

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 12 MARCH 1975

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS**

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (11.2 a.m.): On Wednesday last, whilst speaking during the period allotted by this House to Matters of Public Interest, the honourable member for Archerfield (Mr. K. J. Hooper) criticised the administration of the State Government Insurance Office and alleged intimidation of the business community by that organisation, and sought an independent inquiry into the operations of the office.

The honourable member's claim was that a company "with a relatively accident-free record found that although its wages bill for 1973-74 rose by just more than 60 per cent, the workers' compensation premium assessment based on that figure rose by more than 340 per cent". Because of what appeared to me to be a most serious allegation, I made it my responsibility to locate the name of the unidentified company referred to by the honourable member.

I now place before the House the facts concerning the company's worker's compensation involvement. The company's premium assessment had been based on wages paid to engineering and clerical workers. Wages had increased considerably on the engineering side. A general increase in premium rates in November 1973, together with substantial increase in wages paid by the company, resulted in a 147.5 per cent premium rise for the company from 1972-73 to 1973-74. On receipt of the first premium assessment the firm submitted a revised schedule setting out wages and categories of workers employed.

Two departmental officers inspected the firm's premises and agreed that the company had wrongly categorised certain personnel. The company has subsequently written to the State Government Insurance Office expressing appreciation for "having a re-assessment of premium carried out, which resulted in a decrease in premium to be paid." The net reduction was \$2,464.97. The firm was awarded a 15 per cent bonus because of its claims record, and has been granted an extension of time to make full payment.

From my reading of the files of the S.G.I.O. I can only assume from the attitude of the company executives that they were satisfied with the premium revision and the manner in which the matter has been finalised.

I regret the one-sided attack on the administration of the S.G.I.O. by the honourable member for Archerfield, which was,

as I see it, an insidious form of political grandstanding and a blatant attempt to denigrate the character and roles of the staff of the State Government Insurance Office who administer workers' compensation for the benefit of their fellow workers.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

OVERSEAS VISIT BY PREMIER

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

(1) What were the reasons for his overseas travel during the recent recess of Parliament?

(2) What specific topics and areas of interest were studied or discussed and when does he intend to report to Parliament on these matters?

(3) On what date did he leave Queensland for overseas and on what date did he arrive back?

(4) What are the details of his movements, with specific reference to cities and towns visited, on each of the days he spent away?

(5) What persons accompanied him and/or were officially attached to his entourage at any time during his period abroad, for what periods respectively were they so attached, and what were the duties of each person?

(6) What was the total expenditure incurred by him and members of his staff in fares, accommodation, other travelling expenses, entertainment expenses and all other expenses charged to the Government during the period of his overseas trip?

Answer:—

(1 to 6) "I visited London recently to join with Sir Charles Court in making representations to the United Kingdom Government to seek assurance that the sovereign rights of the States would not be further eroded by the centralist ambitions of the present Government in Canberra. As I have pointed out on many occasions since, we obtained all the assurances sought. In accordance with normal practice the cost of that visit will be tabled in the House in due course."

TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR GROVELY-MITCHELTON AREA

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

(1) In view of the need for a technical college in the Grovely, Oxford Park, Arana Hills and Mitchelton area, where is the college to be built?

(2) When is construction likely to commence?

Answers:—

(1) "The site for a future college of technical and further education is located in Dawson Parade, Grovely, approximately opposite the Grovely State School."

(2) "The date by which construction is likely to commence cannot be given as the available capital funding is being directed to technical and further education projects which have much higher priorities."

POLICE PLANS TO COMBAT CRIME

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

Apart from making "Police" a single ministerial portfolio and the proposed legislation before the House to increase by two the number of Supreme Court judges, what other initiatives are planned to protect society and combat the increasing crime rate?

Answer:—

"One of the prime objectives of my having a Minister responsible solely for police matters is to ensure that crime and everything associated with it would be vigorously and effectively dealt with by a dedicated and able Police Force. We in Queensland are extremely fortunate in having a force of the calibre of the present organisation, and its members play a vital part in the protection and well-being of all members of society. I intend to ensure that crime is so dealt with in Queensland that all our people, from the youngest to the oldest, can live out their lives in peace and security. The aims and objectives of the force are set out in the last Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police and the resources of his department are directed towards those ends. Under the new ministerial control we will continue to up-date the force and its equipment, and endeavour to ensure that it has every modern aid required by law-enforcement agencies to combat crime in these troubled times."

CONCESSIONAL BUS FARES FOR STUDENTS

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

(1) In view of his statement made in part 2 of the Government policy speech delivered at the Brisbane City Hall on November 14, 1974, that parents of students who had to travel on council buses before 8.30 a.m. would be subsidised so that the children could still travel at concessional student rates, and as schools have been back from holidays for over six weeks, what has been the delay in the implementation of this proposal?

(2) When will the proposal become operative?

Answer:—

“As announced in the Government Policy Speech, a decision has been taken to subsidise parents of children who must travel on council buses before 8.30 a.m. in order to recompense them for the imposition by the council of full adult fares on these students. The mechanics for the reimbursement to parents and the timing of the introduction of the new scheme have yet to be finalised. No promise was made that it would be operative from the beginning of this year, but the Honourable Member can be assured that the scheme will be implemented within a reasonable period of time.”

FINANCE FOR SEWERAGE WORKS,
IPSWICH AREA

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

(1) Is he aware of the recent Press statement by the Minister for Social Security regarding the availability of \$1.4 million for sewerage in the Ipswich area?

(2) What percentage of this amount is grant and what percentage is loan finance?

(3) What effect would the loan finance have on the already massive rates imposed by the Ipswich City Council?

Answers:—

(1) “I am aware of such a Press statement relating to moneys provided under the Sewerage Backlog Scheme for sewerage works in the City of Ipswich and the Shire of Moreton. The appropriate amounts involved are Ipswich City Council \$350,000 and Moreton Shire Council \$1.07 m.”

(2) “70 per cent. of the moneys provided are in the nature of loans and 30 per cent. in the nature of non-repayable subsidy.”

(3) “The loan finance should not noticeably affect rate and charges levels in either local authority areas, apart from the imposition of sewerage charges on premises connected to the sewerage scheme with the funds available.”

CHAIRMEN OF COUNTRY HOSPITAL BOARDS

Dr. Crawford, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Does he recall a Liberal Party Council recommendation from Rockhampton some years ago, in which it was overwhelmingly decided that country hospital boards should be reconstituted and structured in such a manner that the Clerks of Petty Sessions were not automatically chairmen of the boards?

(2) As country hospital boards need to be chaired by the best available local talent, will he take action to see that

Liberal Party policy is implemented in this instance to ensure optimal efficiency in board functioning?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) “The appointment of the Stipendiary Magistrate or the Clerk of the Court as chairman of a hospitals board has been the policy of this Government since 1957. This policy has worked successfully and I see no reason to recommend any departure from this policy. As to the second part of the Honourable Member’s Question, I regret the inference that experienced, competent and dedicated members of the magistracy are not capable of carrying out the functions of a hospital board chairman. I have every confidence in the integrity of these Justice Department officers who in many cases perform their duty far beyond the calls of this office.”

EFFECT OF COMMONWEALTH BUDGETING
ON EMPLOYMENT IN QUEENSLAND

Dr. Crawford, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

With reference to the recent announcement in the news that the budget deficit of the Commonwealth Government, previously announced to be \$2,500 million, has already been recalculated to be more than \$2,750 million in this financial year, with only two-thirds of the year completed to date, what effect will this type of irresponsible budgeting have on short and long-term prospects for employment in Queensland?

Answer:—

“I am aware of the further increases in the anticipated deficit of the present Federal Government. This is a situation that deeply concerns many Australians because there is obviously a day of reckoning to be faced and the longer this is deferred the greater will be the problem. The Commonwealth Government has embarked upon policies which have destroyed the confidence of the business community. Honourable Members are aware of the many ways in which the Government in Canberra has achieved this objective of destroying the private enterprise system of Australia. In addition, that Government has embarked on a massive spending programme which can only prove to be inflationary and non-productive. They are only dealing with the end-result of their policies and not dealing with the root cause of the problem. Never before has this Nation suffered so severely at the hands of any Government as it has at the hands of the present Government in Canberra. There is only one solution—for the protection of the people of Australia, the Federal Labor Government must be removed from office, and the sooner the better!”

POLL BY COMPTON ASSOCIATES ON JAMES
COOK UNIVERSITY

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

(1) With regard to his Answer to my Question on March 6, concerning the investigation being conducted by Compton Associates into certain matters at James Cook University, is he aware that the report of the investigating company will not be made available to the council of the university but will be made available only to the Vice-Chancellor and a specially selected committee, and that the investigating company declined to even start operations until they had been paid in full in advance?

(2) If these facts are known to him, will he inform the House as fully as possible on their unusual aspects?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "I am sure the Honourable Member would acknowledge that, although I share his deep and abiding interest in our universities, I could not possibly be aware of all aspects of their activities. I was therefore not aware of the matters raised by the Honourable Member in his Question. However, I am informed by the University Vice-Chancellor that neither of the facts quoted by the Honourable Member is correct. Material provided confidentially as part of the survey will be kept confidential, but the body of the report will be available to the Council of the University. The Vice-Chancellor states that Compton Associates did not decline to start operations until they had been paid in full. As is usual in such projects part of the fee was paid in advance with a final payment to be made when the project is completed."

PENALTIES FOR DRINK-DRIVING

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the impertinent, unethical statement in the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* of March 5, in which the North Queensland Law Association, a group of solicitors, attempted to intimidate magistrates not to impose gaol sentences for first-time drink-drivers?

(2) If so, will consideration be given to advising these lawyers, whose only conception of justice is to protect potential killers of innocent people, that, if the magistracy and judiciary fail to exercise their discretionary right, as provided by law passed by this Parliament, in the interests of a substantial reduction in the awful toll of the road, their continued mawkishness will inevitably result in Parliament making adequate sentences mandatory?

(3) Is he aware that in those countries where the penalties for drink-driving are the stiffest, the toll of the road is the lowest and vice versa, and will he advise magistrates and judges of this?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes. The article was concerned with only one magistrate."

(2 and 3) "If a magistrate considers he has been threatened by statements from any group of people he would take appropriate action."

LAND FOR SEWERAGE WORKS, REDCLIFFE
AREA

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

(1) Is he aware that, following the purchase of land in the Redcliffe area by the Mayor of Redcliffe and in order to enhance the value of the land for resale purposes, the land was promptly rezoned and the sewerage main to Deception Bay passing the area was rushed through?

(2) Is he aware that, because of this unseemly haste, no Government subsidy was paid on the sewerage job and the amount of approximately \$70,000 was lost to the ratepayers of Redcliffe?

(3) In view of this and other apparently unsavoury aspects of this land purchase, will he set up a public board of inquiry so that the people can be fully and authentically informed on the matter?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "I am aware that a new town-planning scheme for the City of Redcliffe was approved by the Governor in Council on December 19, 1974, and that the new scheme involved considerable changes to the previous scheme which received approval in 1964. Approval by the Governor in Council of the new scheme was in fact held up because of the need for the Redcliffe City Council to review certain by-laws, and carry out advertising procedures in respect of those by-laws. I am not aware of any unseemly haste in provision of a sewerage main to Deception Bay. This work involved the Redcliffe City Council and the Caboolture Shire Council. Detailed plans for the joint sewerage work in Redcliffe were reviewed by the Department of Local Government before such work commenced. The Redcliffe City Council did not receive subsidy on its section of the work, because such work did not qualify for subsidy under the States approved subsidy scheme. In the light of the foregoing, I do not think that an inquiry is necessary."

GRANTS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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

(1) How much money was granted to Queensland in 1972, how much was spent on (a) rural local and (b) rural arterial roads, and where was this money spent?

(2) How much money was granted to Queensland in 1974, how much is to be spent on (a) rural local and (b) rural arterial roads, and where is this money being spent?

Answers:—

(1) "Commonwealth grants since 1972 in \$million:—

	Old Act		New Act		
	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77
Rural locals ..	15.12	15.88	14.2	13.2	12.3
Rural arterials ..	13.17	15.65	14.75	8.9	9.8

It can be seen from this table the grants are falling in money terms and with inflation at 20 per cent. per year the real work possible has been severely reduced since 1972."

(2) "It is not possible to list the large number of jobs upon which rural local and rural arterial funds are spent throughout the State but the information is available in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Main Roads for each financial year. I would suggest the Honourable Member, as well as other new members of the House, that they have ready access to Main Roads Departmental officers to provide such information."

SUBSIDIES FOR AMBULANCE SERVICES

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

(1) When does the \$ for \$ subsidy to Q.A.T.B. centres begin and does it cover receipts from July 1, 1974?

(2) What will be the subsidy for aerial ambulance services?

(3) Will his department meet all costs of the rail ambulance service now owned by the Mareeba Hospitals Board if it is taken over by the Mareeba Q.A.T.B.?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "The present rate of endowment on *bona fide* collections of Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade Committees is 75 cents for each dollar collected, except in the case of aerial ambulance where it is \$1 for each dollar. No approval has yet been given for a variation in the rates of subsidy mentioned above, but it is this Government's stated policy to raise the Government subsidy to a dollar for each dollar collected as from July 1, 1974. As subsidy paid is based on the previous year's collections, it

follows that no additional payment would be made during the current financial year, if the subsidy is increased on collections from July 1, 1974."

(3) "The rail ambulance at Mareeba was operated for the Mareeba Hospitals Board by the Mareeba Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade to convey patients between Chillagoe and Mareeba, for which the brigade received the sum of \$500 annually. The use of rail ambulances has diminished over the years, and the Mareeba Rail Ambulance was the last one in use in Queensland. In conformity with policy, the Mareeba Hospitals Board was advised that the ambulance might be handed over to the Mareeba Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade without charge. A counter proposal has been received from the Mareeba Queensland Ambulance Transport Brigade and this is currently under consideration."

RAIL FREIGHT RATE ON STEEL TO CAIRNS

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

Is he aware that, due to the shortage of superphosphate, some ships which carried a large quantity of steel will not be going north to Cairns? If so, will a similar rail freight rate be made available for the cartage of steel to Cairns?

Answer:—

"The steel traffic from the southern steel mills to Mackay, Townsville and Cairns was carried by rail transport from April, 1971, until February, 1973, when the suppliers decided to change back to sea transport because of the offer of cheaper shipping rates. In the last few months the traffic has reverted to rail transport, presumably due to increased shipping rates or deterioration in service. The traffic is already being conveyed at concessional rates and there is no justification for a further reduction."

ROADS TO NEW PORT FOR BRISBANE

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

With reference to his Answer to a previous Question that the arterial roads leading to the proposed port development on Fisherman Island will be planned by a consultant group yet to be engaged, if this study plan of roads has not been commenced what roads will be used to service the commencement of the port development to allow the expenditure of the \$3.9 million of the financial year 1974-75, referred to on page 93 of the Port Strategic Plan?

Answer:—

"The first contract to be entered into for the development of new port facilities at the Fisherman Islands will include the construction of road access and a causeway

to link the mainland to the port area. This will enable construction works to be commenced on the Islands. As part of their brief, the consultants will be required to submit an interim plan of development to include the precise location of this access road and causeway."

GREEN ISLAND CORAL LEASE

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

(1) Has a lease been granted over the immediate surrounds of Green Island, Moreton Bay, for the taking of coral for cement?

(2) If such a lease has been granted, what consideration has been given in planning to the overall effect of the island and has consideration been given to the excavations to be effected in such a way as to create a deep-water anchorage basin?

(3) Does the lease provide for the removal of pylons after the area has been dredged, to prevent a repetition of the situation which at present exists on Mud Island?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) "The Mines Department has not granted leases for removal of coral. It is suggested the Honourable Member direct his Question to the Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries."

LAE ENTERPRISES, HOLLYWELL

Mr. K. J. Hooper for **Mr. Dean**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Justice,—

(1) What legal right has a home-owner or citizen whose home and family are continually adversely affected by the work carried out by a development syndicate, such as Lae Enterprises at Hollywell?

(2) What Acts afford protection for our citizens in these circumstances?

Answers:—

(1) "If the activities of a development company constitute an actionable nuisance to a home owner in the vicinity that home owner could commence a common law action for damages or approach the court for an injunction to restrain the company."

(2) "No statutes specifically cover this situation."

SEALING OF RODE ROAD NEAR McDOWALL SCHOOL

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

(1) Is he aware of statements by Alderman Mellifont, of the Brisbane City Council, alleging that the Education Department should contribute to the cost of surfacing and sealing Rode Road in the vicinity of the new McDowall School?

(2) Which body is responsible for the roadworks?

(3) Will he intercede with the appropriate body to ensure that the road is sealed with minimum delay, before the present dangerous situation results in the death or injury of any pupil of the school?

Answers:—

(1) "The reported statement by Alderman Mellifont had not previously been brought to my attention."

(2) "My department has no funds allocated to it which may be used on roadworks outside the boundaries of school reserves. Such works are the responsibility of the appropriate local authority."

(3) "My Director-General wrote to the Town Clerk of the Brisbane City Council on February 21, requesting that early consideration be given by the council to the sealing of at least that portion of the road adjacent to the school."

ENTITLEMENT TO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

(1) Did he see a recent article in *The Australian* wherein the Minister for Social Security stated that if a primary producer continued to work his farm without income he is not eligible for unemployment benefits?

(2) Does this mean that an Australian worker without income is eligible for the benefits but not if the worker is a farmer?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes".

(2) "I do not dispute the right of the Commonwealth Government to determine its own policies of eligibility for social service benefits. However, I do question the discriminatory basis on which those policies are founded. Ever since its assumption of office the present Commonwealth Government has clearly demonstrated it is not interested in the plight of primary producers and rural dwellers so savagely affected by its incomprehensible trade and other policies, but has pressed home its discriminatory attack on them, even to the extent of denying them social service benefits of the nature referred to by the Honourable Member. It may be asked why they have done this—I will tell the Honourable Member and the House. It is because our country people represent a segment of the Australian electorate for whom the socialist and materialistic philosophies of the Australian Labor Party hold no appeal whatsoever and as such these good people are rejected and despised by the Whitlam Government as being of no electoral value to it."

PURCHASE OF HOUSING COMMISSION
HOUSES

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

(1) As persons residing in Housing Commission houses are not eligible to purchase a home from the Commission if their weekly income is in excess of \$120, is this the legacy of a Commonwealth and State Agreement?

(2) What immediate action can he take to overcome this regulation which disqualifies persons with increases in award rates of pay instead of improving skills in a trade or profession, which should be encouraged?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "It is true that all prospective purchasers of houses built under the 1973-74 Housing Agreement must conform to a means test stipulated by the Commonwealth. The amount in use until recently was \$101.90 per week based on a December 1973 figure of the Commonwealth Statistician and such figure was applicable for the ensuing 12 months. The Commonwealth Minister has agreed to change to the Statistician's quarterly seasonally adjusted figure and shortly I expect the appropriate documents from him which will allow the figure to increase to about \$124 per week based on December 1974 figures. The Honourable Member's question highlights the yo yo effect of the means test on a tenant desiring to purchase. Having qualified under the means test when he commenced occupancy as a tenant he may be debarred from purchase if he has received a promotion or has improved his income beyond whatever means test has become applicable in the interim. Then a wave of the Statistician's wand may qualify him three months later, but a further rise in income could again disqualify him. The State can sell only 30 per cent. of the houses built under the 1973 Agreement, so even if qualified on income a tenant can't buy if the sale would take sales beyond 30 per cent. Like the yo yo—now he is up, now he is down. To change the position requires a change of heart on the part of the Commonwealth. Unless the Commonwealth attitude does change, there is little the States can do except to decline the low interest finance that only the Commonwealth can contribute to public housing. The means test is a string attached to allocation of funds. It is a blatant misuse of the power of the purse to dictate Commonwealth policy to the States each of which should be free to determine its own policies in detail in the light of local circumstances. A tenant may live in a house for years and contribute substantially by ways of lawns, shrubs, concrete paths and the like. He then feels that his position has improved and that he can reasonably meet the responsibilities of ownership but he may not be able to buy because he

has progressed past the income limit. Like a ticket in a lottery, some win, but some lose. The tantalising now you have it, now you don't policy militates against any feeling of security, and surely confidence in the future requires security in the present."

GORGE ROAD, BEAUDESERT-NERANG

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

(1) Is he aware of the bad condition of the Beaudesert-Nerang Road, known as the Gorge Road?

(2) Can regular maintenance be carried out on this road?

(3) Have engineering plans been drawn with construction in mind?

(4) Has any money been allocated to construct the necessary bridges and bitumen-seal the road?

(5) As this road is a major link to the Canungra Army Camp, has he submitted a case to the Commonwealth Government for assistance in construction?

(6) Will he agree to an inspection by road, from Coomera to Canungra, such inspection to include the chairman of the Albert Shire, the Honourable Member for Fassifern and myself?

Answers:—

(1) "This is an unconstructed gravel road with two ford crossings of the Coomera River."

(2) "Limited funds have been made available to Albert Shire but only very limited funds are available for maintenance work on rural arterials."

(3) "Preliminary projections are being considered which involve a deviation to reduce the length of the route. A surveyor is at present in the area."

(4) "No, this is a rural arterial road on which the Commonwealth severely reduced funds."

(5) "I will continue to press the Commonwealth Minister for increased funds on rural arterials and other roads. I will be having discussions with Mr. Jones later this week."

(6) "I am well aware of the condition of this road and whilst you have requested a joint inspection with Albert Shire, I suggest it is substantial additional Commonwealth funds that are needed to allow work to be expedited. The program for 1975-76 is presently under consideration and I am hopeful of including work on this road. The Honourable Member may rest assured that I will be using every endeavour to have this road completed. It is a main link road from the Downs through Warwick, Beaudesert and Nerang to the coast. It was started in the time of the late Sir Arthur Fadden, and it deserves the highest priority."

PINE RIVERS SHIRE COUNCILLORS

Mr. K. J. Hooper, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) Will he investigate reports of some rather strange happenings among the non-Labor majority of the Pine Rivers Shire Council?

(2) In doing so, will he ascertain whether one of the councillors is a member of a very shady, energy-selling healing group which refers to itself as the "Family"?

(3) Did another of the male non-Labor councillors recently attend a council committee wearing a caftan dress and love beads and was he sent home to change?

Answer:

(1 to 3) "Unless some alleged breach of the Local Government Act or other Act administered by me is involved, I do not propose to investigate any of the matters raised by the Honourable Member."

REMUNERATION, LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBER AS MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Mr. K. J. Hooper, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Local Government,—

(1) Will he consider inserting a provision in the Local Government Act prohibiting a member of a city or shire council, who receives a full-time salary for his services, from receiving double remuneration by becoming a Member of this Assembly?

(2) If he does not believe that an amendment to the Act should be made, does he support the notion that persons in public office should not occupy more than one position?

Answers:—

(1) "There is no provision in the Local Government Act under which a member of a local authority can be paid a salary for his services to the local authority. The Act provides for the payment of fees and expenses to members for attending meetings and making inspections authorised by the local authority and it also empowers the local authority to grant an allowance to its chairman and deputy chairman."

(2) "I am not prepared to recommend the amendment referred to by the Honourable Member."

VISIT OF PREMIER'S PRESS SECRETARY TO TASMANIA

Mr. K. J. Hooper, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) What were the reasons for the Premier's Press Secretary's travel to Tasmania during the recent recess of Parliament?

(2) What specific topics and areas of interest did he study or discuss?

(3) When does the Premier intend to report to Parliament on these matters?

(4) On what date did he leave Queensland and on what date did he return?

(5) What are the details of his movements, with specific reference to cities and towns visited, on each of the days he spent away?

(6) What persons accompanied him on his tour and what were the duties of each person?

(7) What was the total sum of the expenditure incurred by the Premier's Department in fares, accommodation, other travelling expenses, entertainment expenses and all other expenses charged to the Government during his tour?

Answer:—

(1 to 7) "Public servants who are required to travel, either interstate or overseas, do so in relation to matters of Government responsibility. This applies to all officers of my Department, whether they belong to my Secretariat or to any other part of the Department. Expenditure on all such visits is scrutinised within my Department and, of course, is subject to examination by, and approval of, the Auditor-General."

PROSECUTIONS FOR SHOP-STEALING OFFENCES

Mr. Young, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Police,—

How many persons were arrested for shop-stealing offences for the year to June 30, 1974 and how many were subsequently convicted?

Answer:—

"Statistics are not kept by the Police Department of shop stealing offences as such as they are included in statistics on stealing generally. To obtain the required information would necessitate a great deal of research requiring the unnecessary wastage of police manpower. In the circumstances, I do not propose directing that this research be undertaken."

PHILADELPHIAN INSTITUTE FOR THE
ACHIEVEMENT OF HUMAN POTENTIAL

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

(1) Has any member of his department investigated personally the philosophy and methods of the Philadelphia Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential and, if so, have the findings been published?

(2) If no member of his department has studied at first hand the work of the institute, when will a competent Queensland investigator investigate its claims?

Answers:—

(1) "The philosophy and methods of the Philadelphian Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential have been widely publicised and the essentials have been known for a period of fifteen years. No local publications have been made commenting on the philosophy and methods of the Philadelphian Institute."

(2) "It is not proposed to deploy any member of the State Health Department to inquire further into the work of the Philadelphian Institute."

WATER FOR DILLINGHAM MINING
COMPANY, FRASER ISLAND

Mr. Powell, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Water Resources,—

(1) What are the conditions under which the Dillingham Mining Company is permitted to draw water from a creek on Fraser Island?

(2) How much water is permitted to be withdrawn?

(3) What qualifications have been placed upon the company for the disposal of waste water?

Answers:—

(1) "Applications for two licenses for mining purposes were received from Murphyores Incorporated Pty. Ltd. on November 20, 1974, and advertised in the Maryborough Chronicle on January 4, 1975, for objections (if any) the mining lease is in the name of Murphyores which is in partnership with Dillingham Mining Company. No objections were received to the application, the closing date for such objections being January 24, 1975. Waterworks license 30145 authorises the construction of a 31 metre (100 ft.) long diversion channel from Second Creek on Fraser Island to a pump site at which was to be constructed a 200 mm. (8 inch) centrifugal pump authorised by waterworks license 30104. Period of licenses is to July 1977."

(2) "Proposed pumping rate is 182 litres per second or 6.4 cubic feet per second."

(3) "No qualifications have been placed upon the company by the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply for the disposal of waste water, this matter comes under the Water Quality Control Council. Both licenses are in the name of Murphyores Incorporated Pty. Ltd."

BANK CREDIT CARDS

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

(1) Is he aware of an article in *The Sunday Mail* of March 9 dealing with the fraudulent use of the new bank credit cards in Sydney, involving large purchases of goods from major departmental stores which are also represented in Queensland?

(2) Have such cases of the fraudulent use of bank credit cards occurred in Queensland?

(3) What is the legal status of bank credit cards in Queensland, including those issued in and held by residents of other States?

Answers:—

(1) "Yes."

(2) "It is understood that the bank credit cards in question have not been issued in Queensland and that no complaints have been received by the Queensland Police concerning the fraudulent use of such credit cards."

(3) "There is no Queensland legislation specifically dealing with bank credit cards. The general law relating to fraud would apply to the use of these credit cards. It is understood that legislation has recently been introduced in the Federal Parliament to amend the Trade Practices Act in relation to the issue of these credit cards."

POLYVINYL CHLORIDE

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

What is his department's response to the recently introduced United States of America regulations governing the use and manufacture of polyvinyl chloride?

Answer:—

"The National Health and Medical Research Council has had the matter of polyvinyl chloride and plastics under consideration for some considerable time. The evidence so far is to the effect that vinyl chloride monomer when taken into the body over a long period may constitute a health hazard. This hazard exists only when operatives are using the substance during manufacture. I understand that there is no such manufacture carried on in Queensland. The committees of the National Health and Medical Research

Council have studied evidence on the movement into food of vinyl chloride monomer from polyvinyl chloride wrappings and containers and are continuing to examine information from overseas such as the recently introduced United States Regulations. At the present time the National Health and Medical Research Council recommendation is to the effect that only those plastic materials conforming with the recommendations made by the British Plastics Federation in its Code of Practice for Safety in Use of Plastics for Food Contact Applications, should be used for food contact application. Both the Government Analyst and the Director of Industrial Medicine are continually reviewing the possibility of any danger to health from these substances. Departmental officers are members of the committees of the National Health and Medical Research Council which consider the subject and I can assure the Honourable Member that the department will keep abreast of the latest developments and take appropriate action where necessary."

SAFETY MEASURES, DUFFIELD ROAD—
ELIZABETH AVENUE INTERSECTION,
CLONTARF

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

(1) Are any plans pending for improved safety at the corner of Duffield Road and Elizabeth Avenue, Clontarf?

(2) How many accidents were reported as having occurred at this intersection for 1971-72, 1972-73, 1973-74 and 1974-75 to date?

(3) How many fatal accidents have occurred since 1971 at this intersection?

(4) In view of the recent fatal accident at this intersection, will he consider the lowering of the speed limit in Elizabeth Avenue from 80 km/h to 60 km/h and the installation of "Stop" signs in Duffield Road on either side of Elizabeth Avenue?

Answers:—

(1) "A speed zoning survey will be carried out by the Main Roads Department."

(2) "Accident statistics are held by the Police Department and are not held by Main Roads in the detail requested. It appears there have been 14 accidents since 1971, 5 involving persons and 9 with property damage."

(3) "It is understood there was a recent fatal accident."

(4) "Main Roads Department will investigate the desirability for speed limit reduction and stop signs."

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE

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

(1) How many insurance companies have withdrawn from conducting business under the *Motor Vehicles Insurance Act* 1936-1974 in each of the last five years, including those currently under notice to withdraw?

(2) How many of these were (a) Australian companies, (b) overseas companies and (c) Australian subsidiaries of overseas companies?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) "It is not practicable to provide the detailed information sought without substantial research. This research would be complicated by past amalgamations of insurance companies and by the fact that until 1 August, 1974 all insurers who were licensed under the Insurance Acts to carry on general insurance business in Queensland had the automatic right to undertake Motor Vehicle Insurance Act business if they so desired. Only since that date has a separate licensing system been in operation. It is only during the past few months that insurers have withdrawn to a substantial degree from Motor Vehicle Insurance Act business. To date, the Insurance Commissioner has cancelled, by notice in the *Gazette*, 11 licences at the request of insurers. Several other cancellations are pending. Several insurers are retaining their licences, but restricting their business to long-standing clients. Action is being taken to ensure that motorists continue to have facilities for obtaining compulsory third party motor vehicle insurance."

STATE GOVERNMENT LOANS FOR PRIVATE
SCHOOL PROJECTS

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

(1) What is the scale of payments made by the State Government to private schools on moneys borrowed to finance new school buildings?

(2) How long has the maximum interest rate been at the present figure and will he consider increasing that figure because of the higher commercial rates of interest which now prevail?

Answers:—

(1) "The State Government subsidises the interest bill on monies raised by non-State schools for approved school projects up to a maximum of 7 per cent. per annum on the amount of the loan with the subsidy reducing by one-fifth each year."

(2) "Since 1 January, 1972. The maximum interest subsidy rate is under constant review."

SALE OF SUGAR MILLS

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

(1) Is the sale of a sugar mill, and the subsequent transfer of the mill peak concerned to new owners, subject to the approval of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board in the same way as farm sales and, if not, is such sale subject to the control of any legislation?

(2) How many sugar mills have been sold in Queensland since January 1934, what mills were they and who were the sellers and the purchasers?

Answers:—

(1) "No. A change in the ownership of a sugar mill, or the trading in shares of a company owning such a mill, does not require approval in the same way as transfers of sugar cane assignments. Providing a millowner continues to accept and crush cane delivered to the mill in accordance with the provisions of the *Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act 1962-1972* and of the award made thereunder, and providing such millowner continues to comply with the Act and regulations currently in force affecting the sugar industry, there does not appear to be any need for further controls which are considered to be adequate at present under existing legislation."

(2) "To my knowledge, the only actual sales of the whole of the assets of sugar mills in Queensland since 1934 were (i) the purchase by Gibson and Howes Limited of the assets of the Gin Gin Co-operative Sugar Milling Association Ltd. (then in receivership), and (ii) the conversion of Plane Creek Central Mill Company Limited from a semi-co-operative to a public limited liability company. The latter company has recently been the subject of a take-over by Pioneer Sugar Mills Limited, whilst Gibson and Howes Ltd. (owners of Bingera Mill) has been taken over by Bundaberg Sugar Company Ltd. However, in both cases these mills (Plane Creek and Bingera) operate as subsidiaries thus retaining their separate identities in the respective mill areas."

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Mr. HANSON: I ask the Premier: As the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, has publicly acknowledged the co-operative attitude of the Governments of New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria with their guarantees to assist the Royal Commission into Human Relationships in its inquiries, would he inform me whether he willingly or belatedly is prepared to offer similar co-operation?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I do not like saying this to the honourable member, but again he is right behind the times. I do not know who supplied him with his information.

Mr. Knox: Stanaway.

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: Obviously it was Stanaway. Long ago I wrote to the Prime Minister offering my co-operation on this matter.

INSPECTION OF BRUCE HIGHWAY BY FEDERAL MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I ask the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads:

(1) Was he advised of the current inspection by the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr. Jones, by car of the Bruce Highway from Cairns to Brisbane? Were the Minister or representatives of the Main Roads Department invited to accompany Mr. Jones on the inspection?

(2) Has there been any consultation with the Minister or his departmental officers on the progress of works on the highway?

Mr. HINZE: The short answer to both parts of the question is "No". However, I welcome Mr. Jones's interest and his decision to drive from Cairns to Brisbane for the purpose of taking a closer look at our roads. I hope that this means we can look forward to a better appreciation by Mr. Jones and the Federal Government of the State's roads problem as well as to a better deal financially for our roads.

Mr. Jones's reported comments yesterday on the state of our roads between Cairns and Townsville would appear to bear out what the State Government, my department and I have been saying for more than two years, that is, that considerably more Commonwealth finance is needed to maintain our road systems in this vast State.

I am sure that if Mr. Jones could have extended his tour to some of the inland highways he would agree with me that more money is warranted for our rural arterial roads as well. This is the point the State Government, my department and I have been hammering consistently.

I would have welcomed the opportunity to accompany Mr. Jones if he had told me in advance of his intention to make his tour. I can only repeat that I commend Mr. Jones for taking time out of his busy ministerial programme to have a look at Queensland and our roads. I hope this heralds the start of a new era of closer co-operation and more finance from Canberra to improve our road systems throughout Queensland.

COAL EXPORTS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. KAUS: I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Is he aware of the fact that commencing in 1976 large quantities of South African coal will be exported to Japanese steel mills as well as to many other parts of

the world, namely, West Germany, France and the United States of America? Does he also know that small quantities are to be exported to other countries? In view of these facts, will he inform the House how this situation will affect our markets and production of export coal after 1976?

Mr. CAMM: I am aware of the impending contracts for the export of South African coal to Japan. As I have mentioned many times previously in this Chamber, Queensland is not the only place in the world from which the Japanese steel mills and users of steaming coal can obtain their supplies. If the Federal Minister for Mines and Energy (Mr. Connor) continues to adopt his present attitude towards Queensland coal mines and also to New South Wales coal mines, the Japanese will go more and more to other countries to obtain their coal supplies.

The only thing that keeps our coal exports on top as far as Japan is concerned is the high quality of our coal and the good deliverability rate that has been maintained by the coal producers in this State.

If Mr. Connor persists in adopting his present attitude he will retard the expansion programme of the Queensland coal producers in their efforts to make their projects economically viable. Already a town has been built in Central Queensland to service two coal mines, but Mr. Connor has publicly stated that he will not allow the second mine to be opened up because the company involved appears to have too much overseas capital. Yet in his own State, quite close to where he lives, the Clutha Mining Company, which has not one cent of Australian equity in its capital, is becoming the largest exporter of coking coal in New South Wales. This will have a very adverse effect upon the future negotiations of our coal producers with Japan. At the present time, as I say, we have an advantage because of our coal quality, good deliverability record and the freight factor involved in the extra distance from South Africa.

TELEVISION INTERVIEW OF LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION ON MINING LEASE APPLICATIONS

Mr. AHERN: I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Did he see an appearance by the Leader of the Opposition on television last night? Was the statement of the Leader of the Opposition correct that neither the mineral sands industry nor the Mines Department was prepared to divulge information as to the area along the southern Queensland coast which could be the subject of future mining lease applications?

Mr. CAMM: I saw the programme to which the honourable member for Landsborough referred. The Leader of the Opposition showed a complete lack of appreciation or knowledge of the situation that exists.

Mr. Burns: You're a dingo. You wouldn't debate on the programme.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CAMM: I saw him squirming under questions delivered by a young interviewer.

Mr. Burns: You dingoed.

Mr. CAMM: I'm only sorry I wasn't there to help him.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have previously asked honourable members to refrain from interjecting while a Minister is replying to questions. I ask all honourable members to obey that Standing Order.

Mr. CAMM: The Leader of the Opposition accuses me of dingoing. To me and to anyone else who has lived in the bush a dingo is a noble animal, one that looks after itself and is quite capable of standing on its own four feet.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. CAMM: If I liked to tell this Chamber just what I think of the Leader of the Opposition and his personal attributes, I would be thrown out of the Chamber. He should not denigrate such a wonderful and noble beast, which is a truly Australian animal, by trying to class it with what he obviously is.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CAMM: I repeat that I felt sorry that I was not with the Leader of the Opposition, for I could have corrected him and assisted him. It is untrue to say that the information is not available from the Mines Department. The geological survey maps of Queensland are available for the perusal of anyone who has the time to inspect them. No-one has grounds for standing back and saying he does not know where the mineralised areas of Queensland are.

Any company which has an intention to mine a substance—in this case, mineral sands—makes its application through the Mining Warden's Court in the relevant area. I inform the Leader of the Opposition that mineral sands exist from the New South Wales border to a point south of Yeppoon. Any of that area can be the subject of an application for a mining lease. That is the democratic right of any individual or company under our mining law.

The conservation movement should have enough courage to allocate priorities where they feel areas should be preserved rather than wait for a mining application to be lodged. I do not know why the conservation movement cannot get together and agree that any part of the coastline is of unique ecological value and worthy of being preserved. Priorities along the coastline should be allocated so that there is no confusion, let alone confrontation, between conservation groups and companies desirous of extracting mineral that has become very valuable. Let the conservation movement make the first move and

say, "These are the areas we think should be preserved." They can then be examined by Government committees—not necessarily composed of public servants associated with Government departments—to see whether it is desirable to preserve those areas.

Every time a mining lease is applied for, irrespective of where it is between the New South Wales border and Yeppoon, there is a direct confrontation with conservationists. I am one of those who are all for conservation and the preservation of our natural flora in national parks; but I will say in defence of the mining industry that more land is disturbed by the building of roads in Queensland than will ever be disturbed by mining operations, and more land is made sterile in Queensland by the building of towns and houses than will ever be made sterile by the mining industry.

Let us get off the back of the mining industry and return to the prosperity and progress we enjoyed during the previous 10 years. Let the conservation movement, of which the Leader of the Opposition seems to have elected himself spokesman, allocate their priorities along the coastline from the New South Wales border to Yeppoon as to which areas they think should be preserved as national parks.

POLICE INTERROGATION OF CITIZENS

Mr. JONES: I ask the Minister for Police: Have police been instructed to accost and interrogate ordinary citizens going about their normal business and way of life? If so, is he aware that the average citizen in provincial and country areas in this State reacts strongly to this type of inquiry and interference with his private life? Will the Minister inform me what would happen to a citizen who refused point-blank to give details of his name, address, etc., when confronted by the police in these circumstances?

Mr. Hanson: Gestapo!

Mr. HODGES: They are not the Gestapo, as the honourable member for Port Curtis suggests. If that is his opinion of the Police Force in this State, it is no wonder he does not receive the co-operation he deserves.

The answer to the question is, "No".

ALLEGED ATTACKS ON MINISTERS BY MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Mr. FRAWLEY: I ask the Premier: In view of the statement by the honourable member for Rockhampton that in the last week of the concluding session of the Fortieth Parliament the Minister for Justice, the Premier and the Treasurer launched a personal and dirty campaign against him, can the Premier advise the House if that is a true statement? And is it not correct that during the Fortieth Parliament the honourable member for Rockhampton himself made many filthy, vicious, personal attacks on the Premier, other Ministers, and members of the Public Service?

Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN: I am accustomed to the type of attack that the honourable member referred to makes on me and my ministerial colleagues. In relation to statements of this sort that he has made, I may say that I was not campaigning in Rockhampton. That is another lie or, to use the term used in this House, untruth. I happened to hear that he said that I was in Disneyland recently. That is another untruth. This is the way he operates. Of course, he is completely incorrect in his overall statements about my Ministers. We have not been interested in him personally or in the way he operates. That is his business. If the people of Rockhampton are continually being deceived by him, that is their misfortune in the choice that they have made.

REFRESHMENT ROOMS COMMITTEE

APPOINTMENT OF DR. J. A. R. LOCKWOOD

Hon. J. BJELKE-PETERSEN (Barambah—Premier): I move—

"That Dr. John Aubrey Ross Lockwood be appointed to the Refreshment Rooms Committee in place of Mr. John Ward Greenwood."

Motion agreed to.

BUILDING BILL

Hon. R. J. HINZE (South Coast—Minister for Local Government and Main Roads): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

FARM WATER SUPPLIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Hon. N. T. E. HEWITT (Auburn—Minister for Water Resources): I move—

"That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Acts, 1958 to 1965, in certain particulars."

Motion agreed to.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT ACCEPTANCE OF MEDIBANK SCHEME

Mr. MELLOY (Nudgee) (12.7 p.m.): I am very concerned at the outburst yesterday by two ultra-conservative members of the

Government over the Medibank scheme. In my opinion, they have done a disservice to the State, and also to the Government of which they are members, because they have sought to cause dissension in the Government ranks at a time when a matter of such importance to Queensland should be considered carefully and deliberated upon by calm-minded members of the Government, seeking to secure the best conditions they can.

Mr. Aikens: You would not like to see a split in the Government?

Mr. MELLOY: Whether one likes to see it or not, it is already there. I would like to see it widen.

The situation in Queensland hospitals today is acknowledged by members of the Opposition and members of the Government to be very bad. In fact, the State's hospitals cannot continue under the present administrative system and money is not available to enable the Government to continue the services that are now being provided. I think it is a very sorry state of affairs, therefore, when members of the Government threaten to resign if their views are not accepted—in effect, to take their bat and ball home if they cannot get their way. I should be very interested to hear the views of another medico in the House, the honourable member for Townsville (Dr. Scott-Young), on this subject. I am sure that in his heart he would support the implementation of the Medibank scheme in Queensland hospitals. However, because of the political implications of the proposal, the honourable member for Townsville must remain virtually silent on the matter. The Minister for Health would, I think, hold a similar opinion, because he, too, is aware of the situation in public hospitals in this State. He is aware that its financial background is very serious and that any money which might come to the State from the implementation of a proposal such as Medibank must be accepted with open arms.

I realise that with the honourable member for Wavell it is a case of sour grapes. Last year when the honourable member for Ipswich was running round the hospitals of the State—I will not say ingratiating himself but familiarising himself with the hospitals and hospital staff—I forecast that he would knock the honourable member for Wavell over when it came to the selection of the new Minister for Health to replace the Honourable S. D. Tooth.

Mr. Aikens: He won in a canter.

Mr. MELLOY: He did, because he organised well. We get back to the old saying that it is the numbers that count. The honourable member for Ipswich had the numbers, and he is now Minister for Health.

The purpose of Medibank is to bring medical and hospital services to every person in Australia irrespective of his income or circumstances. That is what the Australian

Government has in mind when it puts forward this proposal which we ask the Queensland Government to accept.

We hear the cry that it is not a free scheme. Everything must be paid for, and that is acknowledged.

Mr. Lamont interjected.

Mr. MELLOY: The honourable member wouldn't pay for anything.

Mr. Lamont: How much?

Mr. MELLOY: Now the cry is, "How much?" I ask the honourable member whether he knows how much.

Mr. Lamont: Can I answer that, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. MELLOY: I will accept his answer, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Lamont: Liberal Party estimates put it at \$3,000 million, which would mean a tax increase of 18 per cent to every person.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MELLOY: The honourable member does not know just what it is going to cost. He is not in a position to make estimates, nor is his party because it has not taken the trouble to co-operate with the Australian Government to explore fully the ramifications of the scheme. Government members oppose it on political grounds. That is the sole reason why their opposition to the scheme is being so forcefully expressed.

The medical services of the State must be paid for by the nation as a whole, not just by those who are sick and in distress. The costs of the scheme will be met from the natural growth of incomes within the Commonwealth. In this way additional sums from taxation will be provided. The costs can be covered by the finances of the Australian Government.

In the present circumstances it is a sad and very astonishing fact that many people can be and are being taken to court and in some cases sent to gaol through their inability to meet medical and hospital bills. Many people become involved in tremendous doctors' bills and hospital bills because of serious illness, and if they are not covered by insurance they are not able to meet their commitments. Under Medibank that would not occur. Everybody in the Commonwealth will be covered by the Medibank scheme.

Doctors will not suffer under the scheme. In fact they will be relieved of tremendous financial worry by the method of payment. Many doctors acknowledge that. The Australian Government is not providing a medical scheme but a medical insurance scheme. The services as we know them today will continue as they are, but the cost will be met to a large degree by the Australian Government.

Mr. Chinchin: What is it going to cost?

Mr. MELLOY: Doesn't the honourable member know?

Mr. Chinchon: No.

Mr. MELLOY: Then why is he arguing? Why is he criticising? He is arguing on grounds for which he has no basis.

The Queensland Government is expressing some doubts as to the benefits that will accrue to the State under the scheme. I think the Treasurer will acknowledge that one of the greatest problems confronting the State is the financing of our hospital system. Every year it is becoming more difficult for him to meet the cost of the services that are provided to the people of Queensland.

Under the Medibank scheme half the net cost of operating our hospitals will be met by the Australian Government. This means that the Queensland Government will receive approximately \$50,000,000 a year. If it chooses not to meet the cost of operation of its hospitals from this money, it may use it for other projects. Nevertheless that sum will be made available to the State Government for its hospital services, and \$50,000,000 is no mean sum in the circumstances that exist in Queensland today.

The Minister for Health has told us that we already have a free hospital service in Queensland. I ask: How long can that free hospital service be maintained without additional finance? Medibank provides the answer; each year \$50,000,000 will be available to partly finance our hospital services. Queensland cannot afford to knock it back.

On 18 February the Treasurer was advised that there would be no off-setting in other financial assistance to the State. In other words, this grant of \$50,000,000 will have no effect whatever on other financial assistance that is given by the Australian Government to Queensland. The \$50,000,000 is something extra that the Queensland Treasurer will have in his coffers to help meet the cost of providing our hospital service. I am quite sure that he will appreciate this fact and will be able to convince his colleagues of the value of this offer and of signing the agreement.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I will take the \$50,000,000, provided no strings are attached to it.

Mr. Houston: You know there are not.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No, I don't. In fairness, what the Deputy Leader has said is that an offer of \$50,000,000 has been made without any interference with the financial assistance grant, and that is right.

Mr. MELLOY: That is true.

Sir Gordon Chalk: But there are other strings in relation to the general set-up.

Mr. MELLOY: But the Treasurer would realise—

(Time expired.)

PASSION-FRUIT INDUSTRY

Mr. GOLEBY (Redlands) (12.18 p.m.): I rise today to bring to the notice of the House and of the people of the State the plight of yet another rural industry, namely, the passion-fruit industry. It is perhaps a little-known industry, yet it is one of great importance to South-east Queensland. The present situation has been brought about by the policies adopted by the Federal Government.

Only last week I gave notice of four questions pertaining to the industry, and yesterday they were duly answered by the Premier. However, in the very short time that has elapsed since last week the position of passion-fruit growers has deteriorated still further.

Imports from overseas countries have now reached such large proportions that they far outstrip local production. For example, for the last six months of 1974 imports of passion-fruit juice, not pulp, attained the level of almost 600,000 litres. It should be noted that this means an increase over pulp of 25 per cent. Local production contracted for by processors amounted to 920,000 litres over a full year, and this is valued locally under the present contract prices at \$868,000.

Australia has never had any lasting shortage of passion-fruit pulp or juice to warrant imports of this magnitude.

I shall now quote from letters received from local processing firms only this morning. The first is in these terms—

"Manufacturers in the chilled juice trade are importing considerable quantities of passionfruit juice, either frozen, hot-pack or in syrup.

"One manufacturer we are supplying has been reported to have 54,000 litres of passionfruit juice on its way to Australia which, in his case, means six months stock. This also applies to others in this business who normally make their arrangements with us for six to 12 months ahead for their requirements."

The effects of imports into Australia, and those on the water en route to Australia, have ruined the local industry for at least the next 12 months. The price that has been suggested by processors to compete with these imports makes it unprofitable for local producers.

This morning I received a communication from another processor in these terms—

"We have first-hand information that Davis Gelatine is offering frozen juice F.I.S. Sydney at \$4.20 per gallon, that is, \$.923 per litre, or \$.871 per kilogram.

"This selling price is just over our direct cost of manufacture,"—that is in Queensland—"excluding overheads, mark-up, commission and freight, etc."

It should be noted that in the case of Davis Gelatine these imports come from such places as Kenya, Fiji and Brazil. It should also be remembered and noted that

these are countries where cheap labour exists. The tariff paid on these products with less than 25 per cent sugar added is 15c a litre, and with over 25 per cent sugar added it is a mere 2.6c a litre, plus 7 per cent primage of the f.o.b. value of the goods. These duties give little or no protection to the local products.

Imports of this magnitude have been brought about by the Australian Government's policy of lowering tariffs, and in some cases giving preferential treatment to developing countries, not to mention the revaluation of the Australian dollar. These policies have played right into the hands of the cheap-labour countries to the detriment of Australian growers, processors and workers alike. It should be noted that the imported product is not of the high standard of the local product. To make it palatable to the Australian public some content of Australia juice must be added.

In South Queensland 136 commercial growers are affected. They have contracts with four or five local processors, and come principally from the electorates of Redlands, Coorooora and Landsborough. Although the number of growers may appear small, by virtue of the nature of their industry they employ a very large labour force. If the position of the present imports into the country is not rectified, these growers with their staff and the canneries and many of their staff will be forced out of business. It should be noted that the local industry can meet the present and future demand for passion-fruit products—both fresh and processed—for the whole of Australia. Growers operate under a contract system with the processors and the contract is renewed annually in the light of market demands. Generally speaking, growers have always been able to meet the demand of the Australian market.

Each grower who enters the passion-fruit industry has been required to spend many thousands of dollars on specialised equipment in order to establish himself. It should be noted that in doing so a grower bases his economics on a 10-year programme. It should be remembered also that if this industry is to be continually frustrated by imports, many growers will face financial ruin and will be forced to leave the industry. That situation is ludicrous when one considers that this Government, through the Department of Primary Industries, had officers spend many years on research and plant-breeding programmes to produce the present hybrid passion-fruit varieties and the present industry has been established on the basis of those varieties.

Now the import polices of the Federal Government threaten this industry with disaster. This industry is not unique in that. Honourable members know that the present import polices and the lowering of tariffs by the Federal Government have brought about

the ruination of a number of other primary industries as well as many secondary industries.

I appeal to the Queensland Government to take positive steps to assist the industry—the C.O.D. and growers generally—in the preparation of a case to the Tariff Board for immediate assistance. I appeal to the members of this House and the Government generally to put their best foot forward to help alleviate the plight of these unfortunate growers.

DIMINUTION OF ROMA NATURAL GAS SUPPLIES

Mr. DOUMANY (Kurilpa) (12.26 p.m.): The matter of public interest I raise relates to an article that appeared in "The Sunday Mail" of 9 March, headed "Roma gas drop hits industries", part of which reads—

"Major Queensland industries and companies are being hit by a drying up of the Roma natural gas field.

"Mr. John Wilkins, general manager of Consolidated Fertilizers Limited's \$40 million Gibson Island plant in Brisbane said from April the plant would be cut back to half the natural gas it could use.

"Allgas Energy general manager (Mr. A. J. Willis) said: 'We could take twice as much natural gas as we are getting and we would want it over a long period.'

"Allgas Energy supplies gas to the southern half of Brisbane and to Toowoomba.

"The booming sugar industry is concerned that the run-down in natural gas reserves could cut supplies and raise costs of fertilizer at a time when the industry is trying to expand to meet Japanese contracts.

"Queensland Cane Growers' Council chairman (Mr. F. J. McAvoy) said: 'Unless the Queensland and Federal Governments move to accelerate the search for more natural gas in southern Queensland, the supply of nitrogenous fertilizer to the Australian sugar industry from the Brisbane plant is threatened.'

"The State Mines Department is trying to organise rapid development of gas discoveries 50 to 100 kilometres from Roma."

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. DOUMANY: It is amazing how the small-mindedness of Opposition members forces them to bring us back continually to our little dunghills. This is a matter of great import because further gas fields might help to pay for the extravagance of the Federal Government. It is from industries such as this that we find the means of meeting the exorbitant wastage being experienced in our nation.

Let me return to the facts. Why has this happened? Firstly, there has certainly been a booming demand for natural gas from users generally as well as the fertilizer works

at Gibson Island. I do not think anyone would dispute that, with the growth of the sugar industry, which is now taking another leap forward; with the growth of the grain industry, which has been a major user of nitrogenous fertilizer; and with the burgeoning use of natural gas in industry generally in Brisbane and adjacent areas.

A further factor we must bear in mind is the enormously depressing influence that the "Strangler" has had on exploration for resources of this type. I quote from "The Australian" of 7 March this year—

"OIL WELL DRILLING CEASES IN STATE

"For the first time in years oil well drilling in Queensland had ceased, the Minister for Mines, Mr. Camm, said yesterday.

"Mr. Camm, in reply to a question from Mr. M. Hanson (A.L.P., Port Curtis) said in State Parliament that this compared with 12 wells drilled last year and in 1973, 23 in 1972, 19 in 1971 and 57 in 1970."

I venture to say that if 57 wells had been drilled in the past 12 months we might have found some more natural gas.

All we can do is try to put some expert knowledge into the minds of some of the people on the Opposition benches, so let me quote an article entitled, "The Changing Exploration Scene in Australasia" written by Leslie R. Beddoes, Junior. It appeared in "Oil & Gas" in November 1973, at page 15.

The summary reads—

"In Australia, the new Labor Government is effectively nationalizing their natural resources. . . . The National Authority for Minerals and Petroleum, as the Government's exploration company, is expected to have a relatively limited budget. Based upon past experience for many other countries, this will lead to a correspondingly low discovery rate . . .

"Australia's 'shut-down' attitude has, and will continue to shift exploration companies and experienced personnel into regions where exploration is encouraged."

This is an example of the things that are aggravating and exacerbating the situation.

What are the implications for Queensland of this run-down of natural gas in the Roma field at the present time? We have a \$40,000,000 plant employing people. It has a capacity to produce some 150,000 tonnes of elemental nitrogen content in fertiliser. It is a time when I might remind honourable members that the world price for nitrogenous fertiliser is at astronomical levels. Something like \$300 a tonne f.o.b. West is being paid for urea, which is made at the plant I am speaking about. We do not want our sugar industry, because of lack of indigenous raw materials, to be looking to that sort of high price import.

I urge the State Government to continue its active—I repeat "active"—efforts to do what it can to overcome this problem. I

also urge the State Government and everyone else who is interested and concerned in the State of Queensland to push the Federal Government into restoring the exploration concessions that are so urgently needed to safeguard us against future problems of this nature. Without that help from the Federal Government, it will be a very difficult task for Australian industry that depends on hydrocarbon fuel of whatever type to sustain its viability.

AUCTIONEERS AND AGENTS ACT

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (12.34 p.m.): For some time, members of this Assembly have been the butt of a propaganda barrage from important elements within the real-estate industry. Claims and counter-claims, charges and counter-charges, and all types of allegations and criticisms have been made.

Mr. Moore: How much did they put into your campaign?

Mr. WRIGHT: This is a very important issue and I ask the honourable member for Windsor to listen.

Honourable members have almost reached a point where they are totally confused on the real issues and the arguments for and against. The main protagonists have been two camps—the Real Estate Institute of Queensland and the Queensland Licensed Real Estate Agents' Association. Both groups are determined to get their arguments across, and this is surely their right. All of us have received dozens of submissions and all types of letters, which have been very detailed but also very confusing.

The argument does centre around the Auctioneers and Agents Act and how in fact it can or should be amended. Both organisations at least agree on this one point—that the Act does need to be reviewed. But they violently disagree on what aspects of the Act should come under the legislative draftsman's knife.

The Q.R.L.E.A. is emphatic as to where it stands in this conflict. It is unanimous in its opposition to the Auctioneers and Agents Committee; it is unanimous in its opposition to multiple listing and also to the sole agency provisions in the Act; and, finally, it is unanimous in its opposition to the payment to the Government of money held in trust. That is the trust accounts system.

I looked at the decisions that it has made and the desires that it has, and I wish to list them. First of all, it desires that real estate auctioneer and agents licences be issued by magistrates rather than by the Auctioneers and Agents Committee. It is its view that a magistrate would be more competent than the committee to decide who in fact should act in this industry. I personally believe this to be debatable. I am not convinced that a magistrate would be any more competent than members of the committee. One thing that might be said

here is that the committee should in fact represent the whole industry. I do not believe that this is so at the moment. This view is definitely opposed by the R.E.I.Q.

Secondly, the Q.L.R.E.A. believes that we should end the system under which members of the real estate industry are required to lodge a proportion of their money in a trust account. It seems that it wants to return to the old system of fidelity bonds, under which agents took out certain bonds with the State Government Insurance Office. The variation here is that this would be a combined policy. In my opinion, the trust account system worked pretty well. It has worked for solicitors, and it worked fairly well for agents, too. I think that the old fidelity-fund system was inadequate. But this is a point that has been made, and I think it has to be considered. The R.E.I.Q. says that it is satisfied with the present scheme. It believes that it gives proper protection to the vending public, and it also notes that it has been adopted by the New South Wales Government. That may be a point in its favour.

I go further. The Q.L.R.E.A. believes that there should be an upgrading of the qualifications and entry requirements of those wanting to take part in the business of auctioneers and agents. First of all, it says that an applicant should have had some practical experience. In this instance, it suggests three years. It says that there should be a 12 months' real estate course. It also says that there should be referees (five in this instance), and vetting by the Criminal Investigation Branch.

It is interesting to note that the R.E.I.Q. says that there is a need for professionalism in the industry, and it also argues for minimum requirements and a code of ethics. This is one point of agreement that certainly should be noted by the Minister. Both organisations tend to agree that the public should be protected by the provisions of the Act.

I move on very quickly. The Q.L.R.E.A. believes that the present provision under which a licensed agent can rent his licence to another licensee should be removed. I think we would all agree on that. At the moment, a person applying for a licence has to produce character references, and he has to be vetted. Under the present system, it seems that an agent could simply rent out his licence. This is a point on which all honourable members must agree, and I think this is one part of the Act that must be changed. It allows questionable practices, and it allows a person who has not been vetted to obtain a licence.

Another point made is that the manager of a real estate branch should be registered and not licensed, because, after all, he is simply an employee and it is the employer agent who is responsible in law to the public.

A number of other points are made. One that I think is vitally important is that all land should hold title prior to its being sold.

I am sick of having complaints made about Peter Kurts and Queen Street Realty, who come the old dodge of getting a person to sell land to part of their company, and within two weeks they sell it again. In fact, the conveyancing does not take place between the original vendor and themselves; what happens is that instead of the land passing from "A" to "B", it passes from "A" to "C", but the price is \$2,000 or \$3,000 more. I totally agree that holding title before sale would overcome the racket that exists, and it would remove some of the inflationary trends inherent in such practices.

Mr. Miller: Mr. Wright—

Mr. WRIGHT: I am sorry, I cannot take interjections; I have too much to cover.

The Q.L.R.E.A. also wants developers brought within the ambit of the Act. The R.E.I.Q. says, "No.". I should like to see this Parliament stick by that view, because I do not think we should encompass developers within the Auctioneers and Agents Act. Possibly we should go the other way and remove from it motor-car dealers and debt collectors. They should not come under the terms of the Auctioneers and Agents Act. The point is that the present provision is not sufficient to meet the needs of the industry.

I agree in this instance with the R.E.I.Q., although I understand the opinion of the Q.L.R.E.A. and the view that it has put forward. After all, the developer receives money from those who are going to buy land in a subdivision, but there is no requirement on him to lodge the money in some type of trust account. This is required of solicitors, subcontractors and other agents. Whilst I understand that view, I do not believe they should come within the Act. They should, however, certainly be forced to deposit this money in a trust account.

Other recommendations include all sorts of amendments to make sure that people who list businesses, houses and flats for rental come within the Act. This is worth looking into. Changes are sought in the auditing system, as well as all sorts of changes in advertising and commissions. But the most important points are in two issues. They come back, firstly, to the Auctioneers and Agents Committee and, secondly, to multiple listing and sole agency. Time will not allow a full debate on this matter. However, I think that the Auctioneers and Agents Committee should be reconstituted. It should be made representative of the industry, because the Q.L.R.E.A. has no say at the moment. We should ensure that the members of the committee have the necessary expertise for the industry.

The real issue is multiple listing and sole agency, which is covered by section 43 of the Act. The Q.L.R.E.A. says that that section should be repealed because a racket is now being worked under it. Major firms in this city are sending employees to all suburbs, not to sell real estate but to list

homes for sale. As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the Act as it now stands, if a free agent sells a home that has been multiple listed, he does not necessarily receive commission on the sale. If a person within the multiple-listing framework sells it, the commission is divided two-thirds to one-third. The free agent is not guaranteed anything. It is an intrusion into suburban areas and discriminates against the local agent. He knows the industry, but he cannot sell the home because he knows there is no guarantee that he will receive commission on the sale.

A change is taking place in the industry. The game is not selling; instead, it is listing. Surely that is not what the multiple listing provision in section 43 is intended to do.

I accept the view of the R.E.I.Q. that probably it is better to have a home listed amongst many agents if a person desires to sell it. But that is not what is happening. What in fact is happening is that agents are simply listing dozens and dozens of homes, sitting back and waiting for some unsuspecting free agent to sell them, and then receiving the largest part of the commission.

My main point is that there is a need to review the Act. It is clear that the Auctioneers and Agents Committee is not successful as it is presently constituted; it is not representative. I suggest to the Minister that he should accept his responsibility and bring the parties together. In my opinion, the Minister should invite the Q.L.R.E.A., the R.E.I.Q., interested members of the public and parliamentarians to sit down together and work out what is best for the industry, because the most important person—

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: The honourable member for Windsor obviously is not worried about him. The most important person is the member of the public who is affected, and the Minister has a responsibility to protect the public from the shyster breed that has been in the real estate industry and has given it such a bad name.

PROTECTION OF PERSONS BEFORE COURTS OF LAW

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (12.42 p.m.): The honourable member for Rockhampton spoke of the need to protect the public, and that will be the text of my speech in this debate.

After the rather oleaginous and craven speech by the honourable member for Brisbane, in which he toadied to the judiciary, I thought I would look these matters up and tell honourable members what powers Parliament has and—to its disgrace—what powers Parliament does not exercise.

I went to the Parliamentary Library and asked for Kilmuir's "Law of Parliamentary Privilege". I asked also for the Queensland

Constitution Act, at the back of which is a section of the Criminal Code dealing with the powers of the Parliament of Queensland. I found that both books had been taken out by Government members and never returned. Those members could, of course, have had photostat copies made of the sections they wanted and left the books in the library for other members to use.

Fortunately, however, I have an excerpt—I had a photostat copy of it made some time ago—from Viscount Kilmuir's speech to the Oxford Union in 1959. I do not think anyone would doubt Viscount Kilmuir's standing in legal circles. He was the titular head of the legal fraternity and the judiciary in the British Commonwealth of Nations. In his speech to the Oxford Union in 1959 he said—

“. . . and I think it is helpful to everyone to remember in this connection the wise words of Lord Atkin with regard to criticism of the judiciary: But whether the authority and position of an individual judge, or the due administration of justice, is concerned, no wrong is committed . . . by any member of the public who exercises the ordinary right of criticising, in good faith, in private or public, the public act done in the seat of justice. The path of criticism is a public way: the wrong headed are permitted to err therein: provided that members of the public abstain from imputing improper motives to those taking part in the administration of justice, and are genuinely exercising a right of criticism, and not acting in malice or attempting to impair the administration of justice, they are immune. Justice is not a cloistered virtue: she must be allowed to suffer the scrutiny and respectful, even though outspoken, comments of ordinary men.”

That is what Viscount Kilmuir thought of criticism of the judiciary—something, of course, that is absolutely repugnant and abhorrent to the little toadies on the fringe of the judiciary.

I have here "Halsbury's Laws of England", and that publication, too, lays down that we have the right to criticise the judiciary.

I am here to speak for the people. I am not here to speak for the judiciary, or to crawl, grovel or genuflect to them. I owe them nothing. They do not vote for me and I do not represent them. Lord Birkenhead in the Privy Council on the famous McCawley case ruled that the Queensland Parliament was the master of its own destiny. We are limited in this Parliament by no laws except those of the Commonwealth Constitution, and of course if we pass laws on them they supersede our laws.

I have challenged judges from time to time to public debates. I have challenged them on television, on radio, in the Press, on the public platform and everywhere else as a result of their actions during a court case or as a result of the sentences they

have imposed. On each occasion the judges have squibbed the issue. Usually the judge's associate writes to me and says that the judge is not permitted to engage in public debate. What bosh and nonsense! They are permitted to engage in a public debate, but they are just not game to engage in a public debate, particularly with me. It is about time we started to protect the people of Queensland against the machinations and Machiavellian tactics of the judiciary and, of course, the legal profession, which toadies to them.

Mr. GREENWOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! I do not need a point of order. I ask the honourable member for Townsville South to restrain himself in his use of language.

Mr. GREENWOOD: I have not yet stated the point of order on which I rose. The allegation by the honourable member was of Machiavellian tactics by the judiciary.

Mr. AIKENS: They don't concern you. Stop crawling.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am listening to a point of order.

Mr. GREENWOOD: This imputes improper conduct to the judiciary. It is therefore, in my submission, out of order. Any imputation of impropriety against the judiciary should take the form of a substantive motion—

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, my time—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am listening to a point of order.

Mr. GREENWOOD: It should take the form of a substantive motion, when the allegation of impropriety can be defined and then the House has the opportunity—

Mr. AIKENS: Blah, blah, blah!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have heard the honourable member's point of order.

Mr. GREENWOOD: The House then has the opportunity to reject the allegation. I refer to "Erskine May."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Both honourable members will resume their seat. A point of order has been taken against the honourable member's use of the word "Machiavellian". I would remind the honourable member for Townsville South that in the introduction to his discourse he invoked the words of Viscount Kilmuir, who himself said that parliamentarians can

criticise in respectful though outspoken terms. I would suggest to the honourable member that he is entitled to be outspoken but not disrespectful. I would ask him to withdraw his use of the word "Machiavellian".

Mr. AIKENS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be docility and timidity in excelsis.

I understand that the honourable member who just interjected and deliberately tried to stop me making my speech—I have only 10 minutes—is a barrister. I challenge him to deny that barristers do lie and know they lie to judges, particularly when a guilty verdict has been brought in. I have exposed this time and time again. A barrister will stand up and ask the court—

Mr. GREENWOOD: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There can be no point of order. The honourable member has not been maligning in personal terms and the honourable member for Townsville South is allowed to make comments.

Mr. AIKENS: Sit down; you're not in court now.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. AIKENS: When a person is found guilty the barrister will stand up and paint a tearful, doleful picture of the criminal. He will lie to the judge.

On the public platform and in this Chamber I exposed the case of a barrister (who is now a District Court judge) who told some shocking lies to the presiding judge in order to get a prisoner a lighter sentence than the judge said he was going to impose. I asked that that barrister be punished, but I was told that he could not be punished because he was reading from the brief supplied to him by the solicitor. Because I am a fair man I said, "O.K. Let's punish the solicitor for telling lies to the barrister." Then I was told that the solicitor could not be punished as he had not told lies to the judge. Where are we going when that sort of thing is allowed to occur? And this member defends the judiciary.

Only in the Supreme Court of Queensland is it held that adultery can be committed by one person. For example, a woman, Mrs. A, will file a petition against her husband, Mr. A, on the ground of his adultery with Mrs. B, and a Supreme Court justice will grant a decree to Mrs. A because Mr. A did in fact commit adultery with Mrs. B, but in the next breath he will find that Mrs. B did not commit adultery with Mr. A. Can the honourable member, who stood up oleagiously wringing his hands in horror, deny that that occurs?

As "Erskine May" has been referred to, let me deal with this work. People have a poor opinion of this Parliament because we have a poor opinion of ourselves. Few members will get up off their bellies and

do something for the people. I urge the young new members to get up off their and do something for the people. Never mind about the judiciary. Let us think about the little people.

To revert to "May"—when I am asked by someone, "Why don't you mention this in Parliament?" sometimes I say, "I have brought it up in Parliament, but the moment I have done so Mr. Speaker, acting quite within his rights, has told me that 'May' does not allow it." I have heard you give such a ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Erskine May was an old fuddy-duddy who lived in England at about the time of the Crimean War. He gave certain opinions on the laws of England, and we are bound by them. Nevertheless this Parliament is a sovereign Parliament. Any day we want to we can throw "May" and "Annie" and "Lizzie" and the rest of them into the ash can. We have the right and the power to scrap "May" and to amend our Standing Orders, our Constitution Act and our rules of court, but we haven't got the guts to do it. Nor do we have the guts to exercise all the powers that are vested in us as a sovereign Parliament in order to ensure that the ordinary people are given all the protection we can give them when they go before the court.

It is claimed that our courts are courts of justice. Like hell they're courts of justice! At least this Government is honest about that. On the high building that it erected up in George Street it has put a plaque saying not "Courts of Justice" but "Courts of Law". In Townsville the Government has done the same thing. The only justice that is given in our courts of law today is judges' justice. They have nussed it out for themselves, and they spell it "Just us".

(Time expired.)

JUVENILE AID BUREAU

Mr. BYRNE (Belmont) (12.53 p.m.): I raise a matter that is of great importance both to this Parliament and to the community. It must be brought to the attention of the public, either through the media or by some other means. I intend to deal with the Juvenile Aid Bureau and the Education Department Liaison Section.

I commence by quoting from Senior Sergeant T. M. Lewis, who, at the time of writing, was officer-in-charge of the Juvenile Aid Bureau. Since then, however, he has been transferred. I would regard him perhaps as the most competent man to fill that position.

He said—

"The Juvenile Aid Bureau is a section of the Queensland Police Force and was inaugurated in Brisbane on the 14th May 1963 with a staff of one police officer and one policewoman. It has since grown to a strength of 12 police officers and seven policewomen."

Subsequently the bureau's strength grew to 25, but in 1975 it was reduced to a staff of 16. Senior Sergeant Lewis went on to say—

"The main aim of the Bureau is to turn potential delinquents into law-abiding citizens and to prevent them from incurring a conviction which would leave a permanent blot on their character."

In the Police Department's annual report to Parliament the Commissioner, Mr. Whitrod, made this shocking statement—

"Young persons need to be brought face to face with authority and made to account for all their unlawful activities. Research has not given any support for the view that sentimental caring is an adequate substitute for appropriate discipline in providing youngsters with proper guidelines for future conduct."

If that statement does not take us back to the convict days, I don't know what does. On that stead this Police Commissioner would desire to see the children who were in the under-mentioned age groups, and who were convicted of offences, brought before the Children's Court, thereafter to have a blot eternal upon their lives and their future—

Age	Offences Committed
8	2
9	44
10	61
11	39
12	124
13	242
14	238

They may have been involved in the theft of a teaspoon or some other small item. No doubt some honourable members in their childhood committed crimes of a similar minor nature without being found out.

The fact that those children were dealt with under the present system by the Education Department Liaison Section and not by the Juvenile Aid Bureau (which has been transferred to the Children's Service Department) highlights the endeavour by the Commissioner of Police to squash the Juvenile Aid Bureau and by so doing to enhance the Education Department Liaison Section, which has its offenders transferred to the Children's Court, where they receive this blot. This is a damning indictment of that form of punishment.

I come to a further statement by the commissioner in the same report—

"It may be recalled that in last year's Report I drew attention to the apparently low figure of 44 per cent, being the juvenile percentage of detected housebreakers in 1971-72, as against an Australian average of 55 per cent, with its implication that in Queensland juvenile breakers were not apprehended to the same extent."

Later he stated—

“What these figures suggest is that in Queensland we are still missing at least about 8 per cent of the total breakers who are juveniles, and on this basis I have expanded the Unit to cover major cities outside the Metropolitan Area.”

The unit he was referring to is the Education Department Liaison Section.

The Commissioner appears to be more concerned with improving his statistics than he is with showing concern for the individual in society and for children who will have a blot imposed on them for the rest of their lives. That is an undesirable situation and one that cannot be allowed to continue.

I now quote from the report of the Children's Services Department to Parliament in these terms—

“The number of Children's Court appearances during the 1973-74 year was 3,939 compared with 3,269 during 1972-73, an increase of 670 or 20.5 per cent. This is the greatest increase in Court appearances since the increase of 21.85 per cent in 1969.”

At a later stage in the report this appears—

“In contrast to the increased number of total appearances, applications for Care and Control under Section 61 of the Act reduced from 600 in 1972-73 to 413 in 1973-74, a decrease of 187 or 31.17 per cent.”

Thus there is a decrease in the proportion of those who are put into child care and under the control of the department from the number sent to the Children's Court.

Perhaps the following is the most important section to appear in the same report—

“This decrease in appearances is entirely due to the fact that the Commissioner of Police has insisted that Police Officers charge children with offences rather than having them make an application under Section 61 of the Children's Services Act 1965-1973. This in some degree is contrary to the spirit of the Act which is to protect children from acquiring criminal records for minor offences in their formative years.”

I also point out that in January 1973, when the Juvenile Aid Bureau was handed over to the Children's Services Department, it was intended to exchange police officers for social workers. That is not a desirable situation. It is important that they be trained policemen, who maintain the police position. However, following this action, in an attempt to completely squash the Juvenile Aid Bureau, one month later, within the Police Department the Education Department Liaison Section was formed, to which headmasters of schools are encouraged to send children, and from which they are taken before the Children's Court to be stained with this blot I have referred to. This situation is unfortunate; indeed, I find it disgusting.

Various organisations within the community are raising this matter as an important issue. One such is the Young Liberal organisation, which has a statement on it before the Commission of Inquiry into Youth Problems.

In 1971 a survey was undertaken under the auspices of the Queensland University to study the community's reaction to the Juvenile Aid Bureau. There was overwhelming support within the community for the activities of the Juvenile Aid Bureau with its principles on counselling and discipline rather than court punishment, and overwhelming support for the Juvenile Aid Bureau's activities concerning children of this age to remain.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. W. D. Hewitt): Order! In accordance with Sessional Order discussion on Matters of Public Interest has now terminated.

The House adjourned at 1 p.m.