a team of consultants, charged with a two-year investigation of institutions as large and as complex as the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals, find something that calls for correction or comment. There is nothing startling in that. Indeed, if they were not doing so, we would have cause to be concerned. So I say it is my fervent hope that, over the next 12 months, we will see changes for the better; we will see improved staffing structures; we will see members of staff given the opportunity to "do their own thing" which, they claim, has been denied them in the past.

Let me revert to what I said a little earlier about the multiplicity of health functions for which the Health Department is responsible. We hear very little said of the sterling service of the Division of Maternal and Child Welfare.

Indeed, we hear little acknowledgement of the Division of Industrial Medicine. Indeed, from the scant attention that is given to it, one would think that the great majority of the critics of the department do not even know of its existence. I have a very strong suspicion that this actually is the case, yet it is one of the most vital arms of the Health Department.

We take for granted the operations of the Government Chemical Laboratory and the Laboratory of Microbiology and Pathology.

We seem to have forgotten the excellent results achieved over the years by the Division of Tuberculosis. The white scourge of a quarter of a century ago is now almost a thing of the past, yet no commendation is given to the achievements that have been made in this field.

The Division of School Health Services seems to have lost recognition following the decline in the incidence and scourge of poliomyelitis; the good work of the Division of Youth Welfare and Guidance never rates a mention; and the Division of Dental Services appears to be something members on the opposite side of this Chamber have never heard of—notwithstanding that it is the envy of the other States of Australia.

The 5,500 employees within the Health Department proper as well as the 12,000 or more in our hospitals and institutions are human beings. They have a job to do. Their reactions are human ones; they are public servants seeking no kudos, but they do resent unfair, unfounded and untruthful criticisms. How brazen it is for the honourable member for Mourilyan to challenge the calibre of officers of the Department of Health. He would not even know them as persons let alone have any knowledge of their training, their capacity, and experience, their responsibilities and achievements. Let me assure honourable members that in the overwhelming number of cases the administrative officers of the department, from the permanent head downwards, through all the

divisions and levels to the cadets and probationers, give loyal and disinterested service to the Government and people of Queensland.

**Mr. Bromley:** What is this "disinterested"?

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am amazed at the honourable member's interjection. The word "disinterested" does not mean "uninterested" as evidently he supposes. It means something quite different.

**Mr. Bromley:** Then why don't you put it in the right context in your speech?

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am putting it in the right context. They are giving loyal and disinterested service. My good friend and former colleague from the Education Department would, I am sure, enjoy instructing the honourable member on the difference between the words "disinterested" and "uninterested". I put that proposal to the honourable member for Redlands.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I will bow to your seniority. You can do it yourself.

**Mr. TOOTH:** He would not believe me, but I am sure he would believe the honourable member for Redlands.

To continue—this applies in equal measure to the large numbers of technical and professional officers who serve in their various capacities.

The attitude of suspicion and distrust exhibited by some members of this Assembly towards the Public Service could do untold harm to the machinery of government. I make these comments very seriously and with full appreciation of what I am saying. I therefore appeal to honourable members to accept the traditional proposition that the Public Service gives impartial loyalty to whatever Government is elected to power, irrespective of its political ideology.

Let us cast our minds back to the days when this Government first came to power, 17 years ago. We inherited a Public Service which had served A.L.P. Governments continuously for almost 40 years. None could have blamed us if we had had reservations about the loyalty of public servants, but under wise leadership we took the correct traditional attitude that the Public Service would give us the same impartial loyalty as it had given our predecessors for so long; and our confidence was, in the vast majority of cases, completely justified. The examples of disloyalty and deliberate sabotage of our policies were indeed very few and far between.

I often think how unfortunate it is for us all that the Whitlam Federal Government did not show a similar degree of conventional wisdom on its accession to office. Instead, it exhibited not merely a distrust but in the case of some ministers an almost paranoid dislike of the Federal Public Service. It set up a parallel group of advisers,

drawn principally from academic circles who were strong on radical, way-out ideas and plans but woefully weak on the expertise necessary to assess and implement such plans. In consequence the national Government has fallen between two stools and in so many areas is now in complete disarray—so complete, in fact, that it is being compelled in some instances to turn back to the fat cats to extricate it from its difficulties—if that is possible at this late stage.

I take this opportunity to say that generally we in Queensland are fortunate in our Public Servants and this applies in no less degree to the Health Department than to any other agency of government.

I turn now to some specially selected areas of departmental responsibility which I feel should be given particular mention. For the benefit of the record and for those who have a real interest in the achievements of the department I speak of the most rapidly developing of our major hospitals, the Prince Charles Hospital at Chermside.

It was in August 1954, that the first patients were admitted to one of the original prefabricated wards at Chermside, and in 1959, a new multi-storey block was officially opened. By 1964, the specialised cardiac investigation services had already been established at Chermside Hospital, and this hospital was then providing the cardio thoracic surgical service for the State of Queensland.

It was in August 1954 that the first was performed at Chermside Hospital, and since 1967, 1,300 open-heart operations have been performed within this unit. In addition, 700 closed-heart operations have been undertaken during this seven-year period. During the last financial year a total of 292 open-heart operations were performed and these included operations on 26 infants, some of whom required surgery within a few days of birth. In addition, 82 other types of cardiac operation and 257 thoracic surgical procedures were performed during the same period.

A second cardiac investigational theatre will shortly become available, and in addition other changes are being undertaken within the main cardiac theatre complex to enable a further increase in the volume of cardiac surgery to be undertaken.

Meanwhile, in May 1964, a modern neuro-psychiatry unit had been opened at Chermside, and this unit currently provides accommodation for up to 152 patients. Approval has now been received for working drawings to be prepared for the building of a specialised observation ward within the neuro-psychiatry unit, and this observation ward will provide accommodation for another 24 patients.

Approval has also been given for the staff establishment within the Neuro-Psychiatry Unit to be increased considerably, and within the near future, it is hoped that it will be possible to provide a complete

psychiatric centre at the Prince Charles Hospital. Such a unit would provide a 24-hour service with full casualty and outpatient facilities for patients in need of psychiatric care.

With regard to the care of the elderly, three new 78-bed nursing-home wards have been provided at Chermiside since 1966. The modern design of these wards has provided a high standard of accommodation for the elderly patient who is in need of continuing nursing care. Plans are also well advanced for the provision of a geriatric day hospital at the Prince Charles Hospital.

In 1972, a modern orthopaedic surgical unit was opened at Chermiside for advanced procedures. This unit provides for facilities mainly for patients requiring elective orthopaedic surgery. Many types of orthopaedic operation are currently being performed at this hospital, and these operations include an increasing number of total joint replacements involving both total hip and total knee replacements.

As far as future development of the hospital is concerned, it is anticipated that shortly a contract will be let for a new cardio-thoracic outpatient building. When fully equipped, this building is expected to have cost approximately \$2,000,000. In addition, Cabinet approval has recently been received for the Chermiside Hospitals Board to have working drawings prepared for a new Pathology Department, and, as already indicated, a new observation ward at the Neuro-Psychiatry Unit.

Preliminary planning is also currently being undertaken for other major hospital extensions within the hospital complex. These will include the provision of a casualty department, an accident centre, a comprehensive outpatient service, additional theatres and ward accommodation. Full general hospital facilities will then be available at the Prince Charles Hospital and, whilst still leading in the special fields in which it has made its name, it will also join the other metropolitan hospitals in the provision of general acute services.

As I mentioned earlier, very little is said about the work of the Radiation Health Physics Section of this department. Let me inform the Committee of its development over the years.

A radiation health physicist was appointed in 1962 and operation of the Protection Film Service taken over by the Radiation Health Physics Section from the University of Queensland. From that date, licensing of users of ionising radiation, inspection of installations and a consulting service on the application of ionising radiation have been provided by the section.

In 1965 a cadet scientist was appointed to the group, and visits to country hospitals to investigate and advise on the problems of radiography were commenced. The services available from the section were greatly improved by the purchase of a sophisticated

multi-channel pulse height analyser for the identification and analysis of radioactive substances in 1965.

During 1966 the section began advising the department on the design of rooms for radiation-producing equipment in public hospitals to ensure effective and safe use of such equipment. The radiation health physicist was appointed to the Radiation Technical Sub-committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

In 1967 the radiation health physicist was awarded a World Health Organisation travelling fellowship. Radiation facilities in a number of countries were visited to ensure that an up-to-date service was provided in Queensland. The increase in the work of the section over recent years may be seen by the increase in the number of licences issued, from 120 in 1964 to 210 in 1969.

An extension of the services of the section was provided in 1969 by the appointment of a radiographer to the position of technical officer (radiography), to act as an adviser on radiographic techniques and applications with particular reference to country hospitals.

During 1970 the technical officer (radiography) conducted a course in medical radiography for medical staff from hospitals near Brisbane. Extension of the facilities of the section enabled a start on the assessment of the amount of radon gas in mines.

Further extension of facilities in the section's field of interest came in 1970 with the purchase of equipment for monitoring non-ionising radiation from microwave heating units used in domestic and industrial situations.

During 1971 the decision was made to establish medical electronic and X-ray engineering service groups. An electronics technician and two X-ray engineers were appointed. The initial work of these groups was to provide routine and breakdown service of X-ray and electromedical equipment in country hospitals. It was envisaged that these groups would co-operate with each other and with the radiographic advisory and radiation health physics groups to provide an integrated service to country hospitals.

During 1972 an additional physicist was appointed, staff for the service groups were recruited and purchase and construction of necessary test equipment was undertaken.

The service groups became officially operational from 1 January 1973. During that year the service groups attended to several hundred breakdowns of equipment, in many instances indicating lack of adequate maintenance in the past.

In mid-1973 a Thermoluminescent Dosimeter system was purchased to overcome problems experienced with the Protection Film Service in conditions of high temperature and humidity in parts of North Queensland. This system is used as required in conjunction with the Protection Film

Service. The service provided by the radiographic advisory group was expanded in 1973 by the addition of a second radiographer enabling more frequent visits to country hospitals.

The new workshop at 535 Wickham Terrace was occupied in 1973, allowing the service groups to undertake the rebuilding of equipment for hospitals. The increasing need for service by the country hospitals is shown by the number of visits made by the group. A total of 852 visits was made in 1973-74 and, of these, 702 were outside the metropolitan area. As the number and complexity of the units, both X-ray and electromedical, used in country hospitals increases, it is anticipated that the number of visits must also increase. Consideration is being given to the provision of service groups for dental units and for home dialysis equipment and planning for these groups is under way.

During 1973 a major design fault in two large X-ray units was detected by the service groups. This was rectified by the company engineers at no cost to the hospitals.

It is worthy of special note that our radiation health physicist has been invited to serve on a top-level world body, namely, Committee 3 of the International Committee on Radiological Protection, and has attended meetings of that body overseas.

That resume of the work of the Radiation Health Physics Section leads me to a reference to Mr. Stevens, the leader. We are indeed extremely fortunate to have an officer of his standing with us. He is not the only person who has an international standing. There are professional and technical people throughout the health service whose names are better known overseas than in Brisbane and in Queensland. I would say that it is to this area that people who have some doubts as to the quality of the service that is being provided by the Health Department might well direct their attention.

I could talk about the Health Education Council or the Laboratory of Microbiology. In fact, dozens of sections are hardly known, yet in those sections devoted people do very highly skilled work with little public recognition. However, the one I want to mention finally is the Division of Geriatrics. It was created in July of 1961, to be concerned with the development of facilities for care of the aged in Queensland.

Modern hospital care for the aged was provided in Queensland for the first time by the development of a Geriatric Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital. This unit was developed as one of the specialist units of the hospital with a responsibility to provide the best total diagnosis for the aged person, using all of the facilities of a modern hospital to achieve this. Total diagnosis includes a medical diagnosis and a social diagnosis. The unit was also designed to provide for the rehabilitation

of elderly patients with physical disabilities such as hemiplegia following a stroke. The aim of this special unit is to attempt to provide the best possible total management of elderly patients so that it may be possible for them to be cared for by their own families but at the same time to provide for their own personal care with as little reliance on their families as possible.

A geriatric day hospital has been developed at the Geriatric Unit of the Princess Alexandra Hospital as one of the new methods of providing care for the aged. The day hospital has an important role as part of a comprehensive geriatric service. The philosophy of the day hospital is to allow an elderly person to return to his family and to his own community as soon as possible and yet to receive the treatment that might be necessary to help him cope with a physical disability.

The Division of Geriatrics was responsible for the development of better community services for the aged in Queensland by the development of the Community Home Care Service, which commenced operations in Brisbane on 3 November 1969. This service was designed as a health and welfare service for the elderly, providing professional advice to them in their own homes and also providing a home-help service. The home-help service has been a valuable addition to our services for the aged living in their own homes. Indeed, in many cases it has been a godsend. Our home-helps have acted in a most responsible way, providing real support to old people on a regular basis.

This service was designed to emphasise the fact that it is possible to provide better care for old people living at home, and it represents a different approach from the idea that a sick person can be provided with treatment only in a hospital. This service has a preventive component as part of its philosophy, aiming to provide better support for the old person before the crisis of a severe illness actually happens. It tries to emphasise the importance of the preservation of normal health by adequate nutrition and, through a campaign of accident prevention in the home, attempts to reduce the morbidity caused by accidents. As well, this service is responsible for trying to organise as much community support as is necessary to care for an old person in his own home when the need has been defined.

The Department of Health, with its responsibility for the welfare of the aged, has supported the development of senior citizens centres throughout Queensland by the provision of capital subsidies in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government to provide better recreational facilities for the aged, which are part, of course, of the therapy needed to sustain them.

A senior citizens centre is basically a social centre providing all of the facilities that a normal club might provide, and it is designed that such a facility will expand the life of the

older person. It has been possible for some centres to also provide service to the disabled elderly who live in the same community, by allowing the centre to be used as a day centre for the disabled.

Over the last few years State nursing-home accommodation for the aged has been built in an attempt to demonstrate an acceptable standard of nursing-home accommodation and care. New nursing homes have been built at the Prince Charles Hospital, at the Redcliffe Hospital, at "Eventide" Rockhampton and at Wynnum. The new nursing-home accommodation at Wynnum, at present partially completed, will set new standards of nursing-home care, meeting all of the problems of an older person and in particular the problems of those old people who suffer mental deterioration.

As I said a few moments ago, I could proceed for a considerable time, taking one section of the department after another.

**Mr. Aikens:** We would feel desolate if you did not.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I realise that the honourable member would like to listen to me for an almost interminable period—and he has often told me so—but I must restrain my ambitions in this matter and conclude my remarks because I am aware that the honourable member for Mourilyan is champing at the bit.

Before I conclude, I want to make a brief reference to the fact that I will be retiring from this department—with very considerable regret—on the occasion of the forthcoming election. It has been my privilege to be with the State Health Department for more than 10 years. In fact, it has been not only a privilege but something that I will treasure for as long as my memory operates.

Amongst the things that I will remember with the greatest satisfaction and pleasure is the magnificent support that I have received over the years from officers of the department. I know that on occasions like this it is extremely invidious to start mentioning names, but there are some names I feel I must mention. That does not mean that others whom I omit have been forgotten—far from it. I think, of course, first of all of the permanent head of the department when I first joined it. That is the way I like to put it. I think of Kevin McCormack, who served Ministers from both sides of politics.

**Mr. Aikens:** Above and beyond the call of duty.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Above and beyond the call of duty.

I think of Dr. Abraham Fryberg, who has been since knighted for his services to the public weal in this State. I think of Mr. McCormack's successor, Mr. Richard Strutton, who has been of inestimable value not merely to me personally but to the department and the State of Queensland. I think of the present Director-General of Health, Dr. Ross Patrick.

I think of his staff of professional people and Mr. Strutton's staff of magnificent administrators—members who frequently arrive at their office well before 8 a.m. and leave at dusk. I think of the work done with such dedicated enthusiasm by the Director of Psychiatric Services, Dr. Urquhart. I think of all the professional and administrative staff in all the numerous sections. Then I think of the members of the hospital boards, some 60 of them, scattered throughout Queensland. I think of the members of the various professional and technical committees—people who work in very difficult areas for no reward other than the satisfaction of knowing that they are performing a public service.

**Mr. Aikens:** Will you mention the high esteem in which you are held by all members of this Committee?

**Mr. TOOTH:** I will leave that to possibly the honourable member for Townsville South. I am sure the honourable member for Mourilyan will mention it in the course of his remarks.

I refer to members of the various learned colleges. I refer to staff members, professional and lay, and the technical and administrative people to the number of 18,000 or more in various parts of the department. I will always feel a great pride in my long association with them, and I take this opportunity to say to them "Thank you".

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Minister sought leave of the Committee to have certain matters incorporated in "Hansard". I felt it was reasonable to seek the leave of the Committee for that to be done, for the reason that the Minister had unlimited time in which to present its Estimates. I would remind other honourable members that, as they are on a time limit under Standing Orders, that same provision will not apply to them.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE (Mourilyan) (5.14 p.m.):** In opening my reply to the Minister I assure him that I do wish him well in his retirement. But in view of his remarks, let me say that, if he wants to give it, he has to take a little back. I am no shadow of his. I am a little bit in front of him both mentally and physically. He mentioned the Commonwealth Government and made reference to fat cats. Whoever wrote the Minister's speech is nothing but cat fat or cats' fat. First of all, the Minister attributed lies to members on this side of the Chamber. I will withdraw that term because it is quite unparliamentary. I will simply say that the Minister told a pack of untruths about the Opposition's remarks in this Chamber. I remind him of a question I asked him on Friday last which read—

"(1) Has W. D. Scott & Co. indicated to the boards of the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals that his department is the prime cause of the deteriorating situation within the hospitals?"

"(2) What steps has he taken to dismantle the inefficient bureaucracy of his department, which has been publicly acknowledged to be the cause of the problem?"

In that question I did not refer to members of the Minister's department or to any particular person in the department. I was a public servant and gave full support to a former Minister for Education in this State (Mr. Pizzey), with whom I personally corresponded. But I do say, through you, Mr. Lickiss, that, if an answer such as the Minister gave me on that occasion came to me, I would regard the departmental officers—the cats' fat who wrote it for the Minister—as being culpable. It read—

"It is quite obvious by the method of presentation of the Honourable Member's Questions that they are being prepared and typed for him by malcontents and A.L.P. stooges with partial access to confidential documents."

Those are provocative terms. If the Minister cannot accept an honest question either to himself or to his department without answering in that vein, then he has within himself or within his department a feeling of guilt. In fact I would definitely say that that feeling of guilt does exist because, over the last few years, we have seen requests in the Press for a public inquiry. "The Courier-Mail" made one and "The Australian" even said, "Go, Mr. Tooth, go. We have had enough."

Because of the discontent prevailing not only at the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals but throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, the Minister has employed a team of consultants. And he has the audacity to come in here and say that he has channelled funds into various areas. I will grant that he has, but has he maintained the free hospital system established by an Australian Labor Party Government in the 1950's, which his party vehemently opposed? Their speeches are in "Hansard" for anyone to read.

However, let us get back to a particular hospital in Brisbane. The Minister said that a new hospital would be built at Mr. Gravatt. I have with me a photostat copy of the letter from the Prime Minister of Australia to the Premier of this State. If requested to do so, I will table it. It is signed "E. G. Whitlam", the Prime Minister of this country. The Minister knows it because he quoted from it. One paragraph reads—

"The funds allocated by the Australian Government under the programme will not be offset against funds which would otherwise be made available by the Australian Government provided that State capital expenditure on public hospital facilities continues to reflect recent trends."

That paragraph puts paid to the argument of the Minister and his departmental officers. I have not got nine people in the lobby to help me with notes as the Minister had when

he recently introduced Bills in this Chamber. That letter is quite clear and puts paid to the Minister's argument about consequent effects on other hospitals in our area such as those at Redcliffe, Ipswich and Southport. I am not reading from notes written by a cat's fat. I am speaking off the cuff on behalf of the Australian Labor Party and I have put paid to the Minister's dirty untruths about the Australian Government and particularly his statement that the A.L.P. Government's plan might lead to a reduction in expenditure in other parts of the State. The Minister said that. I have here a copy of his speech that he distributed on the day he attacked the Australian Government about the Mt. Gravatt hospital. I challenge the Minister to point to any reference in Mr. Whitlam's letter to the establishment of a hospital at Mt. Gravatt. Now the Minister has invented the story that it will be established at Inala.

Another paragraph from the Prime Minister's letter reads as follows—

"As you know, Mr. Premier, important policy steps taken by my Government have been related to combating problems that have arisen in the growth of urban areas."

You are fully aware of the fact that in terms of population growth both Mt. Gravatt and Inala are the most explosive areas in the city of Brisbane. Yet you have ignored them. Your forward planning, which was commenced by Dr. Noble in 1963-64—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will address the Chair. Surely he can refer to the Minister by his title.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** The Prime Minister's letter goes on to say—

"Our policies on urban transport, area improvement, sewerage, health centres, and the like, are directed towards improving the efficiency of these services and quality of life in urban areas. To complement these initiatives the Australian Government now proposes to assist State Governments by financing the building and operation of hospitals in areas of greatest need or of rapid population growth."

Who in the name of goodness could condemn those sentiments, which were expressed by one of the greatest Prime Ministers Australia has had? I will present a copy of this letter to the Press so that if it is published anyone can read it.

**Mr. Ahern:** Will you table it?

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I will table a photostat copy if the honourable member for Landsborough would like to have the letter photocopied for me.

We have put paid to the Minister's arguments. In the second part of my question directed at what I claimed to be inefficient bureaucracy within his department, I did not refer to any particular section. I have

inspected the Wolston Park Hospital in the company of Dr. Urquhart, and I have not met anyone more gentlemanly. I have publicly stated that I admire his sincerity and honesty.

The Minister is in the twilight of his career, so for once in his lifetime let him admit that certain mistakes have been made.

**Mr. Sullivan:** Mr. Moore—

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** You stay with your old cows. You can't even breed them. You are so big from sitting on your backside in here that you can't do your work out on your farm.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I referred to the bureaucracy that existed in the Minister's department and to the fact that it was the main cause of the problem.

I quote now from the report prepared by W. D. Scott and Co. as follows—

"A communications check list was drawn up and issued, with the request that any groups or staff members who wished to be included in the list could advise if they had been omitted. This resulted from the number of statements to us and to the management, that people vitally concerned in a matter 'had not been told'."

There is the remark that you say your department had nothing to do with. Somewhere along the line between W. D. Scott and Co. and your department someone is telling untruths.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the honourable member that addressing the Chair does not mean talking through the Chair. The honourable member should address the Chair.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I was about to do that, Mr. Lickiss; you beat me to the punch.

In another paragraph, the report reads—

"However, communications will be a problem for some time yet, since you do not have total unanimity."

It is essential to have unanimity of purpose in the department. The report also points out that implementation of recommendations is delayed for reasons beyond Scott and Co.'s control. When we raise matters in this Chamber we should be definite about what we put forward.

At a later stage the report reads—

"We also believe that because of the explosive morale situation in some areas of the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the need for organisational action is urgent. The situation in Royal Brisbane does not allow the viewpoint that you can go on as you are. And given the need for immediate action in Royal Brisbane, then we believe that you have a major opportunity for developing a structure that will positively help you achieve what you want."

In the light of those comments in the W. D. Scott and Co. report, what has the department done? I am not pointing the finger at any individual, but I want the Minister to tell the people of Queensland what he has done for these centres, particularly the Royal Brisbane Hospital.

I can bring to the Bar of the Chamber a little lady from Stafford who told me that two years ago the Minister personally promised that an ear, nose and throat specialist would be appointed at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. The other day the honourable member for Brisbane asked what the waiting time was for an appointment with an ear, nose and throat specialist at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. He was told that patients had to be referred to the Princess Alexandra Hospital. Although the Minister promised this lady two years ago that an ear, nose and throat specialist would be appointed, he has not carried out his promise. Why will the Minister not admit his mistakes?

If the Federal Government is channelling funds into Queensland, why should hospitals like the one at Herberton be closed? The Minister persists in his plan to close this hospital. We are trying to overcome the difficulty through action in conjunction with the Federal Government. On 11 November a public meeting is to be held in Herberton. It should also be remembered that I presented a petition containing 2,100 signatures of people in that district who want the Herberton hospital retained.

The Minister spoke this afternoon about community health centres. I predict that tomorrow the Federal Government will announce the establishment of a number of community health centres in Queensland. The Minister claims credit for them. He even had the audacity to claim credit for the training of dental therapists. Without the additional Federal money made available in the last two years, they could not have been trained. When I asked the Minister a question about community health centres, he named the Redcliffe and Townsville community health centres, which are attached to general hospitals. I do not accept such an answer to my question. Community health centres should be established in areas of need. Mr. Whitlam said that a major hospital will be built in the greatest area of need, that is, where we want it. I again predict that tomorrow the Federal Government will announce that a large number of community health centres will be provided in Queensland. I hope and trust that on this occasion the Minister gives the Federal Government a few laurels. The Federal Government will go down in history for its efforts in health, welfare and education.

In my opinion the State is becoming over-academic in its nursing education. I have stated emphatically that the senior course in Queensland is not modelled for student nurses. No-one who has done chemistry studies in our high schools—a B.S.S.C. or

a P.S.S.C.—will enter the nursing profession if she passes those subjects. Nursing education can be commenced after a Junior education. Many nursing sisters, registered nurses and even matrons did not proceed past third grade. I hope that they realise that, too. Nursing education can begin in our hospitals. It can start in parts of the hospitals set aside for nursing education. Let us not have hospitals closing as teaching hospitals. We need student nurses. Let us recruit them here.

The subject of physiology in the Junior science course is sufficient. In that the students study the lymphatic system, the pulmonary system and even glomerular filtration and so on. They study all those matters in the physiology course. They do not require anything more.

When people such as the honourable member for Townsville openly condemn certain hospital services in the State, surely the Minister should realise that problems exist. The honourable member for Townsville was possibly the greatest destroyer of morale at the Townsville General Hospital. He destroyed the morale of the resident doctors. He destroyed the morale of Dr. Flecker, one of the most prominent doctors in North Queensland.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr. Aikens** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am listening to a point of order.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The honourable member's statement is untrue, offensive and has not been proved by the facts.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member for Mourilyan to accept the statement of the honourable member for Townsville.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I accept his statement, but I say emphatically that when a nerve is touched it always activates something.

What does the Minister do about this State's doctors who are robbing the public? I will give honourable members an example. In Cairns recently a young woman was referred by a specialist to another doctor, who charged her \$6 on a referral notice, did not see her and then charged her \$4 for a script. That is daylight robbery. The Government says that it does not want to control doctors, but they are getting away with murder. I have a number of firm friends who are doctors, but they do not come at this act. The first question of most doctors is, "Are you in medical benefits?" When the patient says, "Yes.", they do not even see him. Instead, they charge \$6 for a visit and \$4 for a script. For the benefit of honourable members I will give them the names of those involved. The patient was Mrs. Murray Davis, who was referred by Dr. Thomas to a G.P., Dr. Ramsay,

while Dr. Thomas went on holidays. That is the evidence on one case, but I can name many others.

Doctors today have the people of Queensland at their mercy. They do not want a national health scheme. They do not want any control. Why would they when they have had an open go to rob the people for years? We will have the three doctors in the House—Dr. Crawford (the more senior member of the profession) and the two minor doctors, Dr. Edwards and Dr. Scott-Young—defending their profession. They are on that side of the Chamber because they rob the working people of the State.

(Time expired.)

**Dr. EDWARDS** (Ipswich) (5.34 p.m.): I have much pleasure in joining the debate—

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am trying to hear the honourable member for Ipswich.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I have much pleasure in joining the debate on the Health Estimates in this, the final session of this Parliament. At the outset, I wish to refer to the remarks of the honourable member for Mourilyan. In the three years in which I have been in this Assembly, I have never heard such a peurile and hopeless speech. He regards himself as a shadow in front of the Minister for Health. If he is half as good a man, and half as efficient, as the Minister has been in his career, he will be doing very well. His attitude in this Chamber leaves everything to be desired. He has never made one constructive criticism. He has never made one policy statement. One wonders if his policy before an election is typical of his criticism today. I feel it is an absolute shame and hypocrisy on his part to make a speech such as he made on this occasion. As the shadow Minister for Health, as he calls himself, he should have taken this opportunity to tell the people of Queensland the policy and plans that the A.L.P. would bring forward if, by some mischance, it was ever elected to government.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I hope that the honourable member for Mourilyan will afford the honourable member for Ipswich the same opportunity as he was given.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** His attacks on the Public Service are in very poor taste, irresponsible, unparliamentary and deplorable.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I rise to a point of order. As I said a number of times throughout my speech, I made no attack on the Public Service. I attacked the bureaucracy in certain sections of the Health Department.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is no point of order. The honourable member has made a statement.

**Dr. EDWARDS:** I hope that every public servant in Queensland refers to his speech and reads the names by which he referred to members of the Public Service. He has shown the true colour of his personality and ability. He is an inept, helpless and hopeless specimen in this Chamber whose main efforts are centred on personal attacks on the Minister.

He referred to the Minister's twilight years. Following his efforts today and over the past two years, as well as his behaviour in this Chamber, I suggest that the honourable member for Mourilyan is well into the twilight years of his parliamentary career. I believe that he will be trying to join the Public Service within the next few weeks. I will not waste any more time on his hopeless speech. I pity the poor efforts that Opposition members will obviously make in this debate.

I wish to associate myself with a tribute to the Minister for Health who retires at the end of this Parliament. For a long period the Minister has undertaken the most arduous and difficult duty of Minister for Health. At the present time, he is the longest-serving Minister for Health in the nation.

During his ministry, as we are well aware, tremendous changes have occurred in Queensland. Some of the fields in which he must have real pride are the Community Home Care programme, the Community Health Centre concept, and the building programmes throughout the State. I am informed that many millions of dollars have been spent in hospitals up to this time, and the Minister has outlined the hundreds of millions of dollars that will be spent in the years that lie ahead. We have also seen changes in the Mental Health Act, in psychiatric institutions, in the programme for maternal and child welfare, as well as in school health services. They are just a few of the things for which the Minister has been responsible, and they will be living monuments to his administration in the years that he has been Minister for Health.

The Minister has always shown extreme interest in, and consideration of, projects and problems that I have discussed with him. His devotion to duty has been outstanding. His efforts in the field of health have been carried out in difficult periods, especially during the past two years when the proposed health changes were being prepared by the Commonwealth Government.

The staff and departmental loyalty that he has developed is admirable, and his support of Health Department staff who at times have been subjected to most unjust criticism in difficult situations, has developed a very great mutual respect and confidence between the Minister and his staff. I take this opportunity to place on record my personal appreciation, and that of the Liberal Party and other members of the Government, of the efforts of the Minister. I wish him

a very happy and long retirement. I also convey to Mrs. Tooth my very best wishes for the future.

I record my personal appreciation of the Minister's assistance to me in many ways. The interest that he has shown in my electorate and the problems in my area has left nothing to be desired, and his personal advice and assistance to me over the 2½ years that I have known him personally have been a tremendous stimulation to me.

In discussing these Estimates, I refer to the work of the Department of Health. I express my appreciation to Dr. Patrick, Mr. Strutton, Mr. Norman and other officers. I also pay tribute to the other senior members of the Health Department who throughout the years have done outstanding work in a difficult job.

Finally, I believe that a tribute should also be paid to Mr. Len Smyth, who has been private secretary to the Minister for Health for a lengthy period and has now had a well-deserved promotion. His assistance to me personally, to other honourable members on this side of the Chamber, and also to members of the Opposition, indicates his dedication and ability, and I wish him well in his new position.

The health administration in this State, and, indeed, in this nation, is undergoing tremendous changes at present. With the advent of the new national health scheme planned by the national Government, the changes in policies and relationships between the State and the Commonwealth, and the change in policy by the Commonwealth Government in hospital development, there is no doubt in my mind that the future administration of health and hospital programmes will be watched with great interest—and also, I believe, with great concern.

I say that because I believe strongly that any hospital and health administration programme should be planned around the patient. Frequently programmes are planned around issues, with little concern for the ultimate welfare of the patient. All people—members of this Assembly, officers of the Health Department, employees in the hospital services—should constantly be reminded that the patient is the most important person, and every effort should be made to provide health services that place little or no financial strain on the patient, yet give support and assistance whenever required.

Often people regard our hospital services in the public sphere as being secondary to private practice. I cannot agree with that, and it has been the desire of National-Liberal Governments to provide the very best available services under the very best circumstances. That concept will be expanded, I believe, so that every person within the State can, if he so desires, use public hospital facilities.

The programme is costly financially; it also is costly in terms of time and the dedicated service given by people involved in the

planning of policies. But the Government is committed to the continuation of a free hospital and health programme in this State, and I take the opportunity offered by the debate on these Estimates to assure the people of Queensland that the Government has carried out this policy, despite doubts and hopes expressed by members of the Opposition. The free health system of this State has been widely expanded by National-Liberal Governments over the years they have been in office, and exciting and massive developments in the system will continue.

In Queensland, we are very fortunate in having developed some services that are recognised throughout Australia, and in some cases throughout the world. This is due to the dedication of many people, and I pay tribute to them. The Maternal and Child Welfare Service was mentioned by the Minister and, of course, it is an outstanding service. Mothers are able to obtain from this service advice and assistance at no charge, and with all the efficiency that could be desired.

Personally, I recall with great pleasure my association with the staff of the Maternal and Child Welfare Service in Ipswich during my years in general practice. The assistance given so willingly and so efficiently was deeply appreciated both by me and by my patients. I saw many a timid, concerned and frightened young woman reassured and uplifted to become a confident, capable and dedicated mother as a result of the assistance and advice that she was given by the Maternal and Child Welfare Service in Ipswich. The Government is continuing to support and expand the service, and I believe that the way in which it now operates is a tribute to the Minister and his department and to the director Dr. Jean McFarlane.

I wish to refer also to school health services in Queensland. At least twice during his or her period at primary school, every child is examined by a very capable school health nursing sister, and on occasions also by a medical officer. Because these examinations have been carried out, many difficult problems that may not otherwise have been discovered have been diagnosed. I know many doctors in private practice whose own children have had problems discovered in the early stages in school health examinations. They may not have been obvious on normal examinations; but because of the expert way in which these dedicated officers examine their patients, minor and even major problems have been diagnosed at an early stage. This has enabled treatment to be undertaken to improve the health of the child in the future.

Another very valuable service is the Community Home Care programme. That programme has been referred to by the Minister, and it has been a tremendous success. It has been of great value in my own area of Ipswich, and its incorporation within the community health programme is a wise

move. In this concept, elderly people are being encouraged to stay in their own homes. By means of aid given to complementary services such as Meals on Wheels, the Blue Nursing Service and other nursing organisations, and the Home Help Service, many people are assisted. In many cases there is no charge for these services, and in other cases only a small fee is charged.

We must encourage these concepts as social welfare programmes of practical assistance to people who need help. Such programmes have enabled many elderly people, who would otherwise be unable to cope with their situation because of approaching years, to stay in their own homes, knowing that their own doctor would call on them if needed, knowing that tradesmen would make deliveries to them, and knowing that they could still enjoy the comfort of having local people call on them. As I have said, we must encourage these concepts, and I am certain that we will see them encouraged and developed within the community health programme that is being instituted at the present time. We must be certain that we continue to employ the dedicated type of people we have at the present time within the community health programme and the Home Help Service. Such services require more than mere employees; they require dedicated, capable people, such as we have now, who have feelings for the patients, and who are prepared to do everything possible for their welfare and to give to elderly people the dignity and quality of life they deserve.

I look forward to exciting activities in the community health programme that is at present being financed by the Commonwealth Government. It has been stated by the Minister on numerous occasions, although obviously not heard by the honourable member for Mourilyan, that this Government places on record its appreciation of the financial assistance being given by the Commonwealth Government. Let me place on record again the fact that this financial assistance is greatly appreciated.

Let me go a step further and place on record appreciation of the tremendous amount of work that has been undertaken by the State Health Department in this programme. We must remember the planning, programming and other basic concepts that were well and truly developed by the State Government before 1972. I can well recall reading Press statements made in 1970, when the Minister had returned from overseas after visiting health centres throughout the world. At that time he decided to set up a committee, and that committee was responsible for a great deal of planning and policy development for the community health programme that is being financed by the Commonwealth Government. I emphasise that this programme has been totally planned by the State Government, and is being instituted by the State Government. That has not been recognised by the honourable member for Mourilyan. Obviously he does not know or

understand what is involved in long-term planning for such an important service. The Minister has been responsible for a tremendous amount of the planning of this programme, and it was planned well before 1972 when the A.L.P. came into office.

The concept of community home care will be expanded. I hope that the efforts of those involved will be rewarded by the appreciation of patients and their relatives, and the community at large.

Within the Health Department programme there will be increased subsidies for Blue Nurses. This is very desirable because of the economic problems that have faced this important service. I pay tribute to the Blue Nursing Service throughout the State, particularly to the service operating in my own area which gives an outstanding and dedicated home-nursing service. The director (Rev. Eric Moore), the sister in charge (Sister Jones), and the secretary (Miss Joan Stirling) play a role of inestimable value that is appreciated by all concerned.

Often as a general practitioner I have found the Blue Nursing Service to be invaluable in its concern and consideration for patients who have come under my care. I hope that the subsidy scheme will be kept under constant review in the light of the increasing pressures and demands upon the service.

I should like to mention a couple of other matters about the psychiatric services. Developments within the Division of Psychiatric Services since 1957 have transformed the hospitals and facilities generally that are available to the community in the field of mental health. When I was a medical student in the late 50's I can well remember visiting the mental hospitals at Sandy Gallop, as it was then known, and the Goodna Special Hospital, as I think it was called in those days, and the thoughts and visions I had as I went around the wards and saw patients in poor conditions and being badly cared for, haunt me to this very day. I encourage every honourable member of this Committee to visit Wolston Park, Challinor Centre, or any other hospital of the kind in this State and see the conditions under which patients are kept today. In fact, these patients are being cared for as guests or residents. No longer are they considered to be patients with particular problems; they are people in which both this Government and the staff are extremely interested.

Quite often I have spent time speaking to members of the staff and the patients and in viewing the work that is being done. I pay tribute to the work done in this section in our services. A great deal of attention has been given to the accommodation problem that has faced this Government over the years. Today in Wolston Park and Challinor Centre we have two of the most modern facilities in Australia for this type of treatment.

Often when driving my children to school I pick up three or four of the residents from Challinor Centre walking to the bus stop to proceed to sheltered workshop and various other activities. It is a great pleasure to be associated with these patients and to give them a lift to the station or the bus stop. They have told me of the tremendous interest they have in life. They are well respected by the community generally and are being accepted by them. We are witnessing a programme designed to involve them within the community, and in the near future they will be living in normal homes in the community. I believe that some are doing so already. We are very proud of this step taken by the Government. No longer are these people being regarded as abnormal. They are people with a problem that is being faced up to squarely and properly and we are treating them as normal people and involving them in community programmes and efforts.

Accommodation is not the only important aspect of hospital involvement. As I said, the activity, the living areas and involvement within the community are also very important. Since we undertook this programme we have seen a tremendous change in attitude, not only in medical services by a massive increase in the appointment of medical staff, including psychiatrists and so on, but also a completely different attitude in the patients themselves. I believe that this is something of which we can be proud.

It has been a great pleasure to be associated with these Estimates and I should again like to pay tribute to the Minister for Health for his outstanding work over the years. He has been a friend to many people and I do not think it would be amiss to pay him a tremendous tribute today. I place on record my personal appreciation and that of this Government for his services to the State and the nation. I believe that he deserves the very best in the future, as do his wife and family.

**Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (5.54 p.m.):** We have heard the Minister's swan-song on this occasion. It is with some regret that we see people retiring from public life after a very strenuous period of work. I have no doubt that everyone will agree that the job of Minister for Health is a very strenuous one. It is one we hope to take over in the near future, and we do not shrink from the prospect. I wish the Minister well in his retirement. I have not often agreed with him. In fact, I might go so far as to say that virtually I have never agreed with him; but I have always disagreed with the Minister for Health; I have criticised the Minister for Health; and I have abused the Minister for Health: I have never related it to the honourable member for Ashgrove. We enjoy a very friendly association outside the Chamber.

A Minister must be able to hand it out and also be prepared to cop as good as he gives. We have taken it from the Minister, and all we do is give it back to him as

the occupant of the Health portfolio. But I do not wish to continue in this vein for too long. Perhaps an analogy can be drawn between my speech tonight and my experience as a child, when my mother used to give me a mouthful of raspberry jam before she shoved in a teaspoonful of castor oil.

I deplore the fact that we have not had available to us this year's annual report of the Director-General of Health and Medical Services. The ramifications of the Health Department are set out much more clearly in his report than in the Estimates. Without the assistance of an officer of the department, it is not easy to ascertain from the Estimates the nature of the department's operations. Sums of money are set out without any indication as to the Government's intentions.

In the provision of new hospitals, which is presently a contentious issue, two aspects of paramount importance are location and size. Many areas of the State, including certain suburbs in Brisbane, are crying out for medical services. The Minister should give us an indication not merely of the proposed establishment of hospitals but also of their size, their location and the nature of the services that they will provide. We have not had such an indication from the Minister, nor can we get it from the Estimates. This is one of the reasons why I consider it to be essential to have the report of the Director-General made available.

The report of W. D. Scott and Co. is of great significance. The company was employed by the Government, at a cost of nearly \$200,000, to probe the management and workings of our hospital services. Its inquiry extended over two years and it found that in our hospital service certain shortcomings existed. These have, in fact, been admitted by the Minister. As he said, if there had been no shortcomings there would not have been any need to employ these management consultants. The Opposition has claimed for years that there were serious shortcomings in our hospital system. In the past the Minister denied these charges, in spite of the fact that there was a mass of evidence to support them. We are entitled to know the nature of the findings of Scott and Co.

The Minister has claimed that the company is submitting its report not to Parliament but to the Government. Surely it is the Parliament that controls the affairs of State. A Government merely dictates policy. Therefore I contend that Parliament is entitled to know the result of any inquiry into the ramifications of any field of administration. I shall have more to say on this matter later in my speech.

Quite naturally the greatest problem that confronts our hospital service is the lack of finance. In Australia the national Government has the money. It has bent over backwards to provide financial assistance

to the States, particularly Queensland, in all fields. Great emphasis has been placed by the national Government on financial assistance to hospitals.

By contrast, the Minister is doing everything in his power to ridicule the assistance that is offered by the Federal Government. In doing so he is denying the people of Queensland a service to which they are justly entitled. Because the Queensland Government will not accept the Federal Government's offer of financial assistance, the people are not being given this service.

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

**Mr. MELLOY:** Before the dinner recess I was discussing the efforts of the Australian Government to put more money into the medical services of Queensland and the Minister's ridiculing of that Government's efforts. Rather than act in this way the Minister should open his heart a little and accept what the Australian Government is prepared to give him. The Government is always crying that strings are attached to this money. Any decision made by the Government or the Minister must depend on weighing the pros and cons—the advantages and disadvantages—of any help proffered by the Australian Government, which I think is sincere in what it is trying to do.

In a Press release dated 9 October, the Minister is reported as saying—

"The Federal Government's proposal to start building a major hospital in Brisbane early next year was absurd, the State Health Minister (Mr. Tooth) said yesterday. There would be more hospital beds available in Brisbane than necessary if the Commonwealth started work on a 1,000-bed, \$20,000,000 hospital at Mt. Gravatt early next year."

The Minister called it an immediate hospital. The Federal authorities expect to commence it next year, so it could hardly be called an immediate hospital.

**Mr. Tooth:** I called it a "quickie" hospital.

**Mr. MELLOY:** The Minister said that the proposed hospital could mean the postponement of extensions at the Southport and Redcliffe hospitals. I do not think that is so. If the Government has planned extensions to the Southport and Redcliffe hospitals finance is committed and any additional hospital construction work undertaken by the Federal Government should not interfere with the Queensland Government's plans.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** I quoted the Prime Minister's letter on this.

**Mr. MELLOY:** That is so.

The Queensland Government should act reasonably and look carefully at what is offered to it, instead of sitting on the fence crying about victimisation, regimentation and so on. It should sit down with the Federal Government to find out what it

intends to do. It is not a matter of the Australian Government's dictating how the money shall be spent. Let Queensland get hold of the money and then talk about how it is to be spent. I think the Queensland Government will find the Australian Government reasonable.

The Minister decried the additional 1,000-bed hospital. He seems to think that we have all the hospital beds we require, but I am sure he knows that is not true. He might pay attention to what the honourable member for Townsville said earlier this month, namely, that the Queensland health services have small cracks which will open into large cracks very soon. The honourable member for Townsville said that the outpatient department should be enlarged and that medical administrators should be sacked if they did not look after patients properly. At the same time he referred to two patients he had sent from Townsville to Brisbane for radiotherapy who did not have beds available when they arrived in Brisbane. He said it appeared that the Royal Brisbane Hospital administrators had reduced the number of beds for Queensland Radium Institute patients. That conflicts with the Minister's attitude that additional beds are not warranted in the capital city. We should get as many beds as we can. If somebody else is prepared to pay for them let him go ahead and provide the hospital accommodation.

Staffing is our responsibility. Despite our present difficulties in providing medical staff, no-one knows when that position will change. We might even have a surfeit of medical staff. It is not very likely, but it could happen if there were a sudden influx of medical staff from overseas and an upsurge in the number of trainee nurses. We could then have the numbers to staff these hospitals. It is senseless to knock back hospital beds because we do not think we can supply the staff. If we have the hospital, we can then set about providing the doctors and nurses.

The Minister said he wants to know what the Federal scheme is all about and what sort of hospital it will be—whether it will be a training hospital or a psychiatric hospital. If he would sit down and talk to the Commonwealth Government, he would discover very quickly what it was all about. It is no good the Minister crying that he does not know what a proposal is about if he rejects it out of hand. If he is not prepared to talk to the Commonwealth, he will never know what the proposal is. On the other hand, if he were prepared to sit down and discuss it, he could say, "Very well. If you want to provide this hospital and these beds, what strings are attached to it? What will you do about it?" It is no use saying, "We won't accept it. There are strings attached to it." Let us find out what the strings are. Let us find out what the Australian Government intends to provide. We should not just knock the offer back.

**Mr. Lee:** They're not strings. They're ropes.

**Mr. MELLOY:** That is according to the honourable member for Yeronga. I don't think he would have a clue what anything is about.

The other matter I wish to comment on is the report of W. D. Scott & Co. Without question, that is causing a lot of chaos and concern among the medical staff in our hospitals. They would know better than I just what the implications of that report are. It is apparent from statements in the Press by leading medical men in our hospitals that the recommendations of the Scott report will have a drastic effect on the medical and administrative staff. We do not know just what recommendations are contained in the report; we have been denied any information on it. That treatment has not been confined to members of the Opposition. From Press reports it would appear that the Minister and the honourable member for Wavell have had words on this matter. According to one report—

"Mr. Tooth is said to have refused a request by Dr. Crawford for the Scott report on a survey by management consultants into the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals.

"Mr. Tooth is reported to have told Dr. Crawford the consultants were reporting to the Hospital Boards, not to Parliament, and that much of the information was confidential."

So apparently the Minister is refusing the information to members of his own Government as well as to members of the Opposition. That refusal is to significant members of his Government—members who are intimately connected with the hospital service and well informed on hospital matters. I refer to the honourable member for Townsville, the honourable member for Ipswich and the honourable member for Wavell. Apparently they do not know what is occurring in our hospitals. They have been associated with them for many years, and I believe they would be entitled to the information even if members of the Opposition were not. If the Minister says that we are not entitled to it, we will accept his word for that; but we cannot see the logic of his argument. Certainly we do not think it fair that he should withhold the information from his own members.

The importance of the Scott report is very great. Apparently the Government has at last admitted that all is not well with the hospital system. The Minister is at long last listening to the complaints of the medical staff, the threats of strike by the nursing staff and the complaints by the administrative staff. Apparently all of these matters are only just getting through to him. This has led to the Government's admission that there is something wrong and the decision to employ a firm of consultants to find out what is wrong.

The Opposition has said frequently and consistently that there is something wrong with our hospital system—not with those who work in the hospitals. In his speech the Minister tried to distinguish between “system” and “policy”. No attack is being made on the people who work in our hospitals. It is apparent that something is wrong. When nurses threaten to go on strike and doctors, such as the anaesthetist in a matter of some consequence recently, threaten to withhold their services, something must be wrong. It is the business of Parliament to put it right. It cannot do that unless it knows what is wrong and what has been raised in the report of Scott and Co.

We should be told what is happening. If we were told, we could perhaps co-operate with the Minister. If the Minister were to lay his cards on the table, we might have less cause to criticise him. He is being criticised for his refusal to come clean with Parliament and outline what the worries are. Parliament and the public know that something is wrong in our hospitals.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am rather intrigued. I am wondering whether the honourable member is displaying a great deal of wisdom in exhibiting the object that is on the seat in front of him. Perhaps he feels more at home speaking from the stump.

**Mr. MELLOY:** We will pay that one.

I now wish to deal with the location of new hospitals and community health centres, to which I attach a great deal of importance. I go along with them 100 per cent. I am pleased that the Government is at last acknowledging the value of community centres. But things are not moving quickly enough. Some areas in Brisbane and in provincial cities badly need these centres. The Minister said that they will be established in order of need.

The Pine Rivers Shire Council has claimed that earlier this year 43,000 people in its area were without medical attention at week-ends and on holidays. This is a serious situation. We have probably all had experience of endeavouring to get a doctor and finding that none is available. I remember once when a doctor was needed urgently at Banyo and eventually one was got from Coorparoo. This is not good enough. The Government must deal with this problem very smartly by providing community health centres. They are a most desirable proposition and the scheme should be fully implemented as quickly as possible.

The people living in the Pine Rivers Shire would have no hope in the world of being treated at outpatient departments at week-ends, during holidays or at night-time because, at those times, they are seriously understaffed. This has been pointed out time and time again by Opposition members, who have given instances of people waiting two or three hours for attention. I have brought to the notice of the Minister cases of

people who have gone to the outpatient department or casualty department and been sent away with a wrong diagnosis. The one doctor on duty at 11 p.m. cannot be blamed because he just cannot handle the volume.

In July, a Petrie man died from influenza because for five hours he was unable to obtain medical help. Whom do we blame? Do we blame the medical profession, or do we blame the Government and the Health Department?

Four or five doctors band together to conduct a clinic. Surely one of them could be on call at all times during the week-end or on public holidays. In certain circumstances nobody is on duty at clinics of that type, and it is not always possible to take a patient to a general hospital.

I wish to make some remarks about the serious plight of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. It is crying out for funds. It provides a service to the people of the State that the Government does not supply, and it does it free. In my opinion, the Government should provide more money than it now does by way of grants and endowments.

(Time expired.)

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG** (Townsville) (7.31 p.m.): I am very pleased to take part in the debate on these Estimates. It is interesting to note, Mr. Lickiss, that members of the Opposition have not said one good word about the health services of Queensland, which have been providing efficient treatment of patients over the last 20 or 30 years. I am reminded of the old story of the patient who, when he is sick, praises God and asks for the doctor and then, when he is better, curses God, and forgets the doctor and does not pay him. That is the impression I have of honourable members opposite.

I have even had to sit in this room and be grossly insulted by the honourable member for Mourilyan, who was talking about something of which he knows nothing. As I said on another occasion, the honourable member does not know the difference between agitation and administration. He thinks that administration is all agitation. Because I am a junior member of this Assembly, he apparently thinks that I still suck a bottle. For his information, I point out that I graduated about 34 years ago, and since then I have spent about 28 years in hospitals as a full-time surgeon. In that time I think I have acquired a knowledge of the general set-up in medicine and of what is required, which is more than the bungling, bumbling politician who is the Opposition's shadow Minister for Health displays when talking about health services.

I notice that the Commonwealth Government gets from Queensland about \$925,000,000 and gives back about \$800,000,000 which means that between \$125,000,000 and \$130,000,000 remains in the Commonwealth's coffers. I cannot see

how, in the light of that, anyone can say that the Commonwealth Government is magnanimous to Queensland and bestows largesse upon us. It does not; it treats this State like a beggar. When we try to get back our own money, it will not give it to us.

**Mr. Lee:** Gough gets it.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** That is true. About \$500,000 has been expended on Gough Whitlam's latest trips.

There is one thing that I like very much about the Queensland hospital system. I came to Queensland 21 years ago because, as a junior member of the staff of a teaching hospital, I saw patients with prostate disease and others with malignancies who could not be admitted to hospital and who died before they could be admitted. After looking around the Australian States, I could see one State that gave a good service. That is why I came to Townsville, and I have never regretted my decision to come and serve there.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** I bet the doctors did.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I rather enjoyed getting rid of a lot of incompetent, bum doctors that the honourable member for Mourilyan—

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I rise to a point of order. If the honourable member is going to say that Dr. Pat Fletcher is a bum doctor, then I say that the honourable member is a bum doctor.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member knew before he rose that that was not a point of order, and I will not take that type of interjection by way of a point of order.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** When I came back from Vietnam, I found that the doctors had been allowed to run wild. They were drunk on duty; they did not carry out their duties. When I got rid of them, Mr. Percy Tucker, who is now Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, backed them to the hilt and caused a great furore in this Assembly. He abused me through the newspapers when I had no right of reply or redress. The honourable member for Mourilyan has done something similar today. He would not know anything about hospital services. God help the services if honourable members opposite got into Government.

May I inform the shadow Minister that health is not only hospital services. The Health Estimates cover dozens of departments. I will name just a few of them: Division of Dental Services, Division of Youth Welfare and Guidance, Division of Tuberculosis, Laboratory of Microbiology, Enthetic Diseases, Government Chemical Laboratory, Division of School Health Services. On and on the list goes. People think that all the problems of the Health Department are associated with the Royal

Brisbane Hospital. They are not. The Royal Brisbane Hospital is only a minute fraction of the health services of the State. It is on that small fraction that honourable members opposite focus their attention in their evil intention to disrupt the Government. Most of the problems at the Royal Brisbane are not administrative problems but purely emotional personal problems. Personality clashes are behind them all.

Recently I made one small criticism of the service. To the credit of the Minister and the Director-General, the matter was immediately investigated. Action was taken immediately I made my criticism because it was known that I acted on a correct basis. Honourable members opposite do nothing but pinprick. They never offer anything constructive. They are at all times derogatory in their approach. No-one should be derogatory towards medicine. Medicine should not be denigrated. It is a noble profession.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** When honourable members opposite are sick they do not call a veterinary surgeon. They call a doctor. Perhaps they should call a padre.

The interesting thing about medicine in this State is that it is available to everybody. Anyone can obtain free medical attention for anything from, say, a cough or a cold, to open-heart surgery. A fantastic array of medical science is available to the public free of charge irrespective of the patient's financial status. A person remote from Brisbane who is suffering from a malignant disease and has no money can be transported to the capital city free of cost. At the Royal Brisbane that person will have a choice of doctors for surgery and radiotherapy. The hospital service is an absolutely amazing set-up.

In all complicated massive services little breaks in the administrative system will occur. Luckily we have administrators and a Minister who will take the necessary action when a reasonable approach is made to them. But we get nothing but pinpricks from the Opposition. Honourable members opposite offer nothing constructive.

Adequate staffing is one big problem that affects the hospital system. Staffing is not completely under the control of the Health Department, but rather is it under the control of the whole State administration. Medical students, nurses and paramedical personnel are all in short supply. They all have to be trained. For instance, it takes six years to train a doctor. No doctor in the first year after he has graduated is asked to take a tumour out of a person's bowel. Half of them at that stage cannot even tie their bootlaces, let alone tie a knot inside somebody's belly. They are kids. Unfortunately the whole education system today builds them up and makes them think that they are God Almighty on horseback. Some of them do not even learn personal health rules. They come

into the hospital sporting beards and wearing sandals. Some of them do not even look clean.

**Mr. Hinze:** Athletic singlets.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Yes, with "Mickey Mouse" on their chests. That is the way they come in to do a round in the hospital. Our education system has all gone wrong. This attitude has even permeated the medical profession where at least we should expect some sort of decorum and behaviour from a medical practitioner. After all, he looks after the most sacred thing a person has—his body. Of course, he looks after the mind, too. A patient wants his doctor to be able to advise him mentally and physically.

In order to carry out extra training, the graduate needs the correct facilities in a hospital. It will take him at least five years to get a higher degree. I am reminded of the man of straw to whom the Wizard of Oz said, "I can't give you a brain but I will give you a diploma." Lots of people think they are the same. Unfortunately many of these graduates get a diploma. When they get a diploma they think that they are specialists. They are not specialists. They have only been given a certification that they have arrived at a certain standard of education so that, if they apply themselves, in five or 10 years they can become competent physicians and surgeons. That is the whole basis of medical post-graduate education, but unfortunately, as with our primary and tertiary education, it has been taken out of context and distorted, and we have a problem.

Before we can get reasonable senior registrars they must have up to 10 years' education—six years as students, plus another three years at least and, say, another two years on top of that—before they become junior specialists. It will take at least 10 years before we get staff. In saying that he is going to put up a 1,000-bed hospital, Gough Whitlam is talking through the back of his head. He could not do it. He might put the building up, although it would take him two years to get foundations down and do the planning apart from having to train students for 10 years.

He would then have to obtain physiotherapists, all the paramedical staff, speech therapists and dieticians in order to run a big hospital like that. A dietician cannot be obtained in Queensland today. The girls are not being trained. The problem is not getting an administrator, but getting staff. Let anyone here try to get a well-trained dietician in Brisbane and he will soon discover that at the moment there is probably not one within a hundred miles of Brisbane without a job. They are not available.

Despite all this, the medical services in the base hospitals in this State are good. The service is good because the staff have an esprit de corps; they have good working conditions, good superannuation and their wages compare with those anywhere else in

the country. The residents have good housing. If the Education Department did for its employees what the Department of Health does for resident doctors, we would not have the Teachers' Union belly-aching every day in the Press about housing. At all base hospitals the State Health Department supplies first-class flats, most at no charge. These conditions are an incentive to a young man to get married and to go to the North and the West. After he serves a certain time in the West he is brought back into a base hospital where he has consultants and specialists to teach him.

**Mr. Chinchen:** Why do you think the Federal Government will not give the State money to put into its own services?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** For a very simple reason. It kept almost \$200,000,000 of ours and it will make us dangle on the end of a stick at every chance it gets. Every grant it has given recently has had conditions attached to it. Take the Main Roads grants, for example. It wants to tell us how to spend them.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Bromley:** Why don't you speak to honourable members opposite. You heard what they said to me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am speaking to the honourable member for South Brisbane.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** A very important matter that has arisen over recent years is the abnormal attitude to nursing staff. Everyone considers that a nurse should have a Bachelor of Arts degree, a leaving certificate or a senior certificate. Some of the best nurses in this State have had a much lower standard of education. In fact the very best surgical nurse I have ever encountered had only the Junior. She rose to be the matron of a hospital and she had a wonderful compassion and love for human-beings. She did not get that from a tutor room.

Unfortunately, invading our tutor rooms today is a militant unionism. A lot of it emanated from Canada. At one stage there was a great influx of Canadian nurses into this State and they brought this militant unionism with them. They reached the stage at the Townsville Base Hospital of issuing an order to student nurses that they were not even to fill the water bottles alongside patients. Where does this come from and where does it go? Is it nursing or just plain unionism?

Militant unionism has caused disruption and unrest and brought about personality clashes. The senior nurses were fighting the junior nurses, who were utterly confused. Staff trouble was fomented. I do not know who was behind it, but there seemed to be a deliberate plan throughout Queensland to

create trouble among the nurses, the domestics and even the medical profession, especially among the junior residents.

**Mr. Aikens:** And they sell them A.L.P. tickets, too.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Some of these people did have A.L.P. tickets. Some nurses who possess academic degrees and qualifications are too lazy to lift patients, turn them over or wash them. Perhaps they consider such tasks to be below their dignity. They insist that the aides and orderlies carry out these duties. The result was that demarcation disputes arose. I have actually witnessed a male nurse refuse to lift a badly injured woman from a stretcher and place her on a bed. The Casualty Department orderly who was pushing the stretcher said, "I suppose I will have to get someone else to lift her off." Because no-one else was available. I had to lift her off and place her on the bed. Incidents of this type arise from these demarcation disputes that occur.

**A Government Member:** They think they are big-time.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** They certainly do. As well, too many people were giving them instructions. Not one drop of the milk of human kindness is shown by them, but, of course, in their training they are not taught how to act in a humane manner.

Tonight I heard criticism levelled at so-called wealthy doctors.

**An Opposition Member:** That's you.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** That's me! I certainly have not made much money from medicine. I have seen some doctors who have become wealthy not from working in the medical profession but from wise investments. Of course, a doctor may become wealthy by performing abortions; but that is not part of the practice of medicine.

For the information of the Committee I shall compare the hours of work and earnings of doctors with those of other professional and working men. The comparison can be seen from the following table, which was prepared in May 1973:—

	Hours per annum actually worked	Taxable income	Net income per hour	Tax per hour
Blue-collar worker ..	1,664	\$ 4,000	\$ 2.64	\$.37
Doctor .. .. .	3,825	15,000	3.27	1.43
Solicitor .. .. .	2,623	12,000	4.25	1.47
Public servant .. .. .	1,511	6,300	5.12	.83

Those figures were drawn up by an actuary, and I table the document from which they were extracted.

[Whereupon the honourable member laid the document on the table.]

Although it is obvious that the doctor works longer hours than any other professional man, he is certainly no better off financially.

The hospital doctors were instructed by the Labor Party to work to union rules. The Labor Party drove out of the medical profession that spirit of communal help and the will to work.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** The Labor Party has done this all along. It has introduced militant unionism. I worked seven days and seven nights a week, and enjoyed it.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** You destroyed Townsville.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I loved my work. As for the interjection—I was elected with 61.3 per cent of the vote. That shows how much the people of Townsville disliked me! My vote was much better than that of the honourable member for Mourilyan.

The hospital system has been working under great stress caused not only by financial problems but also by internal personal clashes. These were brought about by the Opposition.

**Mr. Davis:** What are you going to do when you retire?

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** I think I will take up teaching.

Despite all this the hospital service is sound.

**Mr. F. P. Moore** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the honourable member for Mourilyan that persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Other aspects of our medical services such as psychiatric services are worth mentioning. When I first came to Queensland, the psychiatric services were cluttered with patients. Hospitals were full to overflowing. After Dr. Noble became Minister for Health he discovered that for years under Labor a very bad administrative practice had been followed under which ma and pa were put into psychiatric hospitals.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** They even put the pensioners in.

**Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG:** Pensioners and many others who should never have been there.

The position was corrected immediately the coalition Government came to office.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BLAKE (Isis) (7.51 p.m.):** The honourable member for Townsville took umbrage at some of the remarks made by our shadow Minister for Health. However, I noted that some of the very pertinent facts put forward by the honourable member for

Mourilyan were certainly not denied by Government members, even if they were not acknowledged as correct. It is evident that a great deal of credence can be placed on the evidence he advanced.

I welcome this opportunity to speak on the Health Estimates, which give me a chance to raise a matter of great importance to my electorate. The total provision for health services has been increased from \$117,715,616 to \$149,156,460, an increase of \$31,440,844 or 26.7 per cent. The total expenditure programme for public hospitals has been increased from \$108,313,231 to \$131,527,302, an increase of 21.4 per cent. Nowhere in the tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement, or in the Estimates, could I determine the exact amount to be spent on hospital construction this financial year. The increased Budget for health facilities must surely be expected to provide for the construction of some expanded hospital facilities.

When I refer to the need to expand the Hervey Bay hospital facilities, I am not telling the Minister a new story. I have written to him and spoken to him personally about this matter. I have acquainted many Hervey Bay organisations and the community in general with my representations and the Minister's replies. Many Hervey Bay people and organisations have made representations to both the Minister and the Premier about enlarging the hospital to cope with the needs of the rapidly expanding population. The population is increasing in this area at one of the fastest rates in the State. The present 12-bed hospital was provided originally to cater for about half of the present population. The present permanent population is about 8,000, and it is estimated that during holidays the population increases to 30,000 or 35,000. Surely nobody would claim that a 12-bed hospital could adequately cater for that number of people. Therefore, it is undeniable that the present Hervey Bay community—and apparently the future Hervey Bay community—is expected to be dependent on Maryborough for normal hospital services.

It has even been suggested to me that Hervey Bay's relationship to the Maryborough Base Hospital is no different from that of suburbs in the metropolitan area to the Brisbane general hospitals. I completely refute that comparison, as does the Hervey Bay community. I do not know the exact mileage from Hervey Bay to Maryborough, but it is close to 25 miles; so a round trip entails a journey of 50 miles. Hervey Bay is often isolated from the Maryborough hospital during wet weather.

In the suburbs of Brisbane, public transport is diverse, frequent and reliable. That is not so with the public transport from Hervey Bay. Occasionally a rail service operates; otherwise there is a bus service. Normal public transport between Hervey Bay and Maryborough is infrequent and often subject to the vagaries of the weather. In addition, it is often not convenient for

people who wish to attend the hospital during visiting hours. The seaside resort of Hervey Bay has a large component of retired people, many of whom, naturally, are aged. Many do not have their own transport. On the other hand, of those who do, some are unable to drive the family car when their partners are in hospital.

People say that the situation can be remedied by the provision of more frequent public transport. Therefore, I believe it relevant to say this. Quite recently a man was killed on the Hervey Bay-Maryborough road while journeying to visit his wife in the Maryborough Base Hospital. I am told that the wife's medical problem was a simple one that could have been treated at Hervey Bay had ordinary hospital accommodation been available. Of course, that was not so. The result was an unnecessary death. Very recently a woman was injured in an accident on her way to visit her husband who was hospitalised in Maryborough. That is another instance. I am quoting happenings in the last few weeks. These accidents are occurring all the time.

I mention these matters to refute the contention that the hospital problems for residents at Hervey Bay can be easily overcome by providing additional transport, either by bus or by ambulance service. I do not have with me a document containing figures relative to the Hervey Bay ambulance service. I am sorry that I could not lay my hands on those figures to quote them in this debate on the Health Department Estimates. A fantastic mileage is covered by the Hervey Bay ambulance service, and a large number of patients are transported. In fact, if my memory serves me correctly—and I believe it does—more patients are conveyed to Maryborough than to the Hervey Bay hospital. Hervey Bay doctors have told me that, because of the repetitive answer of "No" that they receive, they do not even try to have patients admitted to the Hervey Bay hospital. They accept the fact that no hospital accommodation is available at Hervey Bay.

Last week a young girl tripped at school, bumped her head, suffered head injuries and died after being transported to Maryborough. I do not know the medical details and I do not suggest that the girl could have been saved had there been normal medical facilities at Hervey Bay. However, what I wish to illustrate is that it is undeniable that in a population centre of the size and growth rate of Hervey Bay these incidents occur and will continue to occur. They are normal situations and of course the facilities to cope with them are not there.

Hervey Bay deserves its own hospital. Because it does not have one, there is needless loss of life. We do not accept this needless loss of life by either adults or children. I have spoken to the Minister on this matter. He has replied quite reasonably and I have no complaint with his personal manner. But he has said to me, "You have the wrong

impression. You must centralise and have these facilities." We accept the proposition that specialist facilities must be centralised.

But we were told in this Chamber recently of a nine-bed hospital at Richmond. Hervey Bay has a 12-bed hospital for a permanent population of 8,000 people and a floating population of up to 35,000 people. How the devil the Government hopes to service that area with its growth rate, I do not know. It would appear that the Government wants that area to stay as it is. We do not accept that Hervey Bay has not already come of age in its entitlement to ordinary hospital facilities.

Considering the usual rate of approving, planning, constructing and building, and if the present rate of increase at Hervey Bay continues—and it gives all indications of increasing—the area will merit a hospital with 24-hour staffing with qualified personnel.

I mention this matter because the argument has been put up: What is the good of extra accommodation when the sister is on duty for only so long? Surely the Government does not argue that an area that is heading towards a permanent population of 10,000 to 12,000 people and a floating population of 35,000 to 40,000 people is not entitled to anything better than the attention of a sister for a certain number of hours a day. That is a ridiculous contention.

Recently a doctor tried to admit a seriously ill lady to hospital. The lady had a seizure; I forget whether it was a heart attack or a stroke. The sister told the doctor that a bed was available. The ambulance rushed the patient to the hospital and the bearer was told that the patient could not be admitted as no bed was available.

I referred this complaint to the Maryborough Hospitals Board, which investigated the matter. The reason why the lady, who was transferred to Maryborough and died shortly after, was not admitted was that the doctor had not specified that he would be content with a public hospital bed or a public ward bed. If he had done so, she would have been given the public bed that was vacant. I do not argue about it, but it seems that there is a snag somewhere when a hospital with a vacant bed refuses to admit a seriously ill lady who has been transported 25 miles simply because the doctor's request is not couched in some particular terms. When I say that the lady passed away, I am not saying that the journey killed her. But no doubt she would have had a better chance if she had been hospitalised where she had the seizure.

I think we will all admit that the existing facilities are not adequate. What results have we had? I am speaking of the Hervey Bay community and organisations and myself. What results have we had in getting these facilities upgraded? An investigation has been conducted by the Health Services Planning and Development Unit. I am informed

by the Minister that its report was submitted and was considered by the Hospitals Building Advisory Committee.

The Minister wrote to me in the following terms—

"In view of the Committee's recommendation, it is not proposed to provide additional acute accommodation at Hervey Bay Hospital.

"The report of the Health Services Planning and Development Unit indicated that there is an increased demand for accommodation for the elderly long-term patient at Hervey Bay and that a Nursing Home Unit could be required at this stage.

"It is thought that possibly church or other charitable organisations might become interested in the provision of such beds in the light of assistance which may be available from the Commonwealth towards the cost of construction of a Nursing Home under the provisions of its Aged Persons Homes Act."

"In addition organisations providing nursing accommodation may also receive other Commonwealth assistance under the National Health Act. Booklet published on behalf of the Department of Social Security setting out what assistance can be made available to non-profit organisations is enclosed."

That part of the letter is relevant to the matter about which I am speaking, and I do not think I am doing the Minister any injustice by not reading the last couple of paragraphs.

There are a number of aged people at Hervey Bay, and about 12 beds would be available for acute hospital cases if other care for the aged was provided quickly. That would be a step in the right direction.

I did not mention that the recommendation of the Department of Health was that the area warranted—and this will give honourable members some idea of its size—a nursing-home unit or geriatric unit of 45-bed capacity. The Maryborough Hospitals Board considered the position, and it recommended 60 beds because of the growth in the area and the time it would take to provide such a unit even if planning and development began immediately. No-one is arguing about the recommendations. What I am arguing about is that the Minister seems to have taken the attitude that, if a charitable organisation does not provide these facilities with Commonwealth assistance, he is not going to consider any State responsibility to the area. That is the only interpretation I can put on the official correspondence. That is not good enough.

At present there is a Red Cross nursing home in the area, and notification has been given that it is definitely to be phased out. I wish to put on record that when notice was given of the phasing out of the Red Cross home, which caters, I think, for only seven aged people at Hervey Bay, I was

asked to approach the Red Cross organisation. From this building I rang the secretary of the Red Cross and asked him could I talk to the board—that was the way in which he described it—to see if some arrangements could be made to keep the nursing home at Hervey Bay open, or whether, in view of what the Minister had said about nursing-home assistance, some project on the land could be undertaken, either through the Red Cross or some other organisation. The secretary informed me that it was not much use talking to him but that he would attempt to arrange an appointment for me to talk to the board.

Eventually, having not heard anything, I rang again and the secretary said, "Well, there is very little point in your talking to the board, because today they have made the decision that they will definitely close the hospital."

However, recently a representative of the auxiliary that assists the home at Hervey Bay rang my office and said that the auxiliary had been in touch with Red Cross headquarters in Brisbane and had been told that Mr. Blake had not approached them. I put it on record that what I have told the Committee is the truth. Whether or not any such allegation has been made, I have not yet been able to verify. For the benefit of anyone who is interested, I state the facts. I asked for an appointment; I was told that I would be notified when it would be; I was not given an appointment; and when I made further inquiries I was told that there was no point in getting an appointment because the decision had been made that day.

No-one is interested in providing a nursing home at Hervey Bay at present, either with or without Commonwealth or State assistance. From our negotiations with the Minister, it appears that if we do not proceed with a do-it-yourself programme we are not going to get anything. If the acute facilities are not going to be expanded there and we do not get any do-it-yourself accommodation for the aged, it means that we will be stuck with what we have. I say to the Minister that even on the figures this is an absolutely unacceptable situation.

I want to quote articles from some of the local newspapers in case it is thought that I am beating the drum on this matter just for something to say. I could name the different people who are concerned about the matter. The headlines in "The Maryborough Chronicle" read "Geriatric Unit at Bay to be Sought". That article states—

"Action should be taken immediately to provide for 60 additional geriatric nursing type beds at the Hervey Bay Hospital, the Maryborough Hospitals Board decided last night."

It is reported in the same newspaper that similar submissions were made by the Burrum Shire Council, which is very concerned about the lack of medical facilities at

Hervey Bay. Reference to the same problem was made by the Hervey Bay Hospital Auxiliary, by the Pensioners League and others I could name.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. FRAWLEY** (Murrumba) (8.12 p.m.): I join the debate because this is the last time that the present Minister will be presenting these Estimates. He has served as Minister for Health for 10½ years, and during that time he has administered a very difficult portfolio.

I have been absolutely amazed and disgusted at the attitude of some honourable members opposite in their attempt to denigrate the Minister for Health, the Health Department and the Queensland free hospitals system. The honourable member for Mourilyan raved and screamed, and vilified the Minister. He attempted to denigrate the officers of the Health Department, the nurses and everybody else connected with health services in Queensland. As the shadow Minister for Health, he has proved to be just that—a shadow. He is a nonentity—a man who is completely unfit to be a member of Parliament. He purports to hold the position of shadow Minister for Health, but in fact he continually plays second fiddle to the honourable member for Lytton.

We know that any knowledge the honourable member for Mourilyan has of health matters has been obtained from watching television movies such as "Doctor Kildare", "Days of our Lives" and "General Hospital". Every speech he has made on health has been from a brief written by the ghost writers at the Trades Hall. He has never said a word that he has made up out of his own head; everything has been written for him. He is nothing but a Trades Hall parrot mouthing his instructions daily. He never gives the Minister or his department a fair go. He is always attempting to throw around some dirty, rotten, filthy insinuations. He is one of the 3½-percenters who has been blackmailed into paying 3½ per cent of his salary to keep his endorsement.

Tonight the honourable member for Mourilyan even attempted to denigrate nurses. I have been a patient in the Royal Brisbane Hospital on at least two occasions. On one occasion, I went there for an urgent operation at 9 p.m. I received very good attention and service from the nurses and staff while I was there. That was four years ago. I had no influence or pull. I went there just as an ordinary person, which I was and still am, and I received excellent treatment.

**Mr. Davis:** You received very good treatment when you were in Lowson House, too.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** As a matter of fact, I used to go to Lowson House every fortnight, because when I was a lift mechanic I maintained the lifts there. I saw plenty of people there who were far better suited to be the member for Brisbane than the one we have

here. Plenty of people in Lowson House have greater mental capacity and intelligence than the honourable member for Brisbane. At least I got out of Lowson House every fortnight; the honourable member would not be game to go there.

We have heard many untruths in this Chamber. I am pleased that the honourable member for Lytton is present because I do not want to say things behind his back. He said recently that the Royal Brisbane Hospital was filthy. From 1951 to 1967, I was a lift mechanic employed by Otis Elevator Company, one of the best lift firms in Brisbane (I have to put in a plug for that company while I am on my feet!) and I maintained the lifts at every hospital in Brisbane. I maintained lifts at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, the Prince Charles Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital, the Mater Hospital, Greenslopes Hospital, Mt. Olivett, the Glen Innes Hospital, the Maryborough Hospital, the Bundaberg Hospital, the Mater Hospital and public hospital in Rockhampton, and the Mater Hospital in Mackay. For 16 years I visited those hospitals. I used to maintain the lifts on the eighth floor at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, which is the operating floor. I also attended to them at various other parts of that hospital. I maintained these elevators on various other floors if they happened to break down, and I saw things that the average visitor to a hospital would not see. I can honestly say that I never saw anything at any of those hospitals that caused me any concern whatever.

To say that the Royal Brisbane Hospital is filthy is ridiculous. As a matter of fact, I was there about a week before the honourable member for Lytton made that statement. I go out there for examination every now and again, and this happened to be one of the days I was there. I walked into the outpatients' section to go where I had to go, and I took particular notice of its condition. I will admit that it is dilapidated and needs quite a bit of refurbishing and repainting, but it is clean.

**Mr. Gunn:** And it's free.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course, it has always been free. Another complaint was about patients having to sit and wait. People have to wait wherever they go. If a person goes to see a solicitor, he has to wait; if he goes to the office of the Medical Benefits Fund in the city, he has to wait. One has to wait virtually everywhere. It is difficult to obtain instant service in any sphere. A few weeks ago, on a Saturday, I took a young man to the Redcliffe Hospital. He had cut his leg with a hand saw. I had a look at the cut. It did not seem to be too bad, but I took him to the hospital. I dropped him at the outpatients' section and drove away to find a parking spot. I did not use any influence, and nobody knew who he was. I do not even know his second name; he was the boyfriend of the young girl next door. By the time I had parked my

car and walked back to the outpatients' department, hospital staff had already started working on him. There were people waiting, but they treated him before them because his leg was bleeding fairly freely.

**Mr. Davis:** You flashed your gold pass.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I did not flash anything, you idiot! At no time have I ever flashed my gold pass to get in anywhere. I must admit I have used it once or twice but never to get into a hospital—and I have never used it to cross the Hornibrook Highway, as some members of the Opposition have. And I have never used my gold pass to get into a picture-show free.

**Mr. Wright:** You used it in a radar trap.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I have never used it in a radar trap in my life. As a matter of fact, I have never been caught in a radar trap since I have been a member of this Parliament.

**Mr. Wright:** Yes, you did.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** The honourable member for Rockhampton is now lending the lie to the fact that some time last month he gave a sermon at a Baptist Church in Biloela, speaking about his aims as a Christian politician. I remind the Committee that he is not living up to them now by telling an untruth about me.

**Mr. Wright:** Do you fellows keep a record on me?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I certainly do. I have spies all over the country. As a matter of fact, I have a photostat copy of it.

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

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I apologise, Mr. Lickiss, I was put off the track.

This State Government has made a grant to the Mater Hospital of \$7,000,000 this year, \$2,000,000 more than last year's grant of \$5,000,000.

**Mr. Burns:** It is a public hospital.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course it is a public hospital. In addition, \$1,900,000 has been provided by this Government as a capital subsidy, on a two-to-one basis, for work on the redevelopment of the children's section, the provision on any essential equipment, and the major rewiring of the Mater Public. Why does the Commonwealth Government not give some of the money it proposes to spend on a new hospital to the Mater Hospital? I shall tell honourable members why—because they are a rotten mob of socialists, dominated by Communists. The Mater Hospital is a Catholic hospital, and they want to undermine it. Everyone knows that the attitude of the Federal Government, and of some members opposite, is to strike at the very roots of christianity. They have already done it by disallowing taxation claims

for donations to church building funds of all denominations. Then, when they wanted to give grants to local authorities, part of the deal was that all churches were to be rated. They are also discussing now the elimination of contributions to school-building funds as tax deductions. What donations would be made to school-building funds other than to church schools? The only non-denominational private schools I know in Brisbane are the Brisbane Grammar School and the Brisbane Girls' Grammar School. All the others are church schools.

**Mr. Gunn:** I wonder if they would rate their brothels?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I know for a fact that one of the reasons they wanted to legalise prostitution was that it would come under the Health Department. I suppose prostitutes would have to be checked. This is why they did it. They moved this motion at Cairns—

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I rise to a point of order. The honourable member said that we were going to legalise prostitution. I point out to the Committee that prostitution is not illegal in Queensland now.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is no point of order. I have indicated before that when points of order are made they should be reasonable.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** A motion to legalise prostitution was put forward at the Cairns convention. Perhaps I should say it was proposed that the offence of prostitution be removed from the Statute Book.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I feel I should take this opportunity to remind honourable members that Standing Orders provide for points of order. Quite often honourable members rise on the pretence of taking a point of order when in fact all they do is make a statement. Such a practice is not acceptable to the Chair.

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** Some punitive action should be taken.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** The best action that can be taken is to allow me to continue with my speech so that I can point out some of the weaknesses of the A.L.P. The Opposition is, of course, doing its best to prevent me from discussing prostitution, because members opposite realise that there is money to be made from it. I know that the A.L.P. has a plan to form a union of prostitutes. And who better than the honourable member for Archerfield could act as secretary of such a union? He has had great experience in standing over the women cleaners in the Treasury Building and demanding union dues from them. I have no doubt that as secretary of such a union he would be helped by the honourable member for Lytton.

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I rise to a point of order. As the honourable member for Archerfield is touring Western Queensland, on his behalf I take umbrage at the remark passed by the honourable member for Murrumbidgee.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I suggest that the honourable member for Mourilyan ascertain what is a point of order. There is no point of order.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Who takes the point of order?

**Mr. B. Wood:** He still said it.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course I said it. The honourable member for Archerfield should be here instead of touring the State.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member will return to the Estimates under debate.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I would suggest that, from visiting hospitals at least once a week, I know a fair bit about their workings. In fact I would know more than the honourable member for Mourilyan, who would not have a clue about hospitals.

**Mr. Gunn:** Where does he get his instructions from?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Obviously from the Trades Hall. In fact, he is known as the "Trades Hall parrot". Day after day he mouths instructions given to him by the Trades Hall. He utters complete untruths about our hospital service, and since his entry into Parliament he has not given the Minister credit for anything.

The attitude of the Queensland Government is vastly different from that of the Federal Government. We are providing funds for hospitals and community health services. For as long as I have been a member of Parliament, I have been continually disgusted at the manner in which the A.L.P. has used health matters in an endeavour to undermine public confidence in the State Government. Surely it could be more constructive. It has struck fear into the hearts of the people by condemning our health services. With the exception, perhaps, of the honourable members for Nudgee and Isis, A.L.P. members have used this debate merely for the purpose of frightening the people.

The honourable member for Mourilyan would not know B from a bull's foot. The greatest thing that ever happened to the school-children in his area was his election to Parliament. In fact I know several parents who voted for him not because they wanted him to represent them but because they wanted to get rid of him. Some of his recent carryings-on at the Goondi Hill hotel would make pretty good reading.

The honourable member for Mourilyan and the honourable member for Lytton have spewed out filthy, vicious propaganda that

has been fed to them by A.L.P. writers. At every opportunity they denigrate the Minister for Health and his department.

I have not heard one good word from the other side of the Chamber about the Blue Nursing Service. The members of the service, which is conducted by the Methodist church, are dedicated. I have attended some of their meetings in the company of the honourable member for Sandgate. The Government has increased the subsidy to the Blue Nursing Service from \$2,350 to \$3,100 a nurse. Is that not an indication of the concern shown by this Government for the health of the community? Of course it is.

In addition, the Government is increasing subsidies towards the cost of maintaining nurses in hospitals for the chronically ill. In fact, these subsidies are to be increased on Friday from \$3,000 to \$3,750 a nurse. The subsidy paid to the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association will be increased this year from \$200,000 to \$250,000, and that paid to the Multiple Handicapped Association will increase from \$20,000 to \$40,000.

While on the subject of chronically ill people, I ask honourable members to consider the recent plight of people in nursing homes. Many of them in Redcliffe telephoned me in the fear that they were to be put out of nursing homes under the Federal Government's policy. The Federal Government would like to close down these homes and place the blame on the State Government.

**Dr. Scott-Young:** What about the \$10 the Federal Government took from—

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I agree with the honourable member for Townsville. He is a credit to the medical profession in view of his work in Townsville and Vietnam.

**Mr. Bromley** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** The honourable member for South Brisbane should pay a visit to a taxidermist.

As the honourable member for Townsville said, instead of caring for old people the A.L.P. committed them to mental institutions. Our mental institutions were full because Labor would not do what we are doing. Although these people were not mental cases, they were put in mental institutions. Labor would not care for them in old people's homes. The honourable member for Mourilyan may yawn to try to show that he is not interested, but he knows that I am getting at the root of the trouble. I realise what good service the Minister has given to the State. In the past 10½ years he has made his mark on Queensland. He is placid, knowing that he has done a good job, and he can leave Parliament secure in the knowledge that he has devoted a great part of his life to serving the people of Queensland. Not too many members of the Opposition have done likewise.

**An Opposition Member:** What do you think about the Flying Surgeon?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I think highly of him. When I was out in Charleville on one occasion I saw some of the good work done by him.

**Mr. Wright:** You want to come down to earth.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I travel around the State. I do not confine my activities to the Redcliffe Peninsula, Woodford, Dayboro, Mt. Mee, and so on.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I remind the honourable member that we are dealing with the Health Estimates.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I was talking about the Flying Surgeon.

The honourable member for Townsville referred to the filthy, scurrilous attack made on him in 1966 by the present Leader of the Opposition who was then a back-bencher. When he was afraid that Dr. Scott-Young intended to stand against him in Townsville, he used an opportunity in this House in 1966 to denigrate him. The honourable member for Townsville South gave us the true story.

**Mr. Bromley:** Why doesn't he raise these things?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Because he is a modest man.

The present Leader of the Opposition got one of his A.L.P. stooges to break into the office of the Townsville General Hospital, remove the records and take them outside to have them copied. He sat outside in his car on the opposite side of the road with the dome light on, copied the records, and had them put back. That was a dirty underhand trick, but it is typical of some of the actions to which the A.L.P. will stoop.

**Mr. Newbery:** The Federal Government should give \$20,000,000 to the Mater Hospital.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course it should.

I have already told people why the Federal Government does not want to have anything to do with the Mater, St. Andrew's, or any other church hospital. It is out to destroy Christianity. What better way is there to get at it than to break the church schools and hospitals? I shall be telling the people of my electorate plenty about that during the election campaign.

I shall now say a kind word for Labor. I admired the late Ned Hanlon. If Labor members of this Parliament were half as good as Ned Hanlon—the honourable member for Mourilyan would not even be fit to lick his boots—they would be reasonably good. He was a credit to the Labor Party, and one who did a lot for hospitals in Queensland.

**A Government Member:** He would get a shock today.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Of course he would.

**Mr. Marginson:** Most of your mob are the same; they give credit after people are dead.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I gave Ned Hanlon credit while he was alive. He was a good man. If Opposition members were half as good, they would be all right.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Vince Gair was never a stooge of mine.

In May of this year I had a spell in a hospital at Tauranga in New Zealand. I had heard a great deal about the New Zealand hospital system, but I must say that it was a fine hospital, staffed with a good bunch of people. White and Maori girls were nursing together, and a good spirit prevailed. There is no racism in New Zealand, because the Labor Party has not got around to it over there. As a matter of fact, Tauranga is a National Party area.

**Mr. Davis:** What is the name of it?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Tauranga. It is in the North Island of New Zealand, 130 miles from Auckland.

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Why wouldn't they go to sleep? They know I am not going to rubbish them, as honourable members opposite do. I will tell the truth.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BALDWIN** (Redlands) (8.31 p.m.): I am pleased to have the opportunity of entering such an important debate as this on the Estimates for the Health Department. I have long said, both in this Chamber and before I entered Parliament, that the three most important areas of State responsibility are education, health, and public protection. The older I grow and the more experienced I get, the more and more I believe that.

However, it comes as a shock to hear the very important matter of the provision of health services to the people of Queensland reduced to such a very low level, with the mud-slinging and the personal denigration campaign that we have just been forced to listen to (out of good manners and decorum) from the member who just resumed his seat.

**Mr. Frawley** interjected.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** The member for Murrumbidgee evidently thinks he is still on his feet.

I was present in the Chamber during the contribution to this debate by the honourable member for Mourilyan, our shadow Minister for Health. I clearly heard him cite to the Committee figures from reports, which have been entirely neglected in a stream of political and personal vituperation which only bespeaks the utter sycophancy

and low-level crawling for future favours that we that we have to endure from some members on the other side. I believe it denigrates the whole purpose of Parliament and serves to indicate that the member deserves his reputation. His time with us will be short. I dare say that we will be rid of men of his type as from 7 December next.

**Mr. Wright:** You realise that the general feeling within the Cabinet is that they detest Frawley intensely.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** Although even a person like him serves some useful purposes, I do not think the electorate at large (certainly not the more critical and enlightened of them) are fooled for one moment by his rantings and ravings in a vain effort to establish that he is a somebody in the Government parties.

**Mr. Bromley:** Actually, he is a religious bigot.

**Mr. BALDWIN:** I do not know about that, but I do know that I was very disappointed because I thought that he might have contributed to such an important debate as this something of public benefit based on fact.

I repeat that the facts presented to the Committee by the honourable member for Mourilyan were not refuted at all. They have been totally ignored in a tirade of meaningless abuse.

I wish to refute directly one or two of the very clear statements that the honourable member for Murrumbidgee made, possibly by extreme accident. He said that Labor committed old people to mental institutions. No-one but an historical ignoramus could make such a vile accusation against a Government and a past Premier whom he so hypocritically praised, for he was the very Premier who introduced the "Eventide" home principle. This person who calls himself a representative plays so lightly, even in his own area of hypocrisy, with the names and careers of prominent political figures that he praises them one moment and pours a bucket of mud over them the next. Conduct of this kind must surely be one of the bases on which the Press rightfully criticises some members of Parliament as being over-paid, underworked bludgers.

I shall now deal with some of the more important parts of these very important Estimates—first the percentage increases over the appropriations for 1973-74. The percentage rises, in round figures, were—

	%
	Increase
Chief Office . . . . .	50
Charitable Institutions . . . . .	16
Maternal and Child Welfare . . . . .	11
Hospitals . . . . .	21
Grants and Endowments . . . . .	62
Division of Psychiatric Services . . . . .	16
Registration Boards . . . . .	4

An interesting new entry appears on the same page—\$240,000 for Hospitals Capital Development Fund. That amount is totally provided by the Commonwealth.

To me, and I am sure to most other thinking members of this Committee, those percentage increases are very significant. I wish in general to point to the total increased Estimates of approximately 33 per cent over last year's appropriations. Perhaps on their own these figures have little or no significance. The only way to obtain knowledge in this world is to look at conditions in terms of comparisons and contrasts and then to take from them the qualitative differences and make a quantitative calculation of their total value one way or the other. If this is done with the Health Estimates we find that the Minister has made a pardonable error. I do not blame him for it because, after 17 years on the other side of this Chamber, the whole mental philosophy and attitude of Government members is to measure everything purely by dollars increase or dollars decrease.

There has been a total expendable increase in income of 43 per cent from all sources—from Consolidated Revenue, Australian Labor Government grants and other assistance and loan capital borrowing. Then we have to consider the Government's own widely advertised figure of more than 17 per cent increase during the past 12 months in the cost of living or devaluation in the amount of work that money can do. If one looks at the 43 per cent, one cannot help asking where the margin has gone. Has the Honourable Seymour Douglas Tooth presented a clear case to the electorate of this State calling for congratulations? I do not think he has, Mr. Bird. I think he has been beguiled by the Achilles heel of the Government parties into trying to measure everything purely on dollars increase given on a table, without comparison with other levels of income and expenditure available to the State.

I do not want to be misinterpreted. I say that it is good to see some of these increases. I do not wish ever to be an absolutely negative type of person. What I am offering for the Committee's consideration is that the increases are (a) not as much as they should have been in the light of that 43 per cent, and (b) not as much as they need to be in the light of the health problems of all kinds—physical, nervous and mental—with which the State has become afflicted in a dollar-dictated society, directed by a dollar-dedicated Government.

It is no surprise to me that in the Estimates of expenditure on mental health, the cost increases are highest in the fields of psychiatry, therapy, rehabilitation and incarceration—66 per cent. To me that could be interpreted in this way: "What a wonderful Government we have. Look how it is taking care of the debris of society—the people

who are wrecks, cast aside and needing services of this kind." But I submit that it is because of the Government's unpardonable attitude to the problems of workers of all kinds, perhaps not so much in the sphere of physical activity, as in spheres of great mental activity and stress and strain, and particularly those requiring nervous energy and those who work under tension and this is where one sees the carnage of a dollar-directed society. I marvel that an increase of only 66 per cent, and not 166 per cent, is needed to clean up, at the taxpayers' expense, the carnage of a callous society that has been imposed upon the workers of this State for more than 17 years.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Too long!

**Mr. BALDWIN:** It is too long. I say that if the Government remains in office, with its dreadful driving of the most profitable section of the work-force—that is, those who have to work under mental and nervous strain—in five years' time it will have to double the expenditure on these areas of mental and nervous rehabilitation. However, I reiterate that I am glad to see that the Government has at least acknowledged the problem by raising expenditure in this area.

I now wish to deal briefly with an area of health expenditure that I deem basic and important. I refer to the health education services provided to young people in schools. It is in this area that the Government gets the best return for money spent. There has been an increase in the Vote but I deplore the fact that it is nowhere near enough when one considers the importance of this service and the follow-up benefit that is gained from such expenditure. I praise the Minister for increasing the allocation, but more money should have been provided and must be provided in the future. If we do not work to counter the effects of a cigarette-dominated, drug-dominated and grog-dominated society by a penetrating programme of health education, my prediction is that the future carnage that will be wrought by these habits will be so great that taxpayers will be unable to bear the financial burden. A cure is better than a palliative, but prevention is better than a cure. So much lip-service is given in this area that one must question some aspects of it.

When I was a child at school we had frequent medical inspections. Even on the Atherton Tableland we had inspections at the school. In the 20's nurses came round the schools. We had a Labor Government then, of course. We had to parade in front of the nurse. Our backs, arms, bellies, mouths, teeth and everything else were looked at. I remember that quite clearly. It made a lasting impression on my mind. Even though the approach to health problems then was not nearly as sophisticated as it is today, at least an entry was made into the very important area of correction, prevention and cure at an early age.

I do not believe that health inspections in schools today are anywhere near as frequent or as searching as they should be. When I was at school the teachers used to examine us for head lice. In this modern age I get complaints from parents about other students at school infecting their own children, who in turn infect the rest of the family. I hope the Minister will answer me on this very important aspect of getting at health problems early in schools—more or less a captive-patient area in which to work. Perhaps even more important is the effect of inspections by school nurses, doctors and other qualified persons on the minds of young children. It makes them think that health lessons are more than something just written in a book. They feel that somebody is concerned about them—that a Government is concerned about them. That impresses itself upon their minds. Actually, it impressed itself on my mind in my day and I have therefore always been more aware of these things and I practised them when I was a teacher. The carry-over value was great.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. KAUS (Mansfield)** (8.50 p.m.): I am very pleased this evening to be able to enter the debate on the Health Department Estimates. First of all, I wish to congratulate the Minister on the wonderful job he has done for health care in Queensland over the past 10 years. Opposition members have always tried to provoke him. They have had many clashes with him, but the Minister has always come out on top. He certainly does his homework and the Opposition has no answer to his arguments. As we all know, the health service is a multi-million-dollar business and, with the support of his departmental officers, who have greatly assisted him, the Minister, has done a wonderful job in administering it.

Tonight I should like to speak about a division of the department's activities that should receive the acclaim of every family in the State for its sterling service. I refer to the Maternal and Child Welfare Service and the sisters and staff employed by it.

Today, more than ever before, the services offered by the trained personnel of the Maternal and Child Welfare Service are needed by the community. The role of the clinic sisters has always been one of education—education of the mother in the personal one-to-one clinic situation. This type of education is undoubtedly the best. In 1957, as a preliminary to education after the baby was born, education of high school girls was offered to 13-year-olds throughout the State whether the schools were State schools or private schools. In 1958, 1,722 students in 16 schools received the course of ten mothercraft lectures; by 1973 the number had increased to 16,691 students at 267 schools and special lecture courses were given at opportunity schools and institutions. Looking at those figures, we must remember

that over the period of 15 years we have had an increase of 14,969 students and 251 new schools.

By increasing the knowledge of the future mothers in the community about the needs of the baby and young child, it has been possible to protect babies from illnesses which in other countries cause many deaths—gastro-enteritis, pneumonia. Mothercraft lectures are also now being given to young Aboriginal girls by the baby clinic sisters who, in 1968, began travelling with the Royal Flying Doctor Service from their three bases at Charleville, Mt. Isa and Cairns. These sisters take mothercraft advice to isolated mothers who in the past had to rely on the department's correspondence service, which is still used by more than 500 mothers each year. Expectant mothers and mothers with young babies, who are miles from personal medical or nursing attention, have over the years utilised this correspondence service.

In Queensland's 667,000 square miles there are many thousands of isolated mothers, and hundreds of small towns. It has always been the aim of the Maternal and Child Welfare Division to take the service to those in need of it, whether they live in the country or whether they live in the isolated outer suburbs of the larger cities. To do this, it has been necessary to increase the mobility of the staff. Ten years ago there were under 20 cars used by the staff; now there are 28 cars and eight vans fully equipped as baby clinics. Six vans operate on the outskirts of Brisbane. One services the rapidly developing area of the Gold Coast and the other the districts surrounding Cairns—north to the beaches and west onto the Atherton Tableland, where many isolated Aboriginal groups are at present living. By this service advice is taken to those who really need it.

Preventive medicine offers advice to the healthy community as to how to stay healthy, and the motivation to seek the advice is not as great as if illness is actually present. It has to be made accessible if it is to be well utilised. It has been the policy over recent years to make baby clinic facilities as attractive as possible for young mothers. As part of this approach, attractive modern shops in busy shopping centres have replaced local halls as premises for the weekly or daily clinic. Examples of this are at Rossvale (Townsville), Surfers Paradise, Coolangatta, Windsor and Chermiside, to name but a few. I thank the Minister for having given his approval to the provision of such facilities at Mansfield in my electorate. They will be centrally located and will, when completed, be of great benefit to the local community.

In addition, my electorate stands to gain from the establishment of a welfare centre at Upper Mt. Gravatt, at a cost of \$87,289. The building will contain 23.2 squares, and will house a waiting room, an advisory room, a doctors' room, a baby room, a test-feed room, a mothers' room, a toddlers room, a

staff lunch room and staff and public toilets. The older kiddies have not been forgotten, and will be provided with an enclosed playing area at the front of the building. This centre will be of great value to the community and will provide a wonderful service to young mothers as well as to their babies. It will ensure the good health of future generations in my electorate.

The public has appreciated this change, and attendances at baby clinics have increased from 56 per cent in 1952 to 63 per cent in 1961, and 75 per cent in 1973. In 1973 a total of 552,691 visits were made to the clinics, as compared with 430,297 10 years ago. Although the birth rate in Queensland has dropped over the last 10 years the total number of births has increased—35,934 in 1963 and 38,067 in 1973. Smaller families mean that the emphasis is on the quality of survival. To help prevent many infants being mentally defective due to an inherited condition in which the brain damage can be prevented by the baby receiving a special diet from birth, the Guthrie test was introduced in 1968. Since then, 21 positive cases have been detected and are receiving treatment. Each year 96 per cent of all newborn infants have a blood specimen taken by their medical practitioner and this test is carried out by the Laboratory of Microbiology and Pathology.

In 1961, 28 mothers died in childbirth. In 1973, this number dropped thanks to the efforts of the Queensland Maternal Mortality Committee established in 1961, the interest and co-operation of the medical profession and the enthusiasm of hospital staff. There were only 11 deaths in 1973. One of the ways the committee used to improve the standard of care for the mother was to issue bulletins giving advice on care and management. These were distributed with the A.M.A. newsletter. Similar bulletins have been prepared and issued by the Perinatal Mortality Committee formed in 1970 to investigate still-births and neo-natal deaths. Problem areas have been investigated by the committee and methods are being developed in the hope of improving infant survival.

In 1961, the infant mortality rate for Queensland was 20.1 deaths per 1,000 live births; in 1973, it was 17.5. This reflects the care given to babies in Queensland and it will continue to improve in the future.

The medical staff of the department over the past few years have been active in the field of providing lectures on many topics relevant to the growing child. In this field they work in close co-operation with the Queensland Health Education Council. One particularly rewarding field has been that of sex education; parents today are eager for knowledge for both themselves and their children.

One feature of the past 10 years has been the rapidity of change in community attitudes and ideas. In all an unstable community is developing and it is because of this instability

that the advice offered by the baby clinic sister is needed as never before. People often judge advice by the quality of the surroundings in which it is given. While desirable working conditions improve the morale of those working and visiting there, it is not essential to quality. However the Maternal and Child Welfare Service has not forgotten the physical needs of mothers and babies, and over the last ten years new clinic buildings (which in the country include accommodation for the staff) have been opened at Toowoomba, Charleville, Rockhampton, Murgon, Southport, Blackall, Ingham, Ashgrove, Roma, Townsville, Dalby, and Goondiwindi. Almost every town has one. Perhaps the greatest building achievement during this period has been the building of the new Mothercraft Home at Clayfield which is the first ever built to fill the needs of the service. The other four homes have all been in older buildings redesigned for mothercraft purposes. This building was opened in August 1972. Rebuilding of the nurse-training school at St. Paul's Terrace was commenced in 1974 and when this complex has been completed the training facilities offered will be second to none in Australia. It is a great credit to the planning undertaken by the department.

Each year, 44 trained nurses undergo a six-month-training course in maternal and child welfare and this training programme involves all aspects of the service—baby clinic work, nursing in mothercraft homes, hospital and home visiting, examination of expectant mothers, and examination of the pre-school child. A 12-month, training period in mothercraft is given to 16-year-old girls at the other four mothercraft homes and 58 are trained each year.

The way in which the service has developed can be seen from the fact that 183 sisters were employed in 1965 and now there are 226; 430,297 visits to 265 baby clinics were made in 1963 as against 552,691 visits to 366 baby clinics in 1973. The Maternal and Child Welfare Service takes care of Queensland's babies and will continue to do so as long as there are babies and mothers who need help and advice. Once again I congratulate the department and the Division of Maternal and Child Welfare for the wonderful work they are doing for our future citizens and the mothers of Queensland.

I congratulate the Minister and thank him for the dental clinic at Mt. Gravatt East, which I believe is to be provided in the very near future—probably in 1976. The centre will cater for 12 students and will contain associated facilities. It will form an over-all pattern for clinical training for therapists in the dental scheme.

When the Minister introduced the Dental Acts Amendment Bill last year, I made the suggestion that the clinic should be established, and it is pleasing to see that my proposal will come to fruition. According to information I received today, dental

therapist facilities are being provided at Yeronga at a cost of approximately \$2,000,000. Another centre is to be constructed at Stafford, and last week I drove past one at Holland Park. The honourable members for Mt. Gravatt, Yeronga and Stafford should be very pleased about those. I will be very pleased when the clinic at Mt. Gravatt East is a reality. Again I congratulate the department on its wonderful planning and designing ability.

Recently my opposition in the coming election attempted to denigrate me by stating that I rejected the building of a hospital at Mt. Gravatt. That is ridiculous and illustrates how low the Opposition is prepared to stoop at election time in an attempt to gain some political advantage. It shows how ignorant my opponent is. Stage one of the new hospital at Mt. Gravatt—the obstetrics unit—has been designed over a period of five years. These things cannot be designed overnight.

**An Opposition Member:** Eleven years; it was commenced in 1963.

**Mr. KAUS:** That is quite all right. I am pleased to see that \$7,000,000 will be spent there on a training hospital, which will be supplementary to the Griffiths University.

The calibre of my opposition is indicated by the fact that he puts out rubbish like that. It is nothing but a lie. I am not particularly worried about it.

**An Opposition Member:** Not much.

**Mr. KAUS:** It did not upset me. When I distribute my personal pamphlet, I will be drawing attention to that statement.

I know that there has been a great deal of planning for the hospital. Last week I was at the university, and, as a point of interest, only the Liberal members attended. I know that Opposition members were invited, but they did not have sufficient manners to turn up. We were a little disappointed, as were the staff. It is a shame that the honourable members opposite make appointments and do not keep them.

**Mr. Davis:** Where was this?

**Mr. KAUS:** At the Griffith university. It is out near where the new hospital at Mt. Gravatt will be built in the very near future.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Is this your last speech?

**Mr. KAUS:** Certainly not. I am not worried about the next election, but doubtless some honourable members opposite are. Actually, the Labor Party can send anyone it likes into my area. I invited my opponent to bring along any of the Federal Ministers he likes.

On that note, I again congratulate the Minister for a job well done, and I wish him and his wife a very happy retirement.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton) (9.10 p.m.): There is no doubt that the Minister is looking forward to his retirement and feels some regret tonight in introducing his last Estimates on behalf of the Government. It is a pity that the Government did not put forward some top speakers to support him and to show that they have supported him over the years. We have heard the second-rate medical members, but not their senior medical member, the honourable member for Wavell. I see that he is now selecting a microphone. I hope that in his speech he will tell the stories he has told before today in the Press about the hospitals and not continue with the sickening sycophantic rubbish that we have heard so far tonight, including the brief that the lame duck (the honourable member for Mansfield) could not even read. Before him, we heard from the gutter-snipe with his filthy, slanderous, scandalous tactics (the pouting, pirouetting member for Murrumba). Tonight he was talking himself out of his own electorate by standing here and shouting all the filth, rubbish and bigotry that he could scrape up and drag out, as he has done time and time again. No wonder the decent, honest members on that side of the Chamber are sick to death of him and walk out every time he rises to speak. He is one of the members who damns the name of Parliament and parliamentary practice. We will be out in Murrumba telling the people this and reading some of his speeches to them.

When the Minister was making his swansong appearance tonight all we had on that side of the Chamber supporting him were the lame ducks. This is a great pity.

I am pleased to join this debate because I want to place on record the fact that the Government has made it quite clear that it does not want to accept \$20,000,000 for a new Commonwealth hospital in the metropolitan area. It does not really care whether the sick, the ill and the infirm will be able to enjoy additional hospital facilities in this city. For State rights reasons they say, "We do not want a Commonwealth hospital." I do not care a tinker's damn who owns the hospital.

I am sure that the fellow who is knocked down by a car at Woolloongabba or Southport would not say to the ambulance bearer, "Are you taking me to a Commonwealth free hospital or a State free hospital?" What the people want is a free hospital. They want additional hospital facilities in this city. They do not want excuses about repainting and renovating wards which the Minister and his advisers have allowed to deteriorate over the period this Government has been in office.

There have been additions to certain Brisbane Hospitals in the past few years, but no brand-new hospital has been built in the suburbs of this spreading city. That will go down as one of the Minister's non-contributions to the city of Brisbane.

Do we really need a new hospital? Do we need the extra beds, an obstetric hospital and the training facilities associated with it? Do we need to do something about the outpatient and casualty departments? W. D. Scott and Co., who were appointed by the Government, have said people wait for up to four hours and have to stand outside in queues to obtain an appointment.

**Mr. Frawley:** Rubbish!

**Mr. BURNS:** The honourable member for Murrumba again distinguished himself tonight by saying how he thinks people should be treated. He said that if a person takes his car to be repaired or goes to see a solicitor, he waits. Therefore, someone with a bad disease, someone waiting for an operation or someone who has had an accident should be treated like a spare part. That shows how lacking in feeling the honourable member for Murrumba and the Liberal Party are for the sick and infirm in our community. His concern for the people in the community really gets to you; it makes you sick.

What is this Government going to do? It says it will not accept \$20,000,000 for a new hospital at Mt. Gravatt. It says we must continue to have queues at the outpatient and casualty departments. The Government says it is quite happy with the out-of-date X-ray record system which allows a man to go to the outpatient department and find that no X-rays are available for him, or for a doctor to wait 14 days for an X-ray report. It says, "That is acceptable because we are not going to accept that dirty, filthy Commonwealth money. We are not going to have anything to do with any additional hospital facilities in this city. This Government doesn't want them. What the Government wants is to play a little bit of State rights, a little bit of politics." Government members want to stand up and read their prepared briefs and act in their bigoted manner against the people who are prepared to give this State some money to do the job that this Government has failed to do itself.

For the edification of honourable members opposite who say that we do not need the hospital, I will refer to a newspaper article of Friday, 18 October 1974 in which Dr. R. F. O'Shea, the Queensland President of the Australian Medical Association, said that Brisbane had a shortage of 600 hospital beds. That was only 12 days ago. Since then the Minister has said, "We don't want that 1,000-bed Commonwealth hospital. It will ruin our forward planning." At the same time, the same Minister has agreed to the closure of wards—15, 2C, 1A; you name it, Mr. Bird—at the General Hospital. He is accepting that people should be made to wait for three or four months to be admitted.

Recently the Minister answered a question asked by the honourable member for Brisbane about non-urgent surgery cases. What is meant by "non-urgent"? Someone is sick and needs an operation. We say to him, "That is not urgent. Go away and suffer a

bit. Wait three or four months. We will give you a few pills and stick a needle into you to relieve the pain. But you will wait until you qualify under the priorities we have determined."

When their turn comes around and they report to the hospital—and I am not giving my views; I am reading from the report of W. D. Scott & Co., which the Minister will not make available to honourable members—the beds that are supposed to have been booked for them are not available and they are sent home.

**Mr. Frawley:** Rubbish!

**Mr. BURNS:** That has happened. That is in the report of W. D. Scott & Co. Rubbish is the sort of material that the honourable member talks. This is fact. The Government spent \$250,000 on the report. It was presented to the Government through the board by its own management consultants. If the honourable member has not had time to read it, he ought to get it and read it. If he did, he would not talk the rubbish that we heard from him in this Chamber tonight.

As I said, a patient turns up and no bed is available for him. He is told, "Go back home." It does not matter that he has arranged with his boss to have time off; it does not matter that he has worked himself into the proper mental state that he is going to have an operation and everything will be O.K.; and it does not matter that he has made arrangements with his family and others to have personal arrangements made. After all that, he is told that there is no bed available for him—"Go home. There is no bed for you. It will be all right. We are short of beds because we wouldn't use any filthy Commonwealth money. If we can get some State money, we might do something for you."

A couple of weeks ago I went on a conducted tour of the Brisbane hospitals with the Federal Minister for Health. Some wards still have beds out on what are called sun verandahs; some still have beds in the corridors. The position is not as bad as it used to be—I will give the Government credit for that—but the problems are still there. Honourable members opposite cannot tell me that we do not need additional hospitals and additional beds.

In the 1940's Health Department officials decided to buy land at Wynnum for a general hospital. They decided in the 40's that a general hospital was needed at Wynnum, but Wynnum is still without a hospital.

Is the Government aware of what this decision is doing to the ordinary worker? It was for him that the free hospital scheme was designed—not for the toffs, not for the Minister in his ministerial car, but for the ordinary worker. Today the worker has to catch a train to South Brisbane or take the Wynnum Line bus to North Quay and then find another form of transport to take him either to the Princess Alexandra Hospital

or to the Mater Hospital, or to take his son or daughter up to the Children's Hospital. If that is the sort of free hospital service the Liberals believe in, it only makes me realise that they never really believed in free hospitals.

It is about time we provided services in outlying areas. The 1971 statistics show that the Wynnum area had a population of 32,906 adults. Those people are cut off from the hospitals in time of flood because the roads are under water. In spite of that, it is said by the Government that there is no way in the world that a hospital is needed at Wynnum.

For some time I have been writing to the Federal Government to try to get a community health centre on the road to Wynnum. I have received advice that help is forthcoming. What has the State Government done to the block of land it bought at Wynnum years ago? It has built an old persons' home on it. Let me say, Mr. Bird, that it is one of the most modern old persons' homes in the community, and I give full credit to those who designed it, those who built it, and the staff who are working there. It is first-class. The staff are marvellous. But the Government in building this home took away the piece of land on which a hospital was to be built. As a result, for some time I have been asking the Federal Minister—I hope that the State Health Department will agree—to give us some money to enable a community health centre to be built at Cannon Hill. We are hoping that by the provision of a health centre in that area the people in the vicinity will be able to get a true local service. The people in Wynnum have been promised by every Liberal and National Party candidate for the last 20 years that they would get a hospital, but they are still without one. The people who will work at the port, meatworkers and others who are likely to receive injuries, will still have to be sent over to the Princess Alexandra or the Royal Brisbane.

I am lucky I have the Pleasantville Nursing Home in my area. Someone mentioned the Blue Nursing Service tonight. I am one of the patrons of the Blue Nursing Service and the Pleasantville Nursing Home in my area. I attend the meetings. I do not go along to them regularly but I attend whenever possible. If honourable members opposite want to see practical Christianity at work with sincere people trying to do something for the aged, they can see it in the service. It is a service that does not receive a fair financial deal from the Government side of the Chamber.

The honourable member for Murrumba again showed us how his statements can be damaging to the Government. He started to talk about \$7,000,000 that the Government has provided for the Mater Hospital. On 17 October 1974 the Minister said that the need to rebuild the Mater was urgent, and that the State Government had already committed about \$2,000,000 for capital assistance. On

6 September 1971 the same Minister said that two-thirds of the \$5,000,000 expansion plan for the hospital would be met by the Government. That meant \$3,300,000. In 1971 the Minister said the Government was spending \$3,300,000 and in 1974 he said the Government had already spent \$2,000,000. Tonight the honourable member for Murrumba says that the Government is spending \$7,000,000. Is that truth and honesty! That is the sort of stuff people are going to have fed to them in the State election campaign. Those are Liberal facts according to the Liberal philosophy. I suggest to the honourable member for Murrumba that, before he makes future statements in the Chamber, he should do a little bit of homework. As it is he makes a fool of himself and a fool of his Government.

One could be excused for thinking after reading all the Minister's statements that the hospitals in Queensland were O.K. One would think that the State Liberal Party had looked after the hospitals, and that there was nothing wrong with the old Mater Hospital. One would think that that hospital did not need any assistance, or that if there was something wrong the State Government would have told us about it years ago. It should not need an offer of Federal money to force the State Government to show interest. I have been warning the Minister for some time about the withdrawal of radiographers from the Mater Hospital unit. Yesterday they threatened to withdraw their services from the subcentre. The Minister had to force them back into court today to get them back on the job. Since 1965 they have been made a number of offers.

There have been long delays in Health Department decisions. The union has a long list of promises since 1965. There were promises of new equipment and a new headquarters for them. They still have not received what was promised.

Talking of promises—a Mr. Wotley, the president of the North Brisbane Hospitals Board, was the assistant general manager of the board in 1968. At that time he sat on a committee that was appointed to do something about the X-ray services at that hospital. Six years later the same sort of committee is being set up to again look at the X-ray services. Mr. Wotley made a statement through the columns of "The Courier-Mail" that he was not aware of any trouble, yet six years ago he was on a committee that was appointed to do something about the X-ray services.

Mr. Lee interjected.

Mr. BURNS: The religious bigotry comes out. One of the things I find difficult to understand in politics is how people can be so religiously bigoted. Outside of the Chamber they shake hands with people and try to persuade them to vote for them, but once inside this Chamber they spend so much time denigrating their particular religious

group. When the honourable member goes to the churches in his electorate during the election campaign, let him tell them what I have said about him. He is a religious bigot. For him to use such words in this debate was stupid and very low. I am sorry he chose to sink to that level. It is a very poor level for the debate to descend to.

I was talking about broken promises. The broken promises on cancer treatment go right back to 1965. Right now the Pittsworth Hospital people are worried about whether they are going to get the money the Minister promised last year when he was under fire. Is the Pittsworth Hospital going to get the assistance the Minister promised last year? The board is in a quandary about promises that have been made but not kept.

The Minister charged the Federal Government with undue haste in its offer of \$20,000,000 for a hospital at Mt. Gravatt. Let us take Mt. Gravatt as an example. In 1963 Dr. Noble set up a committee. In 1964 that committee made a decision that we should have a new hospital at Mt. Gravatt. So there can be no suggestion of undue haste about the matter. Quite the reverse. The decision was made 10 years ago. In 1973, when the Commonwealth Government said, "Give us the plans and we will build a hospital," this Government said, "We do not have any plans." The Commonwealth offered \$250,000 for the plans to be drawn up and this Government could then spend only \$110,000 of it. To this date no-one knows whether there really are any plans because the story changes depending on which newspaper is reporting it or where the statement is being made. If plans are available, why would this Government not accept the money right now to build a hospital in that area? Should we not say to ourselves, "Let us get the hospital, the beds and the equipment and then argue about who is going to run it? Isn't it more important to this Government to worry about the sick people who need these facilities? Isn't it more important for us to be worried about the shortages of equipment and beds than to be worrying about who is going to run it? Is running it so very important that someone should suffer even the smallest amount of pain through our inactivity? Is that what it is really all about?"

At this stage, the staff at our hospitals are overworked and overloaded. I suggest to the Minister that if the Commonwealth does come in and build a hospital, he might be faced with a mass exodus from his service because of the way he is treating some of them. For example, the staff currently comprising the heads of the non-medical departments are receiving less money than the people they supervise. And in addition they go without incremental payments. They may decide to leave en masse. The radiographers have informed their union that, if the Commonwealth Governments wants to do something about a Q.R.I. type of operation at Mt. Gravatt, or wherever it builds

the new hospital, they might leave en masse. The Minister should not be surprised if they do just that because they are sick and tired of Health Department mismanagement.

The hospitals' doctors and senior administrative officers are in turmoil because of low morale, poor conditions, and long delays by the Health Department—so much so that the Minister is now introducing a scheme that will remove some of the complainants. After many years their type of position will disappear and some have been told that they will not get a hospital job again.

So, after years of frustration, of Health Department delays, of applying to the board and the board applying to the Health Department sometimes for amounts as low as \$200 or \$300 for equipment that is vital to the lives of patients, the staff are becoming disgusted and dismayed. Their morale has sunk to a low level and I suggest to the Minister that now is not the time to be playing at non-co-operation with the Commonwealth Government; now is not the time to be playing politics with health; now is the time to be starting to do something for those people who badly need our assistance by the provision of extra medical care.

**Dr. CRAWFORD** (Wavell) (9.28 p.m.): It saddens me that health should become a political football in the way we have seen in this Chamber tonight. Although I suppose we must assume that speakers on the Opposition benches feel that they have something to contribute in the matter of health, I should like to point out that, over the last two years, and especially since we had a change of Government and philosophy in Canberra, we have had a deliberate and sustained attempt by Labor authorities there, which is echoed in this Chamber, to denigrate the medical profession and deprecate the type of work they are doing throughout the country.

It is a fact that Mr. Hayden, week after week and month after month, as part of his political campaigning has made attack after attack upon the medical profession, the result of which has been that there is now tremendous discontent throughout the entire country because it is felt that it is just not worth while for young doctors to set up in practice in Australia.

**Mr. Burns:** You haven't got enough places in the university for medical students.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** They do not know whether there will be a climate in which they can practice electively and in peace. This might sound like an exaggeration but it is a fact. Friends of mine have recently emigrated to the United States, having gone there in the first place looking for somewhere to practise in peace and security. After the Labor Party was elected to Government in Canberra in 1972 and after the election on 18 May this year sent them back—

**Mr. Lee:** They could well be coming back next year.

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** Yes, they could well be coming back next year. They are now practising in Colorado, and they have stated that they will remain there until the political climate that has been generated by the Labor Party in Australia changes. They will not return to this country until they can be assured that they will be allowed to practise in peace without interference. Their action is an indictment of the philosophy that is espoused in Canberra and supported by the Opposition in this Chamber.

Doctors and paramedical workers are not encouraged to work without interference from politicians and others. To go further, they are even discouraged. I predict that there will be large-scale emigration of doctors to other countries because they, like other professional groups, simply will not accept control by so-called Government experts who tell them where, how and why they will practise. This outlook is mirrored in the problems that arise in securing residents and other graduates to practise in Queensland. The problem is, however, not peculiar to Queensland; it is widespread throughout the nation. And it has become even more acute since the Labor Government took control in Canberra at the end of 1972.

I spent some time during the Budget debate on an examination of the scene in the United Kingdom and other countries where a centrally controlled system has been in operation for several decades. Such a system does nothing to promote the practice of good medicine, nor will it prevent the disintegration that will occur in private practice in the United Kingdom as the result of interference by both the Labor Government and the trade unions. This is a terrible state of affairs in a nation that has traditionally had a medical service of the highest standard.

Tonight we have heard reference to waiting lists in Queensland hospitals. Certainly there are waiting lists in our public hospitals, just as there are in other such hospitals throughout Australia. However, the longest waiting lists in the world occur in London, where with malice aforethought the provision of hospital beds has, owing to lack of finance and inadequate administration, been so geared as not to be able to cope with waiting lists. In fact, patients are actively discouraged from placing their names on waiting lists. The greater the extent of control, the longer are the waiting lists. There is no point whatever in attempting to shorten the waiting lists in Australia until the socialist Labor Government is taken off our backs.

As to the expenditure of funds on a hospital anywhere in the metropolitan area—I challenge the Prime Minister, the honourable member for Lytton and the honourable member for Mourilyan to have arrangements made whereby Queensland will be given this money and allowed to spend it as it wishes. We can provide hospital services

very quickly indeed provided we are given the extra money. It is possible to erect a hospital very quickly at Mt. Gravatt, or in any other suitable location. A 600-bed hospital could be erected at a cost of \$20,000,000. Provided we are given expert advice and have a thorough study into this matter carried out, we could provide such a hospital with great ease. Plans have been prepared for the construction of such hospitals under various auspices. As well, costs have been drawn up. The Mater Hospital could be rebuilt for a similar sum within 18 months or two years, again provided the money is forthcoming. But all we hear are promises, promises.

I would like to be given an indication of the actual amount of extra money that has come to Queensland from the Federal Labor Government since December 1972. Tonight we have been given some figures in relation to taxation, and to money that we are not receiving back from the Commonwealth. It is all very well for the Federal Government to big-note itself by providing money here and money there. But such action of itself is only pie in the sky. A great deal of organisation of priorities is needed so that the money may be spent properly. It is easy for Mr. Whitlam or anybody else to say gaily that he will spend this or that sum of money. Where is the \$20,000,000? It is not in Queensland. It is somewhere in the coffers in Canberra—in the pie-in-the-sky department. I should really like to know what extra money has come to Queensland in the last two years since all these promises started.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** Would you like to read the Prime Minister's letter to the Premier?

**Dr. CRAWFORD:** Where is the money? Letters can be written and phone calls can be made. All sorts of promises can be made by people who want to big-note themselves up and down the country. But the money does not come. There is no way in the world in which Mr. Whitlam can fairly say to Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Hamer, or our Premier, "We will do this or that if you do it our way." The Commonwealth should send the money here so that we can spend it. We know what to do with it. We need accident hospitals, and a helicopter service to work in conjunction with them. I have been preaching this system for some time, and it could be set up easily. We could build a 300-bed accident hospital at Cherside, with a helicopter service based on the lessons learnt in Vietnam at a cost of \$10,000,000. But there is no way in the world that we can go to the Federal Government and convince it that it should give us this money. It will not do so; it only talks about providing money. Until it starts providing money, or begins putting its money where its mouth is, we will get no further than bandying around political philosophies which in no way help the public

or the individual patient. It is extremely important to the people who want to make a real contribution to the State that this money should start to come in. Let the Federal Government say, "There is the \$20,000,000; spend it to the best advantage in your State."

I repeat my challenge: if Mr. Whitlam is fair dinkum about providing hospital services in Australia and this city, let him bring the money here. We will spend it. I do not doubt for a moment that there will be a lot of political shenanigan between now and the election, but the simple fact remains that we get talk, promises and nothing else. If we are to make any real progress we must have the money brought here, not promises about something that may or may not happen.

At the moment, on the over-all taxation structure in Queensland less money is returned than is produced here. We are losing a couple of hundred million dollars a year in general taxation revenue. If we are to do the things that must be done, Canberra must stop talking and start producing money.

In this over-all context, Commonwealth hospitals are not really acceptable in Canberra. Tonight we have been hearing about condition of service. The conditions of service in Canberra have not been acceptable to the medical profession there. Hospitals are not being adequately staffed. The Government wants to turn the Canberra Community Hospital into a completely Government-controlled hospital, but the medical profession is not prepared to accept its conditions of service. It is as simple as that. Why should medical practitioners be told where they are to practise, and how they must work throughout their working lives? No professional group can be told how it is to work, where it is to work, why it is to work, and that Big Brother will provide. If Opposition members want to do something reasonable for Queensland and Australia, they will reject the socialist philosophy and start thinking about the real aspects of patient welfare.

**Hon. S. D. TOOTH** (Ashgrove—Minister for Health) (9.39 p.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members who have made kindly personal references to me. I appreciate them. In the limited time at my disposal none of them will want me to spend much time talking about this, but I thank them very much for their kindly comments.

It is a little difficult to know whom I should deal with first. Quite a number of honourable members have talked this evening on a great variety of subjects. I think I should refer first to the contribution, if it can be so described, of the honourable member for Lytton. He is a past master in the art of tub-thumping and political larrikiness. He is outstanding in that field. And that is about the only field in which he is outstanding. He is an intriguer. He

is an extremely dangerous man. I am well aware of cosy little conferences and dinners in which he and political associates of his have been involved with certain persons in the Royal Brisbane Hospital. I know perfectly well where a lot of the trouble stems from. It stems basically from something that the honourable member for Townsville spoke about. The honourable member for Townsville (Dr. Scott-Young) has a State-wide—indeed, a nation-wide—reputation as a surgeon.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. TOOTH:** This evening he revealed his ability as a diagnostician when in one short sentence he put his finger on the trouble at the Royal Brisbane, which has bugged me for seven long years, and the honourable member for Lytton has in recent times been right at the heart of it.

What about his honesty? The honourable member for Murrumba quoted a figure in respect of the Mater Hospital. The honourable member for Lytton said that I was talking about a different amount, and he quoted another figure. What is wrong with Opposition members? Why don't they get their facts straight? Let me tell them the simple facts about two figures quoted. The honourable member for Murrumba was quoting the amount of money that has been set aside in this year's Budget for underwriting the maintenance at the Mater Public Hospital. It will cost the State considerably in excess of \$7,000,000 to underwrite the deficit in the working accounts. The \$3,000,000 is a different figure altogether. It is the money that is put aside to assist the Mater in capital development. They are two separate things. Honourable members cannot tell me that the member for Lytton is not aware of all this.

He comes into the Chamber laughing. What sort of principles has he?

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Lytton will speak only from his usual place in the Chamber, not the passageway.

**Mr. TOOTH:** We would like a little political honesty, not political smart-alecism, of which, as I said before, he is a past master.

**Mr. Burns:** You're not bad at it, either. Do a little pontificating.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Let me say that the assertion made by the honourable member for Lytton and other honourable members that we refused to accept Commonwealth money is a complete and utter falsehood. We have not refused one single cent that has been offered to us by the Commonwealth, and we will not refuse it because—

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Persistent interjections will not be tolerated by the Chair.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Because it is our money, we will certainly not refuse it. That is why. It is our money, as several honourable members have pointed out tonight.

**Mr. Burns:** How do you answer the question of the hospital at Mt. Gravatt?

**Mr. TOOTH:** I will talk to the honourable member about Mt. Gravatt if he will shut up.

**Mr. Burns:** The Commonwealth hospital at Mt. Gravatt—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Minister is speaking in reply and I want to hear him.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I can outshout him if it is necessary.

**Mr. Burns** interjected.

**Mr. TOOTH:** You are nothing but a lout.

**A Government Member:** A straight-out lout.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. TOOTH:** The Prime Minister has not offered the Queensland Government \$20,000,000 for a hospital. He has not offered that at all. He has said, "Give us your site at Mt. Gravatt and we"—meaning he, the Prime Minister—"will build a Prime Ministerial hospital at Mt. Gravatt which will cost \$20,000,000."

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** I rise to a point of order. Tonight I quoted, and I will quote again, from a letter from the Prime Minister to the Premier of this State.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! What is the point of order?

**Mr. F. P. MOORE:** The Minister has told falsehoods and untruths with regard to the Prime Minister. There is no question of where the hospital is being put.

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

**Mr. TOOTH:** The honourable member for Mourilyan has accused me of stating falsehoods. That is offensive to me and I ask him to withdraw it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! With all due respect, I feel that that also is not a valid point of order.

**Mr. TOOTH:** With respect to you, Mr. Lickiss, it is still offensive to me.

I will relate what is in the Prime Minister's letter. It is a very good indication of the way in which the A.L.P. at the Federal level and at the State level is conducting its business. The point is that

a back-bencher of the quality of the honourable member for Mourilyan is in possession of a copy of a letter from the Prime Minister to the Premier. Just imagine it! I had to wait two days to get a copy of that letter. I knew it was in existence and I had to wait until I could communicate with the Premier, who was in the country.

**Mr. F. P. Moore:** I scored over you.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Of course. Opposition members will always score if it comes to this sort of sleight of hand.

In his letter, the Prime Minister says in effect to the Premier not, "We will give you \$20,000,000", but, "You will give us a clear run to build a \$20,000,000 hospital and we feel it should be at Mt. Gravatt." If the letter the honourable member is talking about is the letter I have seen, Mt. Gravatt is mentioned.

**Mr. Bromley:** Take things steadily.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am taking things steadily. Don't be so smart.

**Mr. Bromley:** You're getting upset.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am upset. In 17 years in this Parliament I have never seen an exhibition such as that put on tonight by the man from Lytton.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Wave your hands around some more.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Oh, you miserable little runt. Let me say this to you.

**Mr. B. Wood:** You say it.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. Bromley:** Take things steady and enjoy your retirement.

**Mr. B. Wood:** He has already been in retirement. He has had 11 years of it.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I want to say this. The Federal Minister for Health—

**Mr. B. Wood:** Come on, think of it; think hard.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. B. Wood:** Well, he started it, not me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Barron River will probably have an early night the way he is going.

**Mr. TOOTH:** The Federal Minister for Health has talked about three separate and distinct sites for this hospital—Mt. Gravatt, Inala and then somewhere else unspecified.

**Mr. Marginson:** Wolston.

**Mr. TOOTH:** Wolston, is it? I thank the honourable member for the information.

They are the people who are talking about the failure to plan. These people have not even selected a site and they have to start building a hospital in January 1975. When I said that the proposal was absurd, there was a cry of indignation. The thing is absurd as the honourable member for Wavell, I think, pointed out a moment ago because it is impossible to build a hospital in terms of that nature.

**Mr. B. Wood:** I agree.

**Mr. TOOTH:** I am glad to know that the honourable member is prepared to agree with me. The thing is an absurdity.

**Mr. B. Wood:** Well, that's right, isn't it?

**Mr. Bromley:** Completely right.

**Mr. TOOTH:** The thing is an utter absurdity because planning for a hospital of this type takes not months but two or three years. A 1,000-bed hospital would require at least 2½ years of planning and at least 2½ to 3 years for building. So the suggestion that it could be built within a year or 18 months is patently absurd.

The entire exercise is an attempt to bail out Mr. Keogh from Bowman and Mr. Hayden from Oxley. That is what it is about, and that is the answer to a question I was asked this morning as to why it was to be in Brisbane and not elsewhere. I think the honourable member for Townsville South wanted to know why it was not in North Queensland, and that is a fair question. Why \$20,000,000 in one of the suburban areas of Brisbane? The Commonwealth Government is prepared to put up \$20,000,000 to save two members who are running pretty close to the electoral wind. That is what it is about.

I have suggested that the \$20,000,000 be used where it can be used usefully and quickly, and that is in the rebuilding of the Mater Public Hospital. The Mater Public is a hospital with a long reputation of excellent service to the people of this city and this State. It is now reaching a stage of obsolescence which is so marked that it will have to be rebuilt or abandoned. The Government is currently finding some hundreds of thousands of dollars to do a temporary job of rewiring the building, but it must be replaced.

Mr. Whitlam has 20,000,000 lovely bucks burning a hole in his pocket, and he wants to do something with them. I ask him once again, from a sense of responsibility, to make it available to the good Sisters of Mercy in South Brisbane to rebuild their hospital, which is a wonderful hospital. It is presently sited in a closely populated area in which there is a convergence of traffic lanes so that people from the entire south side of the metropolis can reach the hospital conveniently and quickly. Ambulances can move there rapidly, too. It is serving a purpose

that cannot be served by any hospital other than, perhaps, the Princess Alexandra if its size were doubled.

That is the alternative proposal we put forward. The Prime Minister can solve the problem at the stroke of a pen by making the money available. I will go bail that he will not do it, because he wants to have a Whitlam hospital. This man is the egotist to beat all egotists, and he wants to establish hospitals in his name, under his blessing. That is what it is all about. That is why he has cut right across the firm, considered advice of the board of experts that he appointed, under the chairmanship of Dr. Sax, to decide what should be done.

**Mr. B. Wood** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I warn the honourable member for Barron River that persistent interjections will not be tolerated.

**Mr. TOOTH:** These people, not knowing what Mr. Whitlam had at the back of his mind—possibly he did not have it at the back of his mind at that time; it may be something that has been conjured up since the Sax commission dealt with the matter, so they cannot be blamed—firmly and definitely said that the idea of Commonwealth hospitals placed here and there, without relation to the total over-all planning of hospitals in a city or a State, was something that should not be done. They ruled against it.

At 9.55 p.m.,

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Under the provisions of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 24 October, I shall now put the questions for the Vote under consideration and the balance remaining unvoted for Health.

The questions for the following Votes were put, and agreed to—

Health—

	\$
Chief Office . . . . .	18,887,925
Balance of Vote, Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and Loan Fund Account . . . . .	275,511,793

Progress reported.

#### PROPOSED RAILWAY CONNECTION FROM PHOSPHATE HILL TO GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY

##### INITIATION

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport): I move—

“That the Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution—

‘That the House approves of working plans, sections and book of reference of the proposed railway connection from

Phosphate Hill to the Great Northern Railway near Bungalien, a distance of 68 kilometres.’”

Motion agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (9.58 p.m.): I move—

“That the House approves of working plans, sections and book of reference of the proposed railway connection from Phosphate Hill to the Great Northern Railway near Bungalien, a distance of 68 kilometres.”

This proposal deserves the full support of honourable members on both sides of the Chamber as it will provide many advantages to the State by way of financial return, development and increased job opportunities.

The proposed railway will be constructed to meet the requirements of Queensland Phosphate Limited, which is one of the B.H. South group of companies.

Queensland Phosphate Limited has applied to operate two mining leases covering the phosphate rock deposits located in an area known as Phosphate Hill. One lease is expected to be approved this week, and the other is being processed for early approval.

This railway line and new rolling-stock are to be financed by the developing company at no risk to the State.

To appreciate the magnitude of the scheme, it is necessary to turn the clock back 10 years, when the forward-thinking Federal Liberal-Country Party Government encouraged an acceleration in the search for phosphate deposits in Australia, thus ensuring a supply to meet our future needs.

The Government hoped that private enterprise would respond to the challenge, because at that time there were not any known phosphate deposits of a commercial scale in Australia. Following the Government's call, B.H. South began exploration in 1964, and the Duchess deposits, incorporating the Phosphate Hill area, were discovered in 1966.

In February of this year, the company wrote to my colleague the Minister for Mines and Main Roads, advising that there had been a marked change in the world phosphate market. In the preceding months, the price for phosphate rock traded on world markets had increased substantially, and consumers were made aware of a continuing shortage.

Until this time, the company's studies and investigations on the development of its phosphate leases in north west Queensland had clearly indicated that the only way it could be competitive in the Australian, New Zealand and Asian markets would be by mining and beneficiating phosphate rock

from the Lady Annie-Lady Jane deposits and transporting the concentrates by “slurry pipeline” to a new deepwater port in the Gulf of Carpentaria. In fact, the company's forward planning did not envisage the transport of phosphate rock from the Duchess deposits to Townsville, and after some 20 years of production at the Lady Annie-Lady Jane deposits, the company planned to mine-grind and pump Duchess rock as a slurry to the Lady Annie plant for beneficiating.

In March this year I met with the Executive Director (Phosphates) of B.H. South Ltd., who explained the new developments in the phosphate market and the company's proposals for the railing of rock from the deposits of Ardmore, about 29 kilometres west of Dajarra, and Phosphate Hill, which is south of Duchess. The estimated quantity of various grades of phosphate rock in these deposits is 1,300 million tonnes. The company carried out investigations into the feasibility and economics of mining and rail transporting “as mined” phosphate rock from both the Phosphate Hill and Ardmore deposits.

Queensland Phosphate Limited has indicated that its major interest is the development of the Phosphate Hill deposit, so to gain access to the existing Great Northern Railway the company proposes that a railway 68 kilometres long be constructed from the mine at Phosphate Hill to a junction near Bungalien Siding.

A consultant was engaged by the company to carry out a survey for the proposed branch line, while Queensland Government Railway officers have examined the requirements for handling the phosphate traffic on the Great Northern Railway. An agreement between the Commissioner for Railways and Queensland Phosphate Limited will be concluded for the transport of 1,000,000 tonnes of phosphate per annum from Phosphate Hill to Townsville jetty, but this agreement may be varied to cover the transport of 2,000,000 tonnes per annum, depending upon negotiations now being conducted.

So that this traffic can be handled on the Great Northern Railway, it will be necessary to carry out some upgrading work on the line. There is also a strong chance of substantially higher tonnages being railed, and my departmental officers are currently investigating the requirements for transporting 2,000,000 and alternatively 3,000,000 tonnes per annum. The transport of 1,000,000 tonnes of phosphate rock annually from Phosphate Hill to Townsville jetty will necessitate new locomotives and rolling-stock. The additional rolling-stock will be 11 91.8-tonne diesel electric locomotives; 270 aluminium or steel gondola wagons and four brake vans, with an estimated total cost of \$12,450,000. Tenders will be obtained for the construction of 11 or, alternatively, 22 91.8 tonne diesel electric locomotives and 270 or, alternatively, 540 gondola wagons, and it will also be necessary to have the required number of additional brake vans

manufactured. The alternative numbers of both locomotives and wagons will be included in the tender at the request of the company to provide for the possible increase in the annual tonnage I mentioned earlier.

The railing of the phosphate rock will be handled by utilising four unit trains, each of 62 wagons. Each train will have a net capacity of 3,000 tonnes and will be hauled by two locomotives from Phosphate Hill to Hughenden, and by three locomotives from Hughenden to Townsville jetty. These trains will run direct to the Townsville jetty, where they will be unloaded through a rotary single-car dumper, which is being provided by the company on newly reclaimed land behind Magazine Hill.

The proposed railway will require four prestressed concrete bridges over the Burke River, Pilgrim Creek, Petticoat Creek and Monastery Creek. The longest bridge will be over Pilgrim Creek, where a structure of 11 15-metre spans will be constructed.

The permanent way will be laid with 94 lb. rails, while provision has been made for a station at the junction with the Great Northern Railway, and two loops will be provided for train crossing purposes.

The Phosphate Hill railway passes through four pastoral holdings, and the total area required is approximately 278 hectares.

The estimated cost, including land resumptions, surveys and engineering is \$10,610,000. In addition, \$3,355,000 will be needed for the upgrading of the Great Northern Railway.

Queensland Phosphate Limited will lodge a security deposit equivalent to the capital required for the project and this deposit will be available for use by my commissioner in building the new line, purchasing the rolling-stock and upgrading the Great Northern Line.

Provision will be made in the agreement for the transport of minimum annual tonnages to qualify for refund of the security deposit.

Because of the time factor involved in constructing the proposed railway, the delivery of rolling-stock and the provision of the tippler at Townsville, the haulage of phosphate over the new railway is not likely to commence until late 1975.

In the interim period, the company is shipping out trial shipments of phosphate rock from Duchess. Already a road from Phosphate Hill to Duchess is under construction to permit the haulage of small tonnages of ore.

Trial shipments from Phosphate Hill have also been railed, and 500 tonnes of phosphate rock was received at Clapham last week for container shipment to Japan.

Subsequent shipments of phosphate rock from Duchess will be transported to Townsville in conventional wagons, where they will be unloaded either through the Mount

Isa Mines tippler or by utilising end loaders. Regular shipments of phosphate rock from Duchess to Townsville jetty are expected to commence next month.

The proposed freight rate for the rail transport of 1,000,000 tonnes of phosphate per annum from Phosphate Hill to Townsville jetty will be \$9.50 per tonne, escalated from 1 July 1974 to cover variations in capital costs and working expenses and increases in State profit, in line with any increase in the price of phosphate rock.

The actual additional annual revenue which will be derived as a result of the new line will vary according to the movement of each of the escalation components of the freight rate.

This railway is being built specifically for the haulage of phosphate. However, in determining the probable revenue which would be derived from the traffic on the railway, I believe that account should be taken of the total length of the haul involved, that is, from Phosphate Hill over the new section of the line to Bungalien, then to Townsville by means of the existing Great Northern Railway.

Similarly, working expenses should be looked at from the point of view of their relationship to the over-all haul from Phosphate Hill to Townsville jetty, rather than that over the small section of the new railway.

On the basis of the transport of 1,000,000 tonnes per annum, it is expected that the total working expenses and amortisation of capital for the over-all haul from Phosphate Hill to Townsville jetty will be about \$8,500,000 per annum, and the total revenue is expected to be \$9,500,000 per annum. On this basis, the net revenue derived from the traffic will be \$1,000,000 annually.

The success of this operation clearly hinges on the construction and provision of rail facilities, and I ask honourable members to give me their whole-hearted support.

**Mr. R. JONES** (Cairns) (10.10 p.m.): The Minister, in his opening remarks, did not explain the need to deal with this matter by way of resolution or state if there was any constitutional requirement to do so.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I tabled the documents the other day.

**Mr. R. JONES:** We know why the measure has been introduced.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** I tabled the documents and the report clearly indicates why it had to be done. You did not read the report.

**Mr. R. JONES:** I read the report very carefully.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** You should read it again.

**Mr. R. JONES:** The Minister will learn what I mean, as I progress. His submission this evening was purely and simply an extract from the report.

**Mr. K. W. Hooper:** If you read the Railway Act you will find why it has to be done in this way.

**Mr. R. JONES:** The Minister had a fair go. I did not interject while he was speaking.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member does not have to heed interjections. If he addresses the Chair, the Chair will afford him the necessary protection.

**Mr. R. JONES:** Very well, Mr. Lickiss.

All proposals similar to this must be scrutinised very carefully by the Opposition. The implication of the Government's and the company's actions at this point will affect Queenslanders for a long time. Initially those who will be affected will be miners, construction workers on site, and railway workers employed on building and upgrading the line. Later, those affected will include employees who work on the line hauling the phosphate, processors in the port of Townsville and their employees and, eventually, farmers who use the finished product. The consumers will be affected, too, whether they be local or overseas people. That explains the depth of the matter we are considering this evening.

Under the motion the Committee is asked to approve working plans, sections and books of reference of the proposed railway connection. I am sure the Minister would agree that we have a very difficult assignment in approving something, which we have not seen, and which has been skimpily outlined.

We were told by the Commissioner for Railways in his report to Parliament, which was received by us on 29 October, that Queensland Phosphate Limited made application only for mining leases. Although the deposits were discovered in 1966 the Minister said this evening that the leases had not yet been approved. We are aware from the report that the phosphate rock deposits in this area contain reserves of various grades exceeding 1,100 million tonnes, although I think the Minister referred to 1,300 million tonnes. The Minister stated that the company only proposes transporting the phosphate to the port of Townsville and that the agreement has not yet been concluded, or that it will be concluded, depending on negotiations. The proposition is very much in the air.

The report and the Minister's explanation make it clear that the company is to build a new railway line from Phosphate Hill to a junction near Bungalien siding, 11 km from Duchess. This will be a 68 km link to gain access to the Great Northern Railway. It is proposed to use the existing railway line over a distance of 869.47 km, to Stuart and then on to Townsville Jetty. In effect, 42

new miles of line are to be built, and 550 miles of existing railway line in the Northern Division are to be used.

As it is proposed to construct only 42 miles of new line, consideration must be given to the over-all length of the haul involved, particularly on the basis of the number of ton-miles, the volume of traffic, tons per year transported, wear and tear on the permanent way and existing facilities such as rolling-stock, locomotives and so on.

In previous agreements—with Thiess Peabody Mitsui at Moura in 1965 and with Central Queensland Coal Associates at Goonyella in 1968—bonds were lodged. Companies were obliged to lodge security. No doubt this matter is still under negotiation.

Perhaps we should have been reassured about this by the Minister, in view of the statements in the last paragraph of the commissioner's report, which reads—

"The new railways and rollingstock are to be financed by the developing company at no risk to the State."

I would hope not. We have all heard about how munificent such companies are. Such statements as this have been made as if, as it were, these people were making a gift to the Railway Department and doing a good turn to the people of Queensland.

I see no reference in the arrangement to a time factor. Perhaps that is yet to be negotiated. I expect that we will be able to have built into the agreement sufficient protection for the best return when increased charges and costs to service the operation escalate at a rapid rate. I hope that the State will derive clear monetary advantages and benefits, that it will be able to negotiate effectively with the company and that the maximum net revenue will be of major import in these negotiations.

While portion of the construction will be almost exclusive to the carriage of phosphate from Phosphate Hill to Bungalien or Duchess, the major portion of the journey, as I said before, will be on existing track. I trust the financial return will be such that it will assist over-all railway development within the north-western area and not simply overtax the existing permanent way and railway facilities so that one small section of the community can make a profit.

Unions are concerned that the existing staff may not be able to handle the increased freight and that the situation will be accentuated by the additional volume of traffic from the new line. Genuine concern is felt by the unions in the Northern Division. The existing conditions are presently causing industrial fatigue to the staff, who are even now overworked. The project would require a marked increase in running and complementary railway staff. It is needed now. If the net to be carried is 2,000 tonnes per load, 1,000,000 tonnes will require 500

trains per annum, or some 10 trains per week. I hope that we will see an equivalent increase in staff in the period when the haulage is building up to that peak.

With the number of job vacancies in the Railway Department and apparently not enough people to fill those positions, certainly the absence of qualified staff to handle the increased traffic will cause a shortfall in rosters. Today staff are plagued with excessive overtime, working on their normal days off. It is impossible for them to take holidays. There is no time off. Railway running staff and other employees could not obtain holidays or long service leave. Overtime is a normal practice, and the Great Northern Line is experiencing its busiest period on record. Perhaps there is an unusual demand. Certainly it will accelerate in the future, and extra men will be needed to cope with the additional work; but apparently trained staff are just not available.

According to "The Townsville Daily Bulletin" today, the general manager in Townsville (Mr. Brown) agreed that staffing deficiencies were apparent in the Northern Division at the moment. He said they were being experienced in certain areas of the railways and that excessive overtime was being worked because of the shortages. That account appears at page 27 of today's "Townsville Daily Bulletin". I understand that the unions are to meet the commissioner this Friday. I hope some headway will be made towards solving the immediate problem. A big one is looming if the department is to put in train staff to overcome immediate problems and to cope with the traffic offering.

Finally I wish to point out a few aspects of the proposal which I submit should be queried. It is the intention of the Government to approach this railway construction and subsequent operation from the angle of development only or as a business proposition such as a reasonable man would require? Will maintenance on the line, rolling-stock and other railway facilities be taken into consideration in the assessment of working expenses and, if so, by what contribution?

Over what period has the amortisation been calculated and what interest rate has been adopted? Does the estimated net revenue of \$1,000,000 include a return on the investment made by the Queensland Government? On what sort of retail price for phosphate fertiliser has the amount of \$1,000,000 profit been predicted? How do these freight rates compare per ton-mile or per tonne-kilometre with the freight rates charged on the other recently built lines to Moura and Goonyella?

One would like to think that an all-Australian company would get the best possible deal or a deal as good as those of other coal companies, consistent with protection of the interests of the Queensland

community. The agreements should be at least "even Stephen". Indeed, the Australian company could even expect preferential treatment.

Perhaps the Government can take some kudos if the conditions applying to the all-Australian company are on all fours with those applying to overseas companies. I am not in a position to qualify this point and will leave it to the conscience of the Government and those comparing the secret freight agreements with this one.

As a matter of technical interest, what will be the worst possible effect of the handling of 2,000,000 or possibly 3,000,000 tonnes in addition to increasing Mt. Isa traffic—coal and mineral traffic—on the existing track? Will this traffic density be catered for in forward planning and will the existing service be reviewed in accordance with the future welfare of the north-western area? What happened to the proposal to reduce the phosphate to a slurry and pump it by pipeline to a new Gulf port? Will it be revived? In the event of this situation occurring in the future, what will be the adverse effect on the railways?

It was stated in the Press today that the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr. Connor) and the Minister for Agriculture (Senator Wriedt) have indicated that mining crushing and processing of these newly found phosphate deposits would enhance the future of Australian agriculture and would strengthen primary production. I hope that accelerated production keeps down the price farmers have to pay for phosphate. The anticipated production of 1,000,000 tonnes a year within the space of 12 months will be good news for the primary producer. The possible increase in the annual production of 2,000,000 tonnes is doubly reassuring.

The Australian Government has indicated that it will do everything possible to help Broken Hill South develop the deposits. World shortages are a paramount factor in farm production and, if development of these phosphate deposits will protect farmers from expected heavy increases in world fertiliser prices, the current resolution is timely. On behalf of the Opposition, I look with approval on the proposition. The A.L.P. is in full favour of increased employment opportunities and development of our national resources to alleviate the burden of costs to the primary producer of imported fertilisers. If this project realises these objects and provides ways and means of achieving the desired result and making those opportunities, it will have our support.

If there is provision for default and other protections and if eventually we can mine, manufacture and supply the local demand and increase the possibilities of international exports, then I have no hesitation in supporting the measure on behalf of the Opposition.

**Hon. K. W. HOOPER** (Greenslopes—Minister for Transport) (10.24 p.m.), in reply: The honourable member for Cairns asked why the resolution came before the Committee and why I was introducing it. If he looks at pages 21 and 22 of the Railways Act he will find clearly indicated why the resolution has been introduced in this way. Every other query that he raised is clearly answered in the documents so there is no point in my delaying the Committee any longer. I am amazed that the honourable member should have no confidence in the officers of the Railway Department.

**Mr. R. Jones:** You said it to the Press. You should have explained it to the Committee.

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** I will accept that interjection. I tabled the documents in this Chamber last week, and they have been available for each and every member of this Assembly to study. I cannot do any more than table the documents, as I am required to do, and bring the resolution before the House.

**Mr. R. Jones:** I rise to a point of order. I asked at the table only this morning whether these documents were available. I was told that they were not available and that they had not been tabled. I was not in this Chamber at 4 o'clock last Friday afternoon. If they were tabled, I want to know why they were not available to me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Can the honourable member say to whom the query was directed?

**Mr. R. Jones:** The Clerk Assistant. Or is he the Second Clerk Assistant?

**Mr. K. W. HOOPER:** I assure the Committee that the documents were tabled. It is recorded in the records of this Assembly, and there is no doubt that they were tabled. If the honourable member could not find them, it is not the fault of myself or my officers.

I am surprised that the honourable member for Cairns has so little faith in the officers of the Railway Department that he thinks they would not have carried out the necessary feasibility study and made inquiries as to the amount of traffic using the Great Northern Railway and its capability of handling the additional traffic. It was a very big task, but details in the documents show quite clearly that it is adequate for the job.

It is interesting to note that the honourable member, after knocking the proposal, finally said that the Opposition would support the resolution, and I am grateful to him for indicating that.

I wish to comment on what was said in Federal Parliament by Mr. Connor and Senator Wriedt. They have now jumped on

the band wagon, but this rail link is something for which the Queensland Government, and no-one else, is going to take credit. Mr. Connor has completely changed his attitude to the mining of the country's natural resources.

However, I thank the honourable member for Cairns for his support of the resolution.

Motion (Mr. Hooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

## LAND ACT AMENDMENT AND PASTORALISTS' ASSISTANCE BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. W. A. R. RAE** (Gregory—Minister for Lands and Forestry) (10.29 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

This short but important Bill seems to have general support from honourable members opposite, and I note with pleasure some of the complimentary remarks about the effect that certain of the provisions will have upon the lot of some landholders.

The honourable member for Toowoomba North is one who has indicated some agreement with the measure; but I note that he again took the opportunity to mention in general the successful freeholding policy of the Government as opposed to his party's absolute addiction to leasehold tenure.

I quickly remind the honourable member for Toowoomba North that, in terms of the present unchanged provisions of the Land Act, where a development lease is granted subject to stringent Crown and shire council requirements, there is a statutory right for the developer to have a freehold title granted in the name of the developer over each allotment, provided, of course, that the relevant development conditions of the lease have been performed satisfactorily.

The developer has a right to sell such an allotment subject to an agreed percentage commission to the Crown. In this way the rights of the lease if properly developed return a considerable amount of revenue to the Crown.

The damage and loss to the beef industry caused by the great rains of early 1974 have exercised the mind of the Government since its happening, and I am thankful to have the opportunity of introducing a Bill that will render some assistance to affected pastoralists.

The honourable member for Hinchinbrook ably set out details of the assistance the Government has already in train to compensate lessees for flood losses. As stated by him the old concept of the term "cultivation" is out of date. The availability of aerial spraying and chemical application has meant that the term "cultivation" as defined in the Land Act requires updating to fit in with modern times, and this is being achieved by

the insertion of the new definition, which provides for the sowing of improved pasture species by any means whatever.

I commend the honourable member for Belyando for his contribution to the debate. His suggestion that consideration be given to recognition of the growing of shade trees and establishment of firebreaks in the term "cultivation" is well taken, and I will have a look at possibilities in that regard.

The other amendments proposed have been well received, and I do not wish to elaborate on each provision which I detailed in my introductory speech.

I should like to emphasise before concluding that the extension of lease concessions owing to flood will not be confined to the Gulf region. The concession will also be available to lessees in other parts of the State.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. O'DONNELL** (Belyando) (10.33 p.m.): I suppose I am speaking tonight more by accident than by design. Tonight will probably be the end of my 13½ years of association with the Land Act. I would be lacking if I did not express my appreciation to all the Ministers in charge of the Lands Department over those years—namely, Sir Alan Fletcher, the Honourable Vic Sullivan and the Honourable Wally Rae—to members of the Land Administration Commission, both past and present, and to the many departmental officers who have been so helpful to me.

I put it to the House that one of the most difficult pieces of legislation on the Statute Book for a member of Parliament is the Land Act. It is not a very interesting volume; it is not very well written, and it is very difficult to understand. It is only by continuous application, and advice from those with previous experience, that one becomes at all competent in that field. I know that does not concern the Minister now because he is going to greener pastures—and I wish him good luck and everything he would wish for himself for the future—but we could both leave behind the thought that the Land Act should be rewritten in more presentable language so that the ordinary man would be able to cope with its many difficulties. The Lands Department did well in producing a digest, which certainly gave us a great deal of material in an easily digestible form.

My years with Lands have been very fruitful to me. It is not a very glamorous section of the legislation but I would say that every cent I have earned in salary in my 13½ years here I have been able, through my efforts in connection with the Land Act, to get back to people on the land in one way or other—and I am not including in those activities what I have done for education or anything else as part of my parliamentary duties. That is very rewarding to me.

I have also been able to make other contributions. I have made a contribution to the brigalow scheme by what I said in this Chamber and what I did outside it. I will not go into details but I also contributed to conditions relative to ballots, particularly where people were in partnership. That would probably go back to the time of former members of the Land Commission.

I would say with all sincerity to the Minister, who is leaving us, and to his predecessors, that I hope their future will be at least a happy and successful one, although that perhaps is not a politically wise suggestion.

**Mr. Rae:** You are very kind.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** However, I must come back to the Bill or Mr. Speaker will be referring to me in rather unparliamentary terms and I would not like that on the occasion of my last speech.

The Minister said that this is a very simple Bill. That is quite true, but it is a Bill that runs over the whole gamut of the Act and picks out a piece here and a piece there until eventually it gets to the back page, and there is hardly a link between one clause and the next. That makes it rather difficult to deal with. Some of the clauses are in themselves only machinery clauses. We have a new definition of cultivation.

I should like to thank the Minister for his kind remarks. I like to see if I can improve these matters and I hope this contribution will go down somewhere in the history of the Land Act as a final effort from me.

**Mr. Rae:** It will.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** In two instances in this Bill an endeavour is made to define the unimproved value of land. I think this effort is slightly better than the last one but I do not know whether we will ever get a very satisfactory, clear and definite statement of the unimproved value of land.

There is then a minor amendment which I will not bother to refer to and then we come down to the extension of the term of development lease. Perhaps members have not looked very closely at this Bill but this section is most important because it refers to the development of Crown land and land reclaimed from the sea, so we know that roads, bridges, drainage and so on are involved. But that is not the point. Perhaps the matter on which we should have an argument is the extension of time that is being given under this clause. Up to date the maximum period of time has been 30 years. There is now a sudden escalation from 30 to 75 years. This is a remarkable increase and I am sorry that the Minister did not give us an explanation for this considerable jump. Had a statement been made explaining this, it might well have been more acceptable.

He did speak tonight more clearly than he did at the introductory stage about developers and their work. We know the responsibilities and the benefits that flow to them and perhaps those that flow to the Lands Department, too. The extension of the term from 30 to 75 years is a lengthy one, and I would appreciate an explanation from the Minister as to the reason for it.

The Land Act contains one section that any occupant of the Lands portfolio would know by heart. I refer to the famous, or infamous—depending on the way we view it—section 287, which clothes the Minister with a discretionary power. The section is amended by the Bill. Today the honourable member for Baroona commented to me, "Hard cases make bad laws." I thank him for that remark. It is appropriate to this section. Notwithstanding the area or rent involved, and subject to the conditions contained in subsection 1, the Minister has under section 287 power to transfer.

At the introductory stage the Minister made a rather rash comment when he said, "Mt. Margaret could run about 5,000 sheep on 60,000 acres, but what does it matter if it is 100,000 acres?" What an attitude! I sincerely hope that his successors do not apply similar reasoning to other leases, saying, for example, "Such-and-such a property is 40,000 acres, but why shouldn't it be 50,000 acres?"

As all honourable members know, the most secure asset that a person can have is good land.

**Mr. Rae:** That's right, but you won't get it on Mt. Margaret.

**Mr. O'DONNELL:** I am sure the Minister would agree with me that everyone has the earnest desire to own land. Any ambitious person strives to acquire as much land as possible in an effort to make his future more secure.

I have said that section 287 is of utmost importance. Any proposed amendment to it is immediately suspect in that perhaps it gives an opportunity to some people to get their foot in the door and to acquire even larger areas of land. Regardless of the good intentions of the Minister, a person could acquire land for personal gain. From what has been said, however, there does not appear to be any sinister intention on the part of the Government. All I ask is that before the Minister departs from these shores he close all possible loopholes in section 287.

Finally, I see a reference to assistance for pastoralists. On some occasions I am pedantic in my use of words. Nevertheless I do not like the use of the word "pastoralist" here because to my mind it refers specifically to those persons engaged in the sheep industry. The pastoralists' assistance, as it is termed in the Bill, refers only to persons associated with the cattle industry who suffered disastrously in the recent floods.

The Opposition supports everything that has been written or proposed about this assistance. We do so gladly. I am concerned only about the title. I do not know why the word "pastoralists" was used, and I do not know why disaster clauses cannot be written permanently into the Land Act. This measure refers only to the 1974 floods. Disaster legislation should be with us at all times. Strangely enough my comments relate to what I said a long time ago about drought mitigation. At that time I said that the drought mitigation committee should never cease to exist because in our vast State a certain area of land must be suffering from drought at all times of the year. That committee should be ready to operate at all times so that the required assistance may be rendered.

It has been a pleasure to be associated with this measure. I sincerely regret having to cut my association with the people on the land, knowing as I do what they mean to this State.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. TOMKINS (Roma) (10.46 p.m.):** I support the second reading of the Bill in the knowledge that every clause in it shows understanding of the problems of the people on the land. The clause under which compensation will be payable on country that is partly improved, as well as cultivation, can only be a means of encouraging people on the land to continue to carry on development although the leasehold land on which they are working may be subject to resumption at a later stage. In other words, fair compensation is paid. That incentive has been missing from the Land Act but this provision will go a long way towards ensuring that people will develop their properties as far as possible.

There is another angle to it. Many development conditions have been nullified somewhat by the activities of the Commonwealth Government in removing tax concessions. On the other hand, the State Government is playing its part in assisting people to develop land.

The provision dealing with the 75-year development lease is excellent. Many areas in Queensland are totally unsuitable for closer settlement and should never be considered for it. So far as I am concerned, we could extend the period to 100 years.

The amendment of section 287, which the honourable member for Belyando referred to, appears to me to be a genuine attempt to extend the principle of family ownership of leasehold land. The Minister and his Land Administration Commission may use discretionary power in certain cases to allow people to increase their land holdings. I make the point here that, with prices for both cattle and sheep at a very low level, a very sympathetic Lands Department is required to effect a balance. If landholders in difficult circumstances are

not treated generously, they could very well go out of business. Today it is all too evident to anybody travelling about and talking to people on the land that all graziers are having a very bad time. They are wondering how they can make ends meet. In a lot of cases I am sure they will not make ends meet. They will just not get enough income, whether from the sale of wool or from the sale of cattle. Prices have fallen by two-thirds in 12 months. That will have an effect on the liquidity of all landholders.

Perhaps it is not quite within the ambit of the Bill, but I believe that the Lands Department will have to face the situation that at some time landholders in the two industries I have mentioned will need help to carry on for a period during which, all the experts say, there is very little chance of lift in prices.

**Mr. Hartwig:** What about Mr. Whitlam?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** I would not take very much notice of him. He has not shown much sympathy towards landholders at all. He would not worry me at all.

**Mr. B. Wood:** What do you think of the proposals to stabilise prices?

**Mr. TOMKINS:** Quite frankly, I do not think much of them. I am one who believes that the industry, with all its complexities, cannot be helped by statutory boards or any type of stabilisation. The industry has battled through very difficult times and it will do so again. I do not see any fair way of ensuring that a stabilisation scheme will work. I have studied marketing schemes and various ways of handling possible sales, but what we really need is a higher price. If the price is not sufficiently high on the overseas market, which is the present situation, the domestic market is affected. Consequently, I do not see any assistance that way. I believe that as a matter of policy we must take the view that, although things are bad in the industry this year, perhaps next year they will be better. I believe that this is the way the Government must look at it—perhaps through the Rural Reconstruction Board—to see whether or not some sort of carry-on expenses can be provided in the almost certain expectation (certainly in the cattle industry) that, within a maximum period of two years, conditions will have improved. That is the way I would answer the honourable member for Barron River.

As this will perhaps be the final Bill to be presented by the Minister for Lands, I will take this opportunity to make some personal reference to him. The honourable member for Belyando said that he feels sad about leaving the Chamber. I am quite sure that the Minister for Lands does, too. However, he is going to pastures that are much greener (though much colder) and very pleasant surroundings. I take the opportunity of wishing him success in his new job. In

the three years or thereabouts that he has been Minister for Lands, I believe the department has been responsible for some of the best lands legislation of all time. Although I said a little while ago that people are worried about what is happening on the land, today it is not possible to buy a quarrel anywhere about the Land Act. That is a sure sign that, although things are tough, people recognise that the Lands Department has realised the difficulties and that the Minister has acted accordingly.

I pay a tribute to Mr. Brian Heffernan and other members of the Land Administration Commission. It is only necessary to travel about the State to see what the problems are in order to know what should be done about them. I am happy to see that the officers of the Lands Department have done that.

In particular, I pay tribute to the Minister for having the courage to implement some of these policies. A few years ago if the Minister had attempted to enact this legislation somebody would have bitten his head off. It would have been said that he was falling over backwards to help people on the land. Today they are struggling, and I think that it is time the department should fall over backwards to help them. I would like to finish on that note. I think the Minister has done a first-class job in this portfolio.

The honourable member for Belyando is one member of the Opposition who has taken a real interest in land and he is one who can intelligently enter any debate on land matters. He knows the Land Act backwards. I think he, too, will be missed from debates on land matters in the future.

Tonight we have the situation where two top men—one from each side of the House—are giving up. Doubtless the Lands Department will carry on all right, but both honourable members will be missed. I wish them both well.

**Hon. W. A. R. RAE** (Gregory—Minister for Lands and Forestry) (10.55 p.m.), in reply: It would be wrong for me to say that I was not moved by the very kind words expressed here tonight not only to me but also to the members of the Land Administration Commission. It was a tremendous compliment to Brian Heffernan, Joe French, Paul O'Gorman, Len Lawrence, and to Mal Johnston who went onto the Land Court today. They are remarkable men who have done a wonderful job.

The honourable member for Belyando and I have been members of this Parliament for many years. We have had our ups and downs and our differences in the political arena. I confess that, deep down, I have always considered that he possessed a very sound and wide knowledge of the requirements, desires and frustrations of the man on the land. As an honourable member who was formerly a teacher, he has a wonderful

knowledge of the land, which he has applied ably to the benefit of the man on the land. He has been very kind in many of his contributions on land matters.

Tonight, the honourable member said he would like to see the Land Act rewritten. I am sure that the chairman of the Land Administration Commission agrees that it should be rewritten and brought up to date so that it is in conformity with the way we live today and deals with the problems confronting the people living on the land. I am sure that Mr. Heffernan will take this suggestion back to the commission and, possibly before we realise it, work will commence on it.

The honourable member also said he was pleased that we were recognising his suggestion about shade trees. I am all for it. It was one of the highlights of his speech at the introductory stage. He pointed out, also, that people who are prepared to do something with their land should be given recognition by way of compensation. He complimented the brigalow scheme, and I thank him for that. The 75-year lease applies where vast sums of money are involved. It would not be good thinking to restrict these people to a shorter period. We would like to extend the title to cover a longer period so that they could get on their feet. This would enable the State, as well as the person involved, to be enriched.

Local government has proved itself to be beneficial as the third arm of government. It does a very good job. Quite frankly, we feel we can tie ourselves in with it on this matter. It will not be destructive. It will assist and that is what we want it to do. A lot of money is involved. Where a large sum of capital is involved, the Government should be understanding and considerate.

His final point concerned the area of, say, Mt. Margaret-type country of 60,000 acres. I used it only as an illustration. A person with 60,000 acres in that area would be lucky if he could run 2,000 or 3,000 sheep on it. Therefore, area should not be the limiting factor; productivity should be. Let us reward the people who are prepared to live and sweat it out in isolated outback areas where they have none of the amenities of life; the mailman comes once a week, and usually they are short of almost everything they need.

The Land Administration Commission has looked at this matter very carefully. It believes that it should modernise its thinking and get into step with the realities of life, and that is what it is doing in this instance.

I thank my very good friend from Roma, Mr. Tomkins, for the complimentary remarks he made about me and my departmental officers. I do not intend to name them all, but the officers of the Land Administration Commission are a magnificent team. They perform their duties with great dedication, and I am certainly proud to have been

associated with them and to have worked with a team that has done so much for Queensland. The esteem in which they are held is reflected, I believe, in the fact that, day after day and week after week, no questions relating to their work are directed to me in this Chamber. That is comforting to me and to the Government. Of course, I am sure that all Government departments claim they are doing their work equally well. If honourable members on both sides of the Chamber can go to a department, discuss their problems and receive the right answer, that is what the Government wants.

This is my final opportunity to speak in this Chamber. I have been here almost 18 years. They have been very happy years, and I will certainly miss this lovely Chamber that means so much to Queensland and to all of us as elected members of this Assembly. In the long term, I hope that the present system of Government will be retained. The people put us here, and we remain here while we do a good job for them. I hope that this will remain an Assembly of ordinary people doing their best for the people who elect them.

Motion (Mr. Rae) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Wharton, Burnett, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 19, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Rae, by leave, read a third time.

### BRANDS ACT AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN** (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.6 p.m.):  
I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

When introducing this Bill I pointed out that the principal amendment to the Brands Act related to a proposal to issue special brands to the Police Department for the purpose of identifying stock suspected of being stolen and which are taken into police custody.

The principal amendment to the Stock Act is designed to facilitate the introduction of a system of property identification as an aid to the rapid and positive trace-back of the origin of animals in which disease is detected at slaughter, also to check the origin of travelling animals if there is a suspicion that they are being moved illegally or are stolen stock.

I gained the impression that members on both sides of the House were generally in accord with the objects of the Bill.

As honourable members are no doubt aware, the last brand imprinted on stock is taken as prima facie evidence of ownership, and it has therefore been necessary to include provision in the Bill to ensure that the imprint of a special brand by a police officer does not in any way impair the right of ownership of the legal owner of the stock. The Criminal Code also contains a provision making it an offence for any person to imprint a brand on stock that he does not own. Accordingly, an amendment is included to indemnify police against this provision when they use the special brand allocated for the purpose of identifying suspected stolen stock.

Other provisions of the Bill are designed to overcome problems presently associated with the cancellation of brands and earmarks that have not been used by the registered owner for a period of some years. This is to enable their re-allocation with less delay than at present in order to meet an increasing demand for brands and earmarks.

The requirements whereby alterations in the ownership of brands and marks have to be published in the Gazette is proving too cumbersome in view of the delays in publication caused by the heavy work load at present imposed on the Government Printer. Revocation of these requirements will enable these matters to be handled much more expeditiously on a purely administrative basis.

Other matters that will be clarified relate to proof of ownership provided by sheep and cattle earmarks, and the use of certain approved cuts and marks used to identify spayed cows or brucellosis vaccinates.

The rate of inflation of recent years has reduced the deterrent effect of penalties under both Brands and Stock Acts, and opportunity is taken to increase these to a level more in line with present-day money values.

The honourable member for Isis has raised in this House the matter of insecticide residues in meat animals, a matter that has such a big bearing on the entry of Australian meat to important overseas markets. The proposed amendments to enable regulations to be promulgated for the registration of properties for the purpose of identifying stock travelling for sale will have also a most important bearing on the positive trace-back of animals in which unacceptable levels of chemical residues are found at slaughter.

The identification of sale stock, and particularly those consigned to sale for slaughter, or direct to point of slaughter, will also play a vital role in meeting the requirements that have been laid down in relation to the national campaign to eradicate tuberculosis and brucellosis from our herds. Meat importing countries are becoming more insistent that all practicable measures be taken to ensure that animals killed for export be free of these diseases when sent for slaughter. This in turn seems

likely to require in due course, that only identified animals are accepted for slaughter at principal meatworks.

I take this opportunity to advise honourable members of my view that the Bill is calculated to assist measures being taken to curb the stealing of stock, and to aid materially in the control and eradication of diseases of livestock.

I again thank honourable members for their contributions, and I commend the Bill to their further attention.

**Mr. BLAKE (Isis) (11.11 p.m.):** I notice a very great similarity between the comments of the Minister at the introductory stage of the Bill and his comments tonight. This is quite understandable because, as I said at that stage—

**Mr. R. E. Moore:** You can make the same speech, too.

**Mr. BLAKE:** The honourable member has gone very close to the truth. Had he waited a moment to hear what I had to say, that would have been a perfectly superfluous interjection. I said at the introduction that I did not want to make any comments other than those I had made because we could not be properly informed until we had studied the provisions of the Bill. Indeed, on studying its provisions I discovered that it was so much in line with what the Minister's introductory remarks had led me to believe, and so much in line with my own comments on those remarks, that very little further need be said about it.

I suppose the special brands issued to the Commissioner of Police for use by police for the identification of stock involved in the commission of a crime, and the protection of ownership by the owner while such brands are in use, would be the salient features of these amendments to the Brands Act. It is easily understood that the amendments designed for streamlining the cancellation and reallocation of brands and earmarks are as indicated by the Minister in his introductory speech.

The elimination of the requirement to publish alterations of ownership of brands also makes good sense. Only one question arises here. While this is being done within the office, I am wondering if there might be some overlapping administratively which might give rise to some confusion in the absence of the due lapse of time that takes place with publication in the Gazette. But the mechanics of it, I suppose, would be very much the same, and I hope that in practice it will not result in any duplication of re-registration, cancellation, or that type of thing.

Bringing penalties more into line with present-day money values is self-explanatory. This has to be done from time to time in almost every Bill that comes before the

House. The same remarks would apply to penalties foreshadowed in the amendments to the Stock Act.

I believe I commented earlier on the Opposition's support of other Stock Act amendments which expand stock identification on a shire area or property basis for the purpose of tracing stock movements, disease, and even stock stealing. As the Minister has pointed out, it will have a useful purpose in tracing back for chemical residue control, which is a matter of great importance not only to the health of the consumer but in the acceptance of our beef on the export market.

The main object of the Bill is the prevention of cattle stealing or, to use an Australian colloquialism, cattle duffing. Provisions dealing with other matters are, of course, of equal importance. Perhaps some difficulties might arise in practice in the field, but after reading the Bill I cannot visualise any such problems. Many requirements that are foisted—I do not say that in an unkind manner, and perhaps I should have said "imposed"—onto stockowners are not well received in some quarters. This is only because some people regard as an imposition any move that interrupts their routine or breaks their habits. As I say, there may be some inconvenience caused, but I am sure that it will be far outweighed by the benefits that will flow from this Bill. It has the Opposition's wholehearted support.

**Mr. HARTWIG** (Callide) (11.16 p.m.): As a member of the Minister's committee and as one with some experience in the cattle industry, I should like to speak briefly to this Bill. Firstly, I am pleased to see that it tidies up the cancellation of brands and the situation that arises from non-cancellation. On some occasions following the retirement or death of a stockowner, a brand is not cancelled, with the result that confusion sometimes arises. The Bill will obviate this.

The Minister has said that the police will be empowered to use special brands to identify stock. I hope that they will not be allowed to do this before proof is obtained that stock of which they take custody are in fact stolen. If, for example, stock have merely strayed and are taken into custody by the police and subsequently branded by them, the rightful owner could suffer great inconvenience.

I go along with the principle of property identification. This will obviate a problem that is more serious in this large State of Queensland, which covers 22½ per cent of the area of Australia, than in the smaller States of New South Wales and Victoria, which respectively cover 11 and 3.5 per cent of the area of the nation.

The Minister made a comment in relation to the granting of 50 to 70-year leases on country that would not carry a scrub wallaby. We have problems in our vast outback areas.

Some means of identifying stock was debated at length, and the Minister assured us that the matter will be debated further at a later date. I point out—the Minister knows my feelings quite well—that the time is inopportune to introduce stock identification which, in my opinion, is an imposition. I say that knowing the plight of the cattle industry today. It is virtually on its knees following the tremendous drop in stock values. I was told tonight that dry cows sold yesterday for as little as \$5 a head at a cattle sale. That is a ridiculous state of affairs, and it is causing grave concern to this Government and every other Government, including, I believe, the Commonwealth Government. It is also causing untold worries to management.

Today, property management is very difficult. Property owners have to combat high administrative costs, while receiving almost record-low returns for production. I hope that this legislation will not be rushed through and forced on producers at this time. It could well be that when cattle are sold on Mondays, as they are at the Grace mere fat cattle yards, stock identification will take place on Saturdays and Sundays. The stock will have to be mustered, yarded, dipped, drafted and identified.

Of late I have attended many seminars at which we have been told by experts that property management is responsible for bruising. I place on record that whatever is decided about stock identification will result in increased carcass bruising. I say, in the light of my wealth of knowledge of the industry, that cattle cannot be crushed or penned without some risk of bruising. I know that the United Graziers' Association requested identification of stock. I agree with it in principle, but its timing is extremely important. When bullocks in good order are yarded, it means double crushing. Getting over wild bullocks to back-tag, tail-tag or mark with some other form of identification entails carcass bruising. Losses in the industry at present through bruising are considerable.

When I attend the next seminar, I shall at least be able to say that I had the courage to say in this House that the identification of stock could contribute—I do not say that it will—to excessive bruising. It would be a shame if that were so, because it would be an added loss to the industry.

I am not so naive as to say that I do not know what this legislation is about. Countries to our immediate north have the scourge of foot and mouth disease. The measures being implemented by this Bill and the one passed in the previous session are to cover the unfortunate eventuality that this nation should ever be confronted with the terrible scourge of foot-and-mouth disease. The other evening the Minister showed us a very fine film—a horrifying film—of what happened in England when approximately 433,000 head of livestock were slaughtered because of the disease.

I state quite openly that I do not believe our control at airports is sufficiently strict. It is not good enough simply to ask people on arrival, "Have you been to an abattoir overseas?" The fact is that they have been overseas, and the risk is always there. Foot-and-mouth disease is prevalent in Bali, an hour-and-a-half's flight from Australia. I believe that all footwear of persons entering this country should be disinfected and thoroughly treated.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member to return to the provisions of the Bill. He has had fair latitude.

**Mr. HARTWIG:** The Bill relates to elimination and control of disease. The point I make is that foot-and-mouth disease is a real threat to the future welfare of our cattle herds.

**Mr. Davis:** What has it got to do with the Bill?

**Mr. HARTWIG:** It has a lot to do with the livestock industry.

In conclusion, I state that the identification of properties, which is now occurring throughout the State and is part and parcel of the Act, will be of benefit in dealing with stolen stock. However, I trust that the Minister will be wise in choosing the date on which the regulations will be applied.

**Hon. V. B. SULLIVAN** (Condamine—Minister for Primary Industries) (11.28 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for Isis for his acceptance on behalf of the Opposition of the measure before the House. It is not a far-reaching Bill, but I think that its provisions are absolutely necessary at the present time.

The honourable member for Callide has made certain observations. I appreciate his concern, which is based on a lifetime's experience in the industry. However, I cannot agree that the introduction of this legislation, which allows the gazettal of regulations for some form of identification of stock going for slaughter, is untimely.

**Mr. Bromley:** They will only be rounded up once.

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** That may or may not be so. In Queensland we have problems that are not experienced in the southern States. Here we have "ticky" country and clean country.

**Mr. Tucker:** How often do they have to be dipped?

**Mr. SULLIVAN:** We have not determined the type of marking; that has yet to be decided. My departmental officers were very interested in the discussion they had with my committee. In clean country, there is not much problem, with back-tagging of cattle for identification prior to their going to sale. However, the honourable member for Callide and other members made the point that, where cattle have to be dipped,

the back tag cannot be applied prior to the dipping, which could soften the glue. They could be dipped half an hour after back-tagging.

It could be that we would settle for back-tagging or tail-tagging. As I have argued, tail-tagging can be done before dipping. If a person is sending a consignment of cattle to the saleyards, he can dip them beforehand. It is a simple operation. I have done it with my own cattle when I have been testing them for brucellosis. The cattle can run through the dip half-a-dozen times, and the tail tags will remain on. These matters will be covered by regulation.

The measure is timely because of the problems confronting the beef industry and our export markets at present. We have been advised by the secretary of the Department of Agriculture that in recent days he attended a conference in Washington, and one of the matters being looked at there was the residue of insecticide in beef. If there is any residue in our beef, our exports to the United States will be impaired. For purposes of Commonwealth-State tuberculosis and brucellosis eradication, it is very important to be able to trace it back to the property of origin.

True it might be that this creates extra work. I suppose we are only human, and if we have become used to doing a thing a certain way, we are inclined to hang back in the shafts when it comes to change. I think the point the honourable member for Callide was making was that this could incur extra cost. I do not think it will be of any great magnitude.

I appreciate his concern about bruising. The point is that we have to measure up to our responsibilities in this matter. Our beef industry is in one hell of a mess, and we have to take every measure possible to ensure that our exports are not impaired because of inaction. I take cognisance of the observations that have been made. I believe conscientiously that what we are doing is absolutely necessary.

Motion (Mr. Sullivan) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

(Mr. Wharton, Burnett, in the chair)

Clauses 1 to 18, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Sullivan, by leave, read a third time.

### ABORIGINES ACT AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### SECOND READING

**Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT** (Auburn—Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs) (11.36 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The amendments deal only with the management of property under the Aborigines Act of 1971 and the Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1971. At the introductory stage there was a wide and varied debate on the two amendments and other matters. I think that the two amendments are now very clear, and I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH** (Cook) (11.37 p.m.): The Minister said that the introductory debate was wide. I think it was so wide that the provisions of the Bill were missed completely.

It was interesting—and at times distressing—to listen to the honourable member for Merthyr, who took part in the debate not because he was interested in the contents of the Bill or the people who are governed by it but to disseminate propaganda against the establishment of hostels within his electorate. I say to him, “Sometime, when you are quietly alone, just think how lucky you are that your mother and father were white, not black. You had no say in who your parents were, but now you pursue a fanatical course to downgrade a race of people of different colour from your own.”

**Mr. LANE:** I rise to a point of order. Is the honourable member suggesting that coloured people are inferior and that I am lucky I am white? That is not a fair proposition. He has misrepresented me, and I ask him to withdraw his remarks.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** The honourable member was so fanatical in the introductory debate that he does not know what he said. He went a little further on television tonight, and I think it is a disgrace for members of this Assembly to use propaganda of that type when we are endeavouring to assist coloured people to an easier and better understanding of the laws of government.

It is only a small Bill, and I say to the Minister that it is really only window-dressing because it makes so few changes. One or two words are changed and two sections are repealed completely—that is quite a big change—but in the main the amendments make very little difference. As one goes through the clauses, one sees that the amendments add to the confusion to which I referred at the introductory stage. Amendments of many other sections of the Act could have been considered.

As the Minister said, the Bill really relates only to the management of property, and I know that I will not be allowed to digress from that subject. However, although only two words are taken out of one section and one word out of another, I think it would be impossible for Aborigines, or, indeed, many other people in Australia, to understand the exact effect of removing the words that it is now proposed to remove. Although members of the Opposition are not opposed to the changes proposed, I say again that the Bill is only window-dressing. It is another

way of saying, “This is an instance where we are carrying out the wishes of the Aboriginal people.”

The honourable member for Barron River mentioned that the Aboriginal Advisory Council is often used to fit in with the wishes and demands of the Government. Without a shadow of a doubt, the Bill is a very clear example of that.

I reserve the right to speak on some of the clauses at the Committee stage. It is a short Bill and amounts to no great achievement.

**Mr. LANE** (Merthyr) (11.41 p.m.): The remarks of the honourable member for Cook indicate the extremism that is underlined in the attitude of the Australian Labor Party towards Aboriginal affairs in this nation. Its policy is one that can plainly be branded as an Australian apartheid policy. It is an extremism which would seem to place one section of the community apart and separate from the rest of us.

The approach of the Minister in this legislation indicates that it is much more desirable for all men in this nation to be regarded as equal, irrespective of colour, race or creed. The racist approach of the Opposition in this place, and the racist approach of the Federal Government in setting aside people with coloured skin, is completely abhorrent to me.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I ask the honourable member to get back to the Bill.

**Mr. LANE:** I was prompted to make those few remarks because of what the honourable member for Cook said a few moments ago.

The approach of the Minister and officers of his department in seeking the considered views of responsible Aboriginal people, and then drafting this legislation in accordance with their wishes, is indicative of the way things should be in our democracy. The situation that would be promoted by the A.L.P. would do nothing towards binding together the people of the nation. It is plainly racist.

**Mr. B. WOOD** (Barron River) (11.44 p.m.): It has always been the policy of the Australian Labor Party to treat all people as equals. That is our philosophy. In contradistinction to that we see attempts by honourable members opposite to treat various people in a different manner, depending on the race of the people. The Act itself is one example of inequality for Aboriginal people. It spells out special conditions that are detrimental to their interests. One of those conditions is being removed from the Act. Although it is only one small step, nevertheless it is important.

I can only support the Bill, but I regret that it does not include a great deal more to improve the Act. I can remember speeches I have made in this Parliament on other occasions when I have said that it is totally undesirable that the property of Aborigines

should be subject to management as set out in the terms of the Act. I can recall just as clearly being told on those occasions that what I said was not right. I have been told this by honourable members opposite, yet tonight remarks I have made in the past have been vindicated.

This also applies to other areas of both the Aborigines Act and the Torres Strait Islanders Act. There have been other occasions on which I have offered criticisms of both the 1971 Act and the earlier Act where we still have to see my suggestions and those of the Labor Party generally put into effect. We have been vindicated in this House on many occasions. Even the 1971 Act incorporated a good deal of what we had been saying. I expect that remarks we will make will be taken note of and put into effect in the near future. We can anticipate the near future because we will have a Labor Party Government before much longer.

On this occasion I rise to indicate our support for this minor change. It does not provide for all the action that should be taken, but we approve of the Bill and I foreshadow that much of what we say will soon be coming into effect.

**Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT** (Auburn—Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs) (11.47 p.m.), in reply: Let me say that we on this side of the House will vindicate what the Labor Party is saying when we are asked to do so by the members of the Aboriginal and Islander Advisory Council, the representatives of people affected by the Acts. Make no mistake, many Aboriginal and Islander people who have had their property managed over the years would be the first to say "Thank you" to the Government of the day and the Labor Government of the past. As a result of management of their property, they now have some security and are today dedicated to doing a job within our community.

There is more to this matter than talking about the ideas of the United Nations and such things. My interest has always been and always will be for the Aboriginal people. As a Minister I will stand by what I believe is good for them. I am not going to take any notice of radicals throughout Australia. Today we saw reports of a demonstration in Canberra. Much of that conduct has been brought about as a result of Federal policy by people who do not know exactly where they are going in this cause.

I do not care where they are, but many Aboriginal people have been put back many years through policies initiated in the last four or five years. They are policies that are not achieving the right thing. Unfortunately, they are putting people back 10 or 15 years.

For heavens sake, let us get away from playing politics. I have always tried to be fair in this House, so I will say that I

believe the honourable member for Cook is sincere in his belief of what is good for Aborigines. He has had a lot of experience with them. I pay a tribute to him in that regard and, knowing that he is going out of this Parliament, I naturally want to say, "Thank you" to him as my counterpart over quite a period of time.

Motion (Mr. Hewitt) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 5, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—Repeal of and new s. 45; Termination of management of property—

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH** (Cook) (11.50 p.m.): This clause is the one to which I referred at the second-reading stage. The former section 45 was, to say the least, confusing. However, after the legislation embodying it had been rushed through and proclaimed, there was nothing we could do about it.

I refer particularly to subsection (4) which provides—

"(4) As soon as practicable after the giving of the notification referred to in subsection (2) the Director and a district officer in whose hands the Aborigine's property then is shall take all steps necessary to transfer, deliver and secure to the Aborigine that property and all other property of the Aborigine that may subsequently come into his hands on behalf of the Aborigine if—

(a) the Aborigine is competent in law to give to the Director a valid discharge therefor; and

(b) the Aborigine's interest therein consists of an estate or interest in possession other than a limited estate or interest."

It is bad that a clause such as this, which concerns the livelihood and property of the Aboriginal people, should start with such a vague term as "soon as practicable".

Who decides when it is "as soon as practicable"? The clause provides that it is the director and the district officer in whose hands the Aborigine's property then is. They shall do certain things if—

"(a) the Aborigine is competent in law," and so on. What on earth does that mean? Does it mean that the Aborigine must be mentally sane; does it mean that he must be in possession of property that is capable of being disposed of; or does it mean that he simply must be an adult Aborigine? I would like the Minister to elaborate on this. If he is not able to do so tonight, I ask him at least to streamline provisions such as this.

Surely the Minister will not claim that the Aboriginal people drafted this clause, or even understand it. Again I ask: what does it mean? It is so vague.

**Mr. Wright:** Who is to decide all this?

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH:** That is the point. Is it the director, or is it a magistrate? The old section 45 began with entirely different phraseology. Under it, the director had power to grant an application. However, that provision has now been eliminated.

Further, the Bill contains no definition of "property". This should be spelt out. After all, the Aborigines are our fellow human beings. We are forced to turn to other statutes to ascertain the meaning of "property", and we may learn subsequently that such a definition may not apply to this Act. Now that the Minister has started to amend it, I ask him to continue with the job, despite the fact that, because it relates to Aborigines, as usual we are dealing with it very late in the session. I should like to see it streamlined further.

Reference has been made to the wishes of Aborigines. I know quite well that Press articles reveal that Aborigines wish something to be done about the liquor problem, but that has not been tackled this session. Why is that? If a conference was held and it was decided to change only a couple of words, it was indeed a very poor conference. Or is it that the Government intends to say, "We carried out the wishes of these people; we amended their Act"? It is time that the Act was properly streamlined, with plenty of time for adequate consideration by the Aborigines, at the same time ensuring that they know exactly what is in the Act. It would be better if, by repetition, they were able to understand the meaning of words and phrases in the Act that governs their movements and lives.

**Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT** (Auburn—Minister for Conservation, Marine and Aboriginal Affairs) (11.56 p.m.): We will certainly look closely at what the honourable member has raised. I am prepared to let every Aborigine know, by writing to him, if necessary, from the department, that he may opt out if he wishes from having his property managed. We do not want to manage anybody's property.

**Mr. Wright:** Who will decide all these things?

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** If an Aborigine asks a district officer, he can be assured that we will no longer wish to manage his property. There has been far too much playing on words concerning Aboriginal management in this State and elsewhere.

**Mr. Wright:** Laws are made on words.

**Mr. N. T. E. HEWITT:** I know that, and I believe that they should be kept as simple as possible for Aborigines. I have had a

lifetime of experience with them. I have employed them. I take them into my home, I eat with them, and so on. I surely have had some experience of them. I am prepared to go anywhere to try to put the position in everyday language for them. I think I can talk to them in the street or anywhere else. I do not draw up the Acts. If we can find a better way of doing things, we will look into it.

**Mr. WALLIS-SMITH** (Cook) (11.57 p.m.): I am very happy to hear the Minister say that this will be spelt out in simple words. I hope that that will be done so that the people may understand it when they come down here, and it will not be a matter of their saying "yes" to everything put to them by the department.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 14, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hewitt, by leave, read a third time.

## COMMONWEALTH AND STATE HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. A. M. HODGES** (Gympie—Minister for Works and Housing) (11.59 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

I have nothing to add to my introductory remarks.

## THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER 1974

**Mr. N. F. JONES** (Everton) (12 midnight): I do not intend to comment at great length on this Bill. At the introductory stage the Minister spent some time explaining its provisions. Really, it is only an enabling Bill to allow three changes to the 1973 Commonwealth Housing Agreement. Our shadow Minister (Mr. Newton) clearly indicated that we agreed with the changes and the provisions to allow the amendments to the agreement.

Motion (Mr. Hodges) agreed to.

### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, and schedule, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

### THIRD READING

Bill, on motion of Mr. Hodges, by leave, read a third time.

The House adjourned at 12.3 a.m. (Thursday).