

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 1975

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"I ask for the co-operation of the House in making my task as light as possible. To this end Members might consider keeping questions without notice to a minimum.

"I attach a letter received this morning from the Hansard reporters.

"Yours faithfully,

"C. B. McCarthy,

"Chief Reporter."

The letter to the Chief Reporter from the Hansard Staff reads—

"Parliament House,

"Brisbane,

"9 October 1975.

"The Chief Reporter,

"Parliamentary Reporting Staff,

"Parliament House.

"Dear Sir,

"At a meeting of the Hansard staff following the direction by the State Service Union that public servants attend a stop-work meeting this morning, it was decided that, provided two delegates could be granted leave to attend such a meeting, the remainder of the staff would have been prepared to perform their usual duties.

"However, as this leave has not been granted the staff feel that they have no alternative than to attend the meeting to ensure that their voice is heard in any decisions that may be arrived at concerning any future industrial action."

Mr. Houston: Fancy trying to stop them!

Mr. Campbell: It's an illegal strike.

Mr. Burns: Rubbish! You have introduced a Bill removing that clause.

Mr. Campbell: Again, I say again it's an illegal strike.

Mr. Burns: Rubbish! You are removing the clause and misleading the workers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to contain himself or I will have to deal with him.

THURSDAY, 9 OCTOBER 1975

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

ATTENDANCE OF HANSARD STAFF AT STOP-WORK MEETING

Mr. SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received the following letter from the Chief Reporter, Parliamentary Reporting Staff:—

"Parliamentary Reporting Staff,
"Parliament House,
"Brisbane, Q.,
"9 October 1975.

"The Honourable J. E. H. Houghton,
"Speaker,
"Legislative Assembly,
"Brisbane.

"Dear Mr. Speaker,

"As Hansard reporters will be absent from duty this morning attending the stop-work meeting called by the Queensland State Service Union, I am tape-recording the proceedings of the Parliament and will personally transcribe them, possibly on Monday next.

PRIVILEGE

DENIGRATION AND DERISION OF PREMIER AND SENATOR FIELD BY A.B.C. TELEVISION

Mr. SPEAKER: Yesterday the honourable member for Townsville South raised a question of privilege in relation to a certain segment on the television programme "This

Day Tonight". I indicated then that I would look into the matter and give my opinion this morning.

I have given the honourable member's complaint my close consideration but I must say that I am unable to find sufficient grounds to establish the case as one to be treated as a breach of privilege as far as this Parliament is concerned.

Senator Field is the person most involved in the matter and he has the right to raise the matter in the Senate if he feels so inclined.

At the same time I would add that it is my opinion that on occasions the behaviour of some of the media in matters involving the institution of Parliament leaves a lot to be desired. I understand that the A.B.C. tendered an apology last night which clearly indicates that they felt they must have transgressed with regard to this matter. I want also to make it abundantly clear, to the media or anybody else who tries to interfere with the system by way of publicity, that I will have no hesitation in taking appropriate action to bring the individuals concerned before the Bar of this House.

PAPER

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Regulation under the Stamp Act 1894—1974.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. CHEQUERS NITE CLUB

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Lamont**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

(1) How many persons have been apprehended or arrested in Chequers Nite Club and subsequently convicted in relation to (a) drug offences and (b) under-age drinking?

(2) Was the only stolen property recovered from the club, pursuant to the execution of a warrant, a used black and white television set of a value of approximately \$60 and as a result of which a person not connected with the club was charged?

(3) Was the licence not transferred to Gramons Pty. Ltd. until 22 August?

(4) Did the Licensing Commission carry out an investigation, prior to the transfer of the licence, into the character and

background of the directors of the company and the nominee and were all found to be of good repute?

(5) Was the commission supplied with a list of all employees of the company involved in the club at the time application was made to transfer the licence and was no adverse comment made in respect of these persons by the commission?

(6) Does he appreciate that his comments made recently in the House could be misconstrued as casting the present ownership or management of the club in a disadvantageous light and will he give an assurance that this was not his intention?

(7) Does he know of any reason why the member for Archerfield or any other member of the A.L.P. might be attempting to cast a slur on the ownership or management of this particular club?

Answers:—

(1) No persons have been arrested for drug offences or under-age drinking at the Chequers night club since the 1st January, 1975.

(2) Yes.

(3) Licence transferred to Gramons Pty. Ltd. on 22nd August, 1975 from Cabaret Holding Pty. Ltd.

(4 and 5) I suggest that these questions be directed to my colleague, the Honourable the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, who administers the Liquor Act.

(6) The answers supplied by me to previous questions were statements of fact. Whether or not those answers could be misconstrued is a matter of conjecture.

(7) No.

2. SEIZED TAIWANESE TRAWLERS

Mr. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries—

(1) What is the present position of the two Taiwanese fishing trawlers, "Yuan Chang Fu" and "Wan Shun Chuan", which have been seized under the State Fisheries Act?

(2) How far does the State responsibility extend relative to members of the Taiwanese crew seeking (a) employment and/or being employed ashore, (b) accommodation and (c) repatriation?

(3) What amounts in each instance have been expended to date by the State Government on (a) each vessel for berthage and wharfage fees and charges since confiscation and (b) expenses for the crew's keep and welfare while in custody?

(4) What amounts have been recouped by negotiations and/or sale of vessels?

(5) Which department accepts the responsibility for their disposal?

(6) Have any incidents on either of the vessels or other similar vessels held in custody been connected with sabotage or suspected sabotage, apparently caused to accelerate early repatriation of the crews?

Answers:—

(1) The vessels "Wan Shun Chuan" and "Wyan Cheng Fu No. 31" were detained under State Fisheries law and are held at Cairns under Court Order.

(2) (a) The State has no direct responsibility. As seamen, the crew are free to come and go. (b) The crew have a right to remain accommodated aboard their vessel while it remains subject to appeal. (c) If no alternatives offer, where the vessel is forfeit to the Crown, the State has a repatriation responsibility.

(3) (a) and (b) Expenses incurred are: For "Wan Shun Chuan"—Welfare, maintenance, safety etc., \$4,933.88; Crew repatriation, \$12,175.80. Total \$17,109.68. For "Wyan Cheng Fu No. 31"—Welfare, maintenance, safety etc., \$1,230.20. The further details sought are not readily available.

(4) Nil. The vessels are still subject of negotiation.

(5) The Queensland Fisheries Service of my Department.

(6) The Harbour Master, Cairns, noticed the "Wyan Cheng Fu No. 31" sinking and found seacocks were turned on letting water into the hull. An ammonia valve was also found to be partly turned on. Remedial measures were taken. A fire was reported on the deck of the "Chiao Hung No. 7" (detained under Commonwealth Fisheries law). Efforts to control the fire were unsuccessful and the hull remains were towed to a beach on the southside of Trinity Inlet.

3. OYSTER INDUSTRY

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries—

(1) Is he aware of the concern expressed by the New South Wales State Fisheries chief biologist, Dr. W. B. Malcolm, that moves might have to be made to protect the Australian oyster industry from the Japanese Pacific oyster?

(2) Has his department investigated whether these oysters, which are now showing up in New South Wales oyster-growing areas, have appeared in Queensland?

(3) Has any investigation been made into the possibility of the oysters spreading diseases to which our local oysters are not resistant?

(4) As it has been suggested that the oysters have reached New South Wales by travelling in ships' ballast water, has any method of controlling the discharge of this water been investigated?

Answer:—

(1 to 4) The over-all position is being closely observed and the honourable member is assured that any necessary remedial measures which may become apparent will be introduced. In this regard research work relating to effective sterilisation of ballast water before discharge is currently under way in New South Wales and we are in close consultation.

4. TRAFFIC SAFETY, INTERSECTION OF BRUCE HIGHWAY AND BRIBIE ROAD, CABOOLTURE

Mr. Frawley, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) Will he have an investigation made into the feasibility of installing traffic lights at the intersection of the Bruce Highway and Bribe Road, Caboolture?

(2) Is he aware that school buses traversing this intersection whilst travelling to and from Caboolture are in grave danger of being struck by vehicles travelling north or south, as the speed limit on the Bruce Highway is 100 km/h and a loaded bus picks up speed very slowly after leaving the stop signs on either side of this road?

(3) Will he consider reducing the speed limit in this vicinity to 60 km/h immediately?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) All vehicles must approach an intersection with care especially on busy highways.

(3) I will have the matter of speed zoning at this intersection investigated. There is an 80 km/h speed zone at present.

5. VICTORIA POINT JETTY

Mr. Goleby, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Tourism and Marine Services—

(1) Is he aware of the hazards at the Victoria Point Jetty due to silt, which prohibits ferries from loading and unloading passengers at low tide?

(2) What plans has the Harbours and Marine Department to overcome this problem?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware that there is only $\frac{3}{4}$ metre depth in the swing basin at low tide adjacent to the Victoria Point Jetty. This situation has prevailed over the past ten years. The material underlying the basin is hard clay and the cost to dredge to a depth of 1.2 metres at low tide is some \$20,000.

(2) The work will be carried out when funds are available.

6. POLICE STATION, SOUTHPORT

Mr. Gibbs, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

(1) Are plans in hand to build a new police station at Southport and, if so, when is it intended to construct it?

(2) As the Gold Coast City Council Chambers at Southport, which adjoin the police station yard, will be vacated early in 1976, will he consider renting part of the building with a view to improving the crowded conditions which exist at the police station, until a new police station is built?

Answers:—

(1) Yes. Plans are being considered for a new Police Station at Southport in conjunction with a new Court House.

(2) This matter will be considered and I thank the honourable member for his suggestion.

7. ARTIFICIAL LAKES FOR TOOWOOMBA BEAUTIFICATION

Mr. Warner, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Tourism and Marine Services—

As artificial lakes are a vital segment in the Toowoomba City Council's plans to beautify the city, to enable the council to give agreement and assistance to private enterprise to carry out the development, will he lift the ban on the proposed development?

Answer:—

The development of artificial freshwater lakes in Queensland has been the subject of a study by an interdepartmental committee. Following that study Cabinet was advised that management and maintenance of such lakes attached to subdivisions of land could present serious problems and Cabinet decided that my colleague the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads prepare the necessary legislation to control such developments for the consideration of this House. I should point out that the matter of prime concern is freshwater lakes attached to subdivisions of land. With regard to freshwater lakes developed by the Toowoomba City Council in public areas, the department of Harbours and Marine informed that council on 2 September 1974 that it raised no objection to such developments by the council.

8. RAIL PASSENGER JOURNEYS CAIRNS-KURANDA

Mr. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

What was the number of passenger journeys undertaken between Cairns and Kuranda in each of the years ended 30 June 1974 and 1975?

Answer:—

There were 92,867 passenger journeys between Cairns and Kuranda for the year ended 30 June 1974. Compilation of statistical data for the year ended 30 June 1975 has not been completed.

9. JAPANESE THREAT TO GAME-FISHING
INDUSTRY

Mr. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement and Fisheries—

What Government action is proposed to overcome the threat which Japanese long-line tuna fishing poses to the Cairns game-fishing industry by endangering the species of bill-fish marlin which abound in these waters, as both large and small fish are being plundered in large numbers?

Answer:—

The Queensland Fisheries Service officers maintain a regular oversight of the area's sport-fishing activities; however, at this stage they have no evidence to suggest that the species is in any way endangered. In view of the honourable member's interest and in view of the statement by the member for Chatsworth yesterday, I propose to take the matter up with the Australian Fisheries Council urgently.

10. CONCRETING UNDER CAIRNS
DWELLINGS, PUBLIC SERVANTS'
HOUSING SCHEME

Mr. Jones, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) Has he received requests from the occupants of houses under the Public Servants' Housing Scheme in Cairns, relative to a proposal for cement paving beneath their dwellings to obviate the soggy and unhealthy conditions which exist beneath these high-blocked houses for long periods during and subsequent to the heavy wet-season conditions which apply in Far North Queensland?

(2) If so, will he undertake an investigation to introduce a system of part-cost by department and occupier, or higher rental levied for periods to cover costs in respect of raising living conditions, as such cement flooring at ground level often provides outdoor living and children's play areas, and as well can be utilised for laundries, garages, storage, work, hobbies and other essential modes and as a way of life in North Queensland?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Funds are not available for such work.

11. FORMER POLICE INSPECTOR CHARLES
CORNER

Mr. Bertoni, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Police—

(1) With regard to a statement made recently by the honourable member for Murrumba in which he attacked the reputation, propriety and honesty of ex-Inspector Charles Corner, in particular while he was stationed at Mt. Isa, did the member for Murrumba at any time and in any way make any complaints to the Minister or the Commissioner of Police about Inspector Corner?

(2) Did the member for Murrumba make any attempt to interview the two detectives from Scotland Yard and make charges against ex-Inspector Corner?

(3) If the answers are in the negative, will he make a statement to the House concerning the propriety and honesty of ex-Inspector Corner?

Answers:—

(1) I do not recall the honourable member complaining to me about Inspector Corner and I am not aware of whether he approached the Commissioner of Police or otherwise.

(2) As this investigation is completely confidential, I am not in a position to answer the honourable member's question.

(3) Never at any time has the propriety or honesty of Inspector Corner been questioned.

12. OVERLOADING BY ROAD TRANSPORT
OPERATORS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Aikens**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads—

(1) Can an estimate be given of the average damage done each year to bridges and road works, with consequent delay and monetary loss to other road users, by greedy road transporters who grossly overload their vehicles to stuff their pockets with extra profits?

(2) With the anticipated early sealing of the Townsville-Mt. Isa road, can it be envisaged how much damage will be done and how much traffic will be restricted by this reprehensible practice, particularly when the underlying earthworks are softened by the wet-season rain?

(3) In view of the difficulty, due to legal technicalities, of bringing these saboteurs before the courts and having them adequately punished, will consideration be given to introducing legislation to justify the absolute confiscation of the vehicles and the loads?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The matter of overloading on roads, generally, is at present being considered by the Main Roads Department and myself. As soon as I am in a position to do so, I will be happy to provide the honourable member with the information he seeks.

13. COMMONWEALTH DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN UNION TRAINEES AND APPRENTICES

Mr. Ahern for Mr. Aikens, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to an article in a recent issue of the newspaper "Australian Student", wherein it was stated that the Whitlam Government proposed to spend a colossal sum of money to erect a palatial college with lavish motel-type accommodation at Albury-Wodonga, to train about seventy selected 17-year-old students to learn the game of union organising and secretaryship?

(2) If so, will he inquire from the Prime Minister why trade apprentices, who will add wealth to the country and strengthen the nation's economy, are being treated like Afghans' dogs as far as accommodation and financial assistance from his Government is concerned?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Every endeavour has been made to obtain a copy of the particular issue of the newspaper "Australian Student" to which the honourable member refers but without success. No doubt the honourable member will furnish me with his copy in order that I might acquaint myself with the contents of the article to which he refers. I am informed that expenditure by the Commonwealth Government on trade union training generally in 1975-76

is expected to be \$3 million. Whilst I share with the honourable member his concern regarding the discrimination which exists in regard to the allocation of funds by the Commonwealth Government in regard to allowances payable to tertiary students and other types of training of students as compared with allowances paid for apprenticeship training, I feel it would be pointless in my approaching the Prime Minister in respect of this matter. However, at a meeting of Commonwealth and State Ministers for Labour and Labour Relations held in Hobart on 29 August 1975 I made a strong plea to end the present disparity between the payment of allowances for an apprentice and for a tertiary student over the period of their studies. I drew attention to the fact that the allowances payable by the Commonwealth in regard to the training of an apprentice during the period of his indenture at present is \$2,735, whilst the total allowance payable to a tertiary student during the period of his studies is \$6,800. I also pointed out that with the tertiary student there is the possibility of additional allowances, for example, there is provision for payment of a dependant's allowance of \$15 a week for a dependant spouse and \$7 a week for a dependant child. The apprentice receives no such additional allowances. The figures which I have quoted are based on a report tabled in May this year by the Commonwealth Minister for Education and includes his recommendations for substantial increases in allowances paid to tertiary students to be made. At the conference I was strongly supported by all State Ministers for Labour and the Commonwealth Minister for Labor and Immigration, all of whom stated they were greatly impressed with the case presented by Queensland in respect of this matter. In fact the Commonwealth Minister stated that, whilst nothing can be done this financial year, I could rest assured that the paper presented by me and the data set out therein will receive full and careful consideration when the Commonwealth Budget for 1976-77 is being considered. As I feel the information contained in my submission is of great interest not only to the honourable member but to all honourable members of this House, I table a copy of the case submitted to that ministerial conference by Queensland.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.

14. LUMP-SUM SUPERANNUATION OF
DEFEATED PARLIAMENTARIANS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Aikens**, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) How many members defeated at the last election took their superannuation entitlement in a lump sum and what were the amounts paid out of the fund and to whom?

(2) Has his attention been drawn to newspaper articles to the effect that some of these ex-members are contemplating seeking re-election at the first opportunity and, if so, will those re-elected be able to serve another few years and again be paid substantial lump sums from the fund or will they be required to repay the lump sum received following their defeat last year and have their second term counted as a continuation of their first for the payment of superannuation entitlements?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Six defeated members were paid their superannuation entitlements by way of lump sums. It is not considered appropriate to give the amounts paid to individual contributors. Such does not appear to be necessary to deal with the principle raised by the honourable member. Should one of these members be re-elected, his second term would be counted as a continuation of his first term for the calculation of superannuation entitlements, the lump sum already received, or its equivalent in pension entitlement, being deducted from the total pension or lump-sum benefit calculated as due to the member based on his aggregate service when he again ceases to be a member.

15. CATTLE TRANSPORTED BY RAIL

Mrs. Kippin, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

How many cattle were transported by the Railway Department in 1974-75?

Answer:—

This information is not readily available but will be published with other statistical data in the Annual Report of the Commissioner for Railways which will be tabled shortly in the House.

16. INCIDENCE OF VENEREAL DISEASE

Mr. Burns for **Mr. Melloy**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Were the figures given by Dr. B. Smithurst of Queensland University Medical School, showing an alarming increase in the incidence of venereal disease in Queensland, correct?

(2) In what age groups and occupations is this disease most predominant?

(3) What attempts have been made to make people in these groups aware of the dangers of the disease?

Answers:—

(1) In 1973-74 the incidence of venereal disease in Queensland was 2,555 compared with 2,525 in 1972-73. This is a rate of 131.3 per 100,000 population in 1973-74 as against 138.2 in 1972-73. It is anticipated that a further drop in the rate will be seen in the year 1974-75.

(2) Twenty-five per cent of notified cases occurred in the 15-19 years age group in 1973-74 compared with 27.20 per cent in 1972-73. The 20-24 years age group were responsible for 30.13 per cent of notified cases compared with 33.94 per cent for the same periods and the total incidence in this age group was 55.13 per cent in 1973-74 compared with 61.14 per cent in 1972-73. The survey conducted by Dr. Smithurst was on patients attending the Female Clinic in 1971 and this report was published in the Medical Journal of Australia in March 1975. The survey showed that of the females in the survey group 66.08 per cent were unskilled, 22.22 per cent were skilled, and 5.85 per cent were receiving education at tertiary level. The unskilled group in the community represents 15.05 per cent, the skilled 12.41 per cent and tertiary students 23.48 per cent. The assumption that venereal disease is more common in lower socio-economic groups may not be correct as patients in the professional and upper middle class are more likely to obtain private treatment. No similar survey has been done on patients attending the Male Clinic.

(3) Attempts to control this disease are basically by education of the public and in this regard the Queensland Health Education Council distributes pamphlets at hospitals, clinics, doctors' surgeries, Health Education displays and annual

shows. Many local authorities have leaflets available and some chemists have volunteered to distribute these leaflets. In 1973-74 23,208 pamphlets were distributed. Overtures have been made to the Brisbane City Council and to the media for advertising but negotiations have not as yet been finalised. Films on venereal disease are available from the Queensland Health Education Council library and in the past twelve months have been used 201 times, mostly at the request of doctors or parents and citizens associations attached to schools. With regard to the Aborigines, the Queensland Health Education Council has produced two short films for distribution to the Aboriginal population, one for males and one for females. These have been well received and actively shown in Brisbane and their use is extending throughout the State as the Education Officers of the Queensland Health Education Council have more experience and as their ambit covers more of the territory.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

BETTING SCHEME ADVERTISEMENTS

Mr. WRIGHT: Following my recent question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General with reference to the pamphlets distributed to many householders by Walter Hughes of Sydney, I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Is the advertising of such betting schemes illegal in Queensland? If so, whose responsibility is it to take action against the advertisers? Further, has any action been taken about similar advertisements appearing in well-known Queensland newspapers?

Sir GORDON CHALK: It is true that a number of advertisements have appeared in Queensland newspapers aimed at encouraging people to make certain investments with parties in New South Wales who undertake to provide a number of winners over a certain period.

I recall that some months ago I received a number of letters, the majority of which came from the Gladstone-Rockhampton area, asking whether such advertising was legal and whether those promoting the advertisements could be considered to be reliable. At that time I asked the Justice Department to give an opinion on whether such advertising was legal, and the advice tendered to me was that there was nothing in the Queensland legislation to prevent such advertising.

Subsequently I had discussions with members of the administration of racing in New South Wales, and they took up the matter with the Justice Department in that State. Consequently some action was taken both at Justice Department and at police level concerning a number of advertisements, particularly those that made reference to post office box numbers, and I believe I am correct in stating that certain prosecutions were lodged not so much because of the nature of the advertisements as because of the type of individual associated with such advertisements.

I would leave it to the public to assess the reliability or otherwise of the persons who insert these advertisements. My reply to those persons who have written to me—I have had some experience in racing—has been to the effect that no-one can guarantee that a certain horse will win a race. Very often in days gone by certain agencies followed the practice of circulating information in which each of 12 horses was nominated as the winner. People in one area received information in which horse No. 1 was predicted as the winner; people in another area were given information to the effect that horse No. 2 would be the winner, and so on up to the last of the 12 horses. Of course, at the end of the day the person providing the information would be able to claim quite rightly that on that day, on which, for example, horse No. 2 had won, he had predicted that that horse would be the winner. That illustrates the type of advertisements these are, and I would urge Queenslanders to shun them. If they have money to invest they should go to the racecourses and lend support to the racing industry.

TEACHING POSTS FOR FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS

Mr. JONES: I ask the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities: With reference to the answer that he gave yesterday to the member for Mourilyan, in which he said that no vacancies existed for those members of the Labor Party who were formerly teachers and were defeated at the last State election, will he give an assurance that they will be appointed to fill such vacancies for which they are qualified?

Mr. BIRD: I thought I made it perfectly clear yesterday that I have no objection to their appointment. I stipulated, however, that I did not intend transferring teachers merely for the purpose of creating vacancies for former members of Parliament.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(The Chairman of Committees, Mr. W. D. Hewitt, Chatsworth, in the chair)

Debate resumed from 7 October (see p. 940) on Sir Gordon Chalk's motion—

"That there be granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year 1975-76, a sum not exceeding \$108,903 to defray Salaries—His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. TURNER (Warrego) (11.45 a.m.): I intend drawing the attention of the Committee both to those facets of the Budget that deserve praise and to those that I believe will have an adverse effect on the community. Everyone would be well aware of the tremendous difficulties that have confronted the Treasurer in his attempt to bring down a responsible and balanced Budget.

On what I shall term the credit side is the increase of 42.8 per cent in education expenditure, which will allow among other things for an increase of 2,024, or 11 per cent, in the number of teachers employed at primary, secondary and special schools. In addition to alleviating the problem created in those areas where the teacher-to-pupil ratio is far too high, it will create more job opportunities for school-leavers.

The education programme also makes provision for an additional 500 teacher aides in primary schools. This increase will bring the total number of teacher and library aides in State schools to a number in excess of 3,000. These aides perform a vital service by relieving teachers of some of their workload, so I am pleased at the proposed increase in their numbers.

The pre-school programme is to be continued, and by the end of this financial year approximately 350 units will be completed and in operation. The programme is being implemented on a State-wide basis, and I am pleased to note that pre-school centres are being provided in many western areas, where there is urgent need for such a facility for young children. Kindergartens will continue to receive State Government financial aid, in spite of the fact that so far the Federal Government has not indicated what assistance it will give in the current financial year to pre-school education and kindergartens.

The Treasurer has also provided relief to children in country and remote areas. I am sure that parents in those areas would concede that without such assistance from both the State and the Federal Governments, they would be unable to afford to have their children educated.

The depressed state of rural industries, particularly the beef industry, and the inflated costs of board and travel have greatly aggravated the problem of educating isolated children. Hundreds of country children have been forced to leave school because

of their parents' inability to meet the cost involved, and many others are remaining at school under conditions that are extremely detrimental to their chances of achieving complete education.

The number of children who suffer these disadvantages is reaching alarming proportions and the problem is aggravated by the fact that the financial commitments of a growing number of parents are increasing to a level far beyond their means.

I realise that income tax is a Federal issue. Nevertheless I contend that education expenses should be allowable as tax deductions to all parents, particularly those in remote areas.

I should like to see the remote-area allowance extended to cover children in grades 1 to 5. All of us would realise that inflation is eroding the remote-area allowance, so the Treasurer has taken a great step forward by increasing the allowance by 50 per cent from 1 January 1976. This move will be well received by people in remote areas.

The Government's scheme of increasing assistance to non-State schools from 1 January 1976 by raising the payments from \$81 to \$111 per annum for primary students and from \$132 to \$177 per annum for secondary students will be welcomed by non-State schools and will bring the total payments by way of this type of assistance to an annual sum in excess of \$12,000,000.

Of great assistance to boarding schools and to parents of children in remote areas will be the Government's proposal to introduce a new Senior secondary scholarship scheme whereby up to 500 scholarships will be made available each year for children in grades 11 and 12 who qualify for the remote-area allowance and who attend boarding schools.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much noise in the Chamber. I ask honourable members to respect my call to order. My remarks apply to persons in the public gallery as well.

Mr. TURNER: I believe that the Government has come to recognise the problems that exist in rural areas in relation to providing education to children. It is doing something constructive to overcome the problem, and boarding schools as well as parents of children in remote areas will benefit in a tangible way.

I am pleased to see that the conveyance allowance that is paid to parents who drive their children a distance further than 12 miles a day so that they might attend school will be increased to \$105 per child per annum. This represents an increase of \$21 per child per year.

When we consider that some people in rural areas travel in excess of 100 miles a day to convey their children to and from school and for doing so receive an allowance of only 50c a day, we realise that the payments are not excessive, particularly when

they are compared with the State Government's scheme of paying the difference between the 10c concession fare and the full adult fare charged for children attending school in Brisbane.

Payments to school-bus operators in western areas have been a matter of growing concern. In these days of ever-increasing fuel costs and inflation, it is pleasing to note that the Treasurer has seen fit to raise the payments by 33½ per cent.

In many instances school-bus services are the only means of transport available to country children whose parents desire them to attend State schools. Many country parents cannot afford to have their children educated at boarding schools, so without school-bus services their children would be deprived of meeting and mixing with other children as well as of the opportunity to secure a better education than that which most of them would receive by way of correspondence courses.

From 1 January 1976 the special allowance given to smaller schools for the employment of a part-time janitor-groundsmen and clerical assistants is to be increased by 33½ per cent. As well, from the same date the petty cash allowance to schools is to be increased by 100 per cent. These allowances constitute a sensible and worthwhile contribution towards the cost of the daily conduct of schools.

Another major measure announced by the Treasurer is the payment, from 1 January 1976, of a general-purpose grant to all primary schools to assist them in the provision of items of equipment and services, the cost of which is presently met by school committees. The payments are to be on the basis of \$100 a school plus \$4 per student per annum.

Furthermore, the maximum subsidies payable on a \$ for \$ basis to p. and c. associations for approved school projects will be increased as follows:—

High school assembly halls, from \$60,000 to \$84,000; High school swimming pools from \$36,000 to \$50,000; Primary school activities buildings, from \$25,000 to \$35,000; and Primary school swimming pools from \$30,000 to \$42,000.

The full operating costs of education services for handicapped children are to be met by the Education Department. This is an enlightened approach and, combined with the other provisions made in the Budget for education, it must earn the approval of p. and c. associations as well as of parents and teachers throughout the community.

In the local government field—the allocation to local authority libraries has been increased from \$600,000 to \$1,500,000. This will allow local authorities to provide greatly improved library facilities and will also contribute towards their administration and staffing costs.

The reduction by one-third in road permit fees will be well received in transport circles. It is part of the Government's intention to honour its election promise to phase out road permit fees over a three-year period.

The doubling of pay-roll tax exemption levels for small businessmen from \$20,800 to \$41,600 per annum and the budgetary provision whereby all pay-rolls between \$41,600 and \$72,800 will attract less tax than under the present arrangements are clear indications of the Government's policy of assisting small businesses instead of attacking them as some Federal Governments have done.

One of the major breakthroughs in the Budget, in a field in which Queensland has now taken the lead, is the tax reform to be introduced in relation to death duties. I have always contended that death duties are the most iniquitous form of taxation devised by Governments. I am appalled at the fact that a person who pays his taxes while he is alive has his assets taxed after his death. This tax has adversely affected many people, and I suppose that no tax has brought greater hardship to rural property owners than death duties.

Many husbands who die leave their properties to their wives. The over-all valuation of their property and stock is made at the time of death. In many instances this occurs during a good season and at a time of high prices and the widow, who has worked and lived under extreme hardship for practically all her life, is later hit by drought and falling cattle prices and is forced to sell everything she owns to pay the probate duty on her husband's estate. Furthermore, she is taxed on the forced sale of her property. The Treasurer has now provided that estates can pass from husband to wife or from wife to husband without incurring death duties, and this move alone will be applauded by every section of the community. I only hope that in the not too distant future it will be economically possible for the Government to remove death duties altogether.

The Treasurer's proposal to amend the Gift Duties Act to provide that gifts can be made from spouse to spouse without incurring gift duty is also a major breakthrough. I hope that it will be possible to extend this relief also to cover all gifts.

As to the Police Force—the proposal to increase its strength by 8 per cent and to reintroduce foot patrols with men on the beat in metropolitan and provincial cities will be welcomed by all law-abiding citizens. The increasing incidence of theft and crimes of violence in city areas has necessitated an increase in foot patrols. The Police Force does a magnificent job and it is unfortunate that many people seem to take a delight in attacking it and attempting to belittle it.

Grants to cultural groups have been increased from \$1,120,000 to \$1,575,000. At present the State Government pays a

\$ for \$ subsidy towards the cost of construction of cultural facilities undertaken by local community groups. In pursuance of the Government's policy of assisting sporting and youth groups and to encourage these activities, the Government subsidises the cost of approved capital works by paying direct to clubs by way of a free grant up to 33½ per cent of the cost involved. Last year \$1,049,972 was expended under this scheme, and this financial year the Treasurer has made provision for total grants of \$1,770,000. In addition, the sum of \$125,000 has been made available for youth leadership training and an increased grant of \$500,000 has been provided for the Queensland National Fitness Council. Sport plays a vital and important role in our society and has been well catered for in the Budget.

To revert to local authorities—this year the Government will institute a special inquiry into its capital subsidy scheme. The provision for these subsidies is now in excess of \$30,000,000 per year and the inquiry will update the scheme and recommend the best way to get this money to local authorities.

The special State Government free grant to local authorities, which was introduced last year to assist in the finance of their running costs, has this year been increased to \$5,463,000.

As a member representing a rural area, I draw the attention of the Treasurer and honourable members to the desperate plight of local authorities in my electorate. Unless some more equitable system of raising revenue for local authorities is introduced in the near future, we will see the complete collapse of local authorities and the resultant drastic effect that this will have on inland communities. I would have liked to see more assistance extended to local authorities in both this Budget and the Federal Budget.

The cost of providing electricity has placed an intolerable burden on local authorities and ratepayers in my electorate. To those people in city areas who oppose a slight rise in electricity charges to make tariffs uniform throughout the State I say, "Don't regard it as a subsidy to rural areas. Spare a thought for the people who provide you with all your foodstuffs and raw materials." Let us not forget that the major cities owe their very existence and prosperity to those industries that, in addition to supplying the cities, have been the greatest export income earners for the nation. Not many people would realise that it costs more than \$14,000 to connect electricity to every property that is being so connected at the present time in the Paroo Shire. It is time that the local authorities received a greater share of the common pool of taxation. If they do not, they will collapse completely.

It is iniquitous that the Federal Government has reduced Queensland's housing allocation by 12.8 per cent on last year's figures. It is obvious that with an allocation not even equal to that of 1974-75 in actual

money, let alone an equivalent in terms of real money, the results can only be less employment in the home-building industry, fewer houses constructed and longer waiting lists in both the Queensland Housing Commission and the terminating building societies.

Undoubtedly the Treasurer had an unenviable task in attempting to bring down a balanced responsible Budget. With the limiting taxing powers available to the State Government, it has been necessary to increase certain fees and charges. Naturally this will affect certain sections of the community. It is not my intention to elaborate on every part of the Budget, but I believe that I would be neglectful of my obligation to my electorate if I did not refer to the proposed rail freight increase of an average of 40 per cent. On figures it is quite justifiable to increase freights by 40 per cent. They have not been increased since 1966, yet average weekly earnings have increased by 184 per cent over that period. That alone must have a direct bearing on the astronomical losses shown annually by the Queensland railways.

The Treasurer has indicated that the increase is to be an average of 40 per cent—I emphasise the word "average"—and that in some areas of freight rates the increase will be far in excess of that in others. At this point no indication has been given as to whether freights on wool, cattle and essential consumer goods will be increased in western areas. If they are, I certainly hope it will be by only a minor amount. If a 40 per cent rail freight increase is imposed on western areas, it will be the last straw to break the proverbial camel's back.

With ever-increasing inflation and rising costs, western areas are in a state of virtual depression. The rural industries are in a state of collapse. We have just been mauled by the Federal Government with savage increases in postal and telephone charges and increased costs of fuel. If the full 40 per cent increase in rail freights is loaded onto country areas I am afraid that it will result in a tremendous increase in the cost of living in those parts of the State, where it is already far higher than in the cities. A 40 per cent increase in rail freights will virtually not affect city areas at all.

I realise that I am merely speculating on what the increase may be. However, I do appeal to the Treasurer to consider seriously the implications to rural areas if the proposed average rail freight increase is imposed on western people.

Main Roads Department expenditure will be increased from \$148,800,000 last year to \$169,500,000 this year. That is possible because of the 50 per cent increase in motor vehicle registration fees, an allocation of \$1,000,000 from the Loan Fund and the Commonwealth Government's contribution from petrol tax contributions. I certainly

hope that more funds can be found for some of the State's rural arterial roads, which have been neglected recently owing to the Federal Government's policy on inland roads.

In the rural sector, assistance totalling \$49,424,000 is provided for primary producers. That is made up as follows:—

\$19,037,000 for assistance to beef cattle producers

\$17,634,000 as loans from the Agricultural Bank

\$6,000,000 for rural reconstruction purposes

\$3,700,000 for borrowers under the Marginal Dairy Farms Reconstruction Scheme

\$1,000,000 from the Assistance to Primary Producers Special Fund for dairy adjustment activities

\$1,000,000 for further development of brigalow land in the Fitzroy region

\$653,000 under the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme

\$400,000 as subsidy for dairy pasture improvements.

Looking at page 10 of the Tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement, under the heading of "Territorial," one can see that the estimated land revenue from rents (pastoral, selections, etc.), survey fees, freehold land sales, etc., will increase from \$13,215,147 to \$16,285,000. That does not give anyone on the land anything to enthuse about.

Although I have no argument about building a cultural complex at an estimated cost of \$45,000,000 at 1974 prices, I do believe that attention should be directed to the fact that almost every cent of the \$49,000,000 available to rural industries is in repayable loans to the industry, all of which have to be paid back with interest. The majority of landowners are not eligible to borrow any of that money.

Many other areas of concessions and grants of benefit to the community, especially urban areas, have been well covered by the Treasurer and other speakers—for example, pensioner concessions of 50 per cent on urban private buses and the 15 per cent increase, retrospective to 1 July, in student-teacher allowances and other State Government scholarship-holders. It is not my intention to go into detail on those and many other issues which have already been well covered.

I sincerely commend and congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his Budget. It is a balanced, responsible Budget, with advances in many areas, such as in education, gift duty and death duties. However, as I have already stated, there are some areas which concern me, such as the proposed 40 per cent freight increase.

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (12.6 p.m.): The Budget debate is possibly the most important one in a parliamentary session. If we look back to the time when responsible government first came to this State, we note

the advice that the first Governor in Queensland, Sir George Ferguson Bowen, received from the then Secretary of State for the Colonies. When Sir George assumed office in 1859 he was advised—

"Let your thoughts never be distracted from the paramount object of finance. All States thrive in proportion to the administration of revenue."

That is quite true. For a long time the balancing of the Budget has been a controversial matter. The balancing of the Budget in a particular year is not regarded by the modern State as the unquestioned precept it once was. Although a balanced Budget is often construed as evidence of good financial housekeeping and husbandry, we in the Australian Labor Party do not mind the incurring of deficits if the funds are applied to the relief of unemployment.

In his opening remarks in the Financial Statement the Treasurer very piously referred to the scourge of inflation and, contemporaneously, the period of unemployment. If we look at the first four or five years of office of the present Government, from 1957 until the early 1960s, we see a very sad and sorry record. In the first four years of the coalition's administration there were accumulated deficits to the tune of some \$7,000,000. The excuse of the Treasurer of the day for the accumulated deficits was that it was the Government's intention to relieve unemployment. At that time there was a very high rate of unemployment and Queensland had the highest rate of any State in the Commonwealth. In the fifth year of the administration, during a period of economic uncertainty, the then Treasurer introduced a Budget which provided for a small surplus of some \$200,000. That was at a time of very high unemployment. As I said, the present Treasurer piously referred to those matters in the introduction to his Financial Statement. He should be like the person who lives in a glass house and not throw too many stones.

In his presentation of the financial result for 1974-75 the Treasurer spoke of an accumulated deficit of \$5,900,000 in the Consolidated Revenue Fund. He has estimated that the Consolidated Revenue Fund will have an accumulated deficit of \$5,500,000 at the end of the 1975-76 financial year. In the unusual summary that appears at the bottom of page viii of the Estimates, the Treasurer states—

"Total estimated Expenditure includes an amount of \$5,943,394 to be applied in elimination of the Accumulated Deficit at 30th June, 1975."

How very cunning! If we do quite a simple sum we see that he would end up with a surplus of \$400,000.

If the grants received from the Grants Commission are taken properly into account, it will be found that in 1975-76 the State will receive \$11,300,000 as a completion grant for 1973-74, and similar completion

grants will be received for each subsequent year. In effect, this takes care of the State's deficit, the only difference and worry being that the Treasurer does not have the cash available to him before the end of each financial year.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I don't know how you work that out.

Mr. HANSON: The Treasurer is trying to confuse the issue. He shouldn't try to put it over. It is no use his telling me that he is the great financial saviour when he is running around playing with a box of tricks. It is all quite simple. There are people who can carry out research and look into these matters.

I heartily concur with the Opposition attitude when we bring to light the devious machinations of the Premier as he plays along with his counterparts Lewis and Hamer in New South Wales and Victoria, and as a result we have the sorry plight of the State having lost millions of dollars of Medi-bank revenue. The Treasurer has inflicted savage increases in State taxation on the people of Queensland in order to get square on the Premier and to show up his blatant stubbornness. Who suffers? The workers and the rural sector of the State suffer through the inevitable raising of costs to meet the Treasurer's savage imposts! Incidentally, what does that cause? Inflation and more inflation, coming from one who piously rejects any suggestion that he would be in any way a wicked contributor to the scourge of inflation.

In his introductory remarks to his 1975-76 Budget, the Treasurer referred with great concern to the scourge of inflation, the pressures it creates and the misery he alleges it brings. He said that if sound economic decisions had been made, many of the problems could have been avoided. Earlier in the year in the Address-in-Reply debate, I pointed out that many of the causes of this scourge could be laid at the feet of his political counterparts in Canberra. Their decisions, their determinations and their guide-lines on the national scene were responsible for much of the misery that scourge has caused. Let the Treasurer be ever mindful of the editorial in the "Institute of Public Affairs Review" for July-September 1972, which stated—

"The 1972-73 Budget Speech (Mr. Snedden's) did not emphasise nearly strongly enough that inflation was the central problem of the economy. So far the Commonwealth Government has failed to create a compelling sense of urgency in the community about this critical issue; it has failed to convey to the people the threat to our way of life of a continued, rapid decline in the value of the monetary unit, the standard which forms the basis of all business and personal transactions."

In other words the problem was here long before the Whitlam star was in ascendancy in Canberra. By the democratic vote of

the people, Labor assumed office in 1972. At that time it won a charter and a lease of the property of government. Unfortunately, before leaving office the Liberal-National Parties forgot to call the garbage collector and the pest exterminator. They left behind one awful, unholy mess.

The presentation of the Treasurer's Budget heralds a significant occasion. He is the Treasurer who probably has presented the most Budgets since 1859—for that reason alone he should receive a modicum of congratulations—but his record certainly does not give him the privilege or honour of glossing over his stewardship for 1974-75 in two pages of his Financial Statement. Within that short compass he gave an explanation of the expenditure of \$2,450 million from all funds and receipts of approximately \$2,539 million. No doubt he is suffering very acute embarrassment because he has to fix up a large number of people—the representatives of all electorates except those who sit on the Opposition benches. He is a very realistic man. Probably he realises that a lot of the new members are oncers, who are here for only a short while. It would be absolutely useless for him to try to teach them anything. From observation there seem to be none among them who have been the recipients of the favoured treatment that was handed out to the Minister for Works and Housing when he sat on the back bench. Of course, it goes even a little further. Every statement that Minister makes to the media has to be vetted by the Treasurer. He will not give any statement to the newspapers until such time as the Treasurer has seen it. Of course, that is by the way.

The Auditor-General's Annual Report upon the Treasurer's Annual Statement shows clearly and concisely that parliamentary appropriations are treated as a joke. When honourable members consider that nearly 12½ per cent of expenditure out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund was unforeseen expenditure, which Parliament will be asked to approve in the Supplementary Estimates, they will see what I mean. It is obvious that the Treasurer cuts departments too finely or the departments go ahead and spend freely without regard to approved appropriation.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You wouldn't understand.

Mr. HANSON: Something smells and it needs correction. Once again it is all very well to be pious, to cast aspersions and to pontificate on occasions. The Treasurer did pontificate about Loan Council arrangements when his Liberal colleague, the honourable member for Salisbury, by way of a question, inferentially but purposefully and cunningly opened the gate for the Treasurer to level extraordinary charges at the Whitlam Government. He should have a look at his own shortcomings and failures. That kind of executive expenditure—unforeseen expenditure that does not have the approval of parliamentary appropriation—is not good for

the State. It is not good for the politician and it is not good for the public. It is time that members of this Committee had a greater say. At times members have no knowledge of variations to approved parliamentary appropriations until the following year's Budget is presented. That is a very regrettable state of affairs. Perhaps the proposed Privileges Committee will have something to say about that odious practice.

Some of the unforeseen expenditure represents the reallocation of the \$80,000,000 provided for award increases but not spent under Treasury appropriation. Perhaps we will get an explanation about that. While I am talking about unforeseen expenditure, perhaps the Treasurer could answer some of the queries I raise after a detailed study of the Budget. I want to know these things; I am entitled to know these things; I am not to be treated as a rubber stamp. It is not just a matter of somebody saying, "All in favour say 'Aye'; to the contrary 'No'." As representatives of the people, we are entitled to know these things. My electors, erudite and astute people, want to know. For instance, the Treasurer could probably tell me why \$2,000,000 unforeseen expenditure was charged to the Consolidated Revenue Fund for subsidies to local bodies, when \$1,836,000 was available and unspent in the Loan Fund for this purpose? That is something that needs explanation.

The Treasurer could also well explain why he engaged in a clever, subtle and devious exercise in the administration of the Beef Cattle Industry Assistance Fund. A grant of \$3,500,000 by way of unforeseen expenditure was transferred to that fund from the Consolidated Revenue Fund when only \$963,000 was spent. The fund was also assisted by a transfer of \$6,500,000 from the Woolgrowers' Assistance Fund. A little explanation of those transactions would not be out of court, either.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I'll tell Pat Hanlon the answer. He made a good job of your speech.

Mr. HANSON: The Treasurer need not worry about Pat Hanlon. I am quite capable of making my own speeches. I have never had anyone prepare a speech for me in the whole time I have been in this Assembly. Unlike the Treasurer and the Premier, I do not have a whole host of script writers rapping the public purse and running after me to try to help improve my political performance.

I want the answers to my queries. I want to know why the Works Department expenditure contained \$1,800,000 unforeseen expenditure as a grant to the Cultural Capital Development Fund. That appears at page 27 of the Auditor-General's report. An examination of that report reveals, in Appendix A at page 35, a grant of \$100,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the Cultural Capital Development Fund.

What happened to the balance of \$1,700,000? That, too, requires an answer. It is all very well for the Treasurer to incorporate such figures in his Estimates and tables. They need explanation. The Treasurer comes into this Chamber and talks constantly about the inadequacies of the Federal Government. Let him look first at his own back yard and then give the Committee a few answers.

I refer now to the Lands Department, Chief Office. Under "Estate Preparation", there is shown an unforeseen expenditure of \$1,000,000. In the year under consideration, there were very clean figures indeed, namely, an appropriation of \$1,500,000 and an expenditure of \$2,500,000. Very neat figures indeed! Was this \$1,000,000 tucked away in the Estates Maintenance Fund, which is mentioned in Appendix A at page 35 of the Auditor-General's report? Was it a contribution from the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the value of \$1,899,964.91?

Whilst I am raising queries, I ask why railway working operations are not accounted for, in railway accounting, through a separate trust fund. Why not amend the Railways Act to provide for debt charges, with the Consolidated Revenue Fund making up the shortfall? This is done in hospital administration. The accounts would then be much easier to follow. Everyone would be able to look at the operations of the railways and have a better understanding of them. The present arrangement, under which debt charges are hidden away in the Consolidated Revenue Fund, is most unsatisfactory.

If we look at Table 24, Summary of Loan Expenditure to 30th June 1975, we find that the total net expenditure on the railways for this period was \$374,368,337, on which interest is charged to the Railway Department. Looking then at Table 25, I ask why interest should not be transferred to the non-recoverable expenditure of \$297,205,892. These are matters requiring clear and concise explanation and direct, honest and straightforward answers.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You wouldn't expect other than that from the Treasurer, would you?

Mr. HANSON: I certainly would not take his racecourse tips, because I would be suspicious that he might be a commission agent for George Gray or Hughes or any of the other urgers who write from southern climes.

If the unforeseen expenditure mentioned in the four items is totalled, it will be seen that it could quite easily account for the deficit disclosed by the Treasurer.

Turning now to receipts—it is seen that Commonwealth finance provides almost 48 per cent of Consolidated Revenue Fund collections. If the Premier considers that Queensland can do better under his cohorts, namely, Fraser, Lewis and Hamer, with their federalism proposals and new methods, I suggest that he consult the Treasurer. My

understanding is that before there can be any cessation of the present arrangements, all States have to be in agreement. The Treasurer knows that only too well. But this is not feasible, it is impossible, and it will never happen. So the Premier once again struts the stage like an actor. When the funeral passes, he is unhappy that he is not the one being revered and honoured on the bier. Once again the Premier is dishonestly making headlines without having any chance of success in what he advocates.

The Treasurer knows—or at least he should know—the facts of life. I believe he has a little idea of them. If he has sufficient courage, he should tell the Premier to get lost, and ensure that he himself looks after the financial arrangements of this State.

I endorse the spirit of the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition when he addressed himself to this matter. As I have already said, the great public relations exercise was the Federal Opposition's so-called federalism policy. The Premier went off to these talks and supported an agreement to which his Treasurer, who should handle money matters, was opposed. Quite naturally, the Premier has earned the scorn of a considerable number of his parliamentary colleagues. Apparently the Premier either did not understand what he was agreeing to or he was hoodwinked by the Premiers of the other States.

It has been suggested that we look to what has happened in Canada. The Canadian experience is that a policy that allows State Governments to raise their own tax surcharges means that smaller States must impose greater additional tax burdens on their people as the result of pressure from the larger, more prosperous and more powerful States. The Federal Opposition's plans would be most disadvantageous to this country and of serious disadvantage to the less-developed States such as Queensland. The Treasurer has acknowledged this problem, but the Premier has not explained how it could be overcome. In fact, his counterpart in New South Wales has publicly admitted that the scheme has not been thoroughly thought through. If the smaller States such as Queensland are forced to raise tax surcharges, as they would be under the Federal Opposition's proposals which the Queensland Premier endorses, they would be less attractive to industry and migrants. Industrial development would slow down, and the work-force would gradually decline as job opportunities dwindled.

The smaller States would be caught in a vicious circle. They would have to impose ever higher per capita taxation as their population decreased in comparison with the more populous States, in which lower tax rates would apply. As the Treasurer's Budget shows, the present Federal-State arrangements provide a fair and most generous distribution of funds to Queensland in the light of present economic circumstances.

In the long term, the decision to start work on the cultural complex in Brisbane, as announced in the Treasurer's Budget, may be seen in the years ahead to have been a good one. It will provide a much-needed facility for the city of Brisbane. But unfortunately other cultural complexes have already been provided in this city. The Treasurer cannot tell me that the S.G.I.O. Theatre is a profitable venture, or that the Twelfth Night Theatre, to which the Government was rather generous, is economically viable. He must therefore proceed very cautiously in the development of the proposed new complex. It is all very well to say, in the interests of doing something good for the city, that the scheme is advantageous to the State. A microscopic study must be made of its operations. I maintain that it was a good proposal when first mooted in 1969. Unfortunately the Government's dithering has added to its capital cost. The delay in implementing the scheme will, in the long term, mean additional millions of dollars in both capital costs and rentals paid on premises until the centre is completed so that valuable art works can be housed in the unfilled rooms of a commercial building owned by the State Government Insurance Office.

I personally have great reservations about the transference of funds obtained from the operations of the Golden Casket to the cultural project. The Treasurer knows only too well that for a long time Golden Casket revenue has assisted the implementation of many health schemes within this State. He also knows only too well that Medibank does not cover all aspects of health expenditure. For example, the payment of interest and redemption on the borrowings of hospitals boards does not come within the responsibilities of Medibank. Never let it be said that the Labor Party would knock the establishment of a cultural complex—far from it—but there is a clear responsibility on the Government to see that money is used in the best interests of the community and not wasted, which would eventually be to the detriment of cultural development.

It will no doubt be said that the Sydney Opera House was financed by the New South Wales opera lotteries. Those who bought tickets in those lotteries knew their purpose. Subscribers to the Golden Casket have known over the years that its proceeds were directed to the provision of health services for Queenslanders generally. What we do not want is a situation in which there is criticism because the proceeds of the Golden Casket are directed to a facility that will be used by only a minority.

As to the actual construction of the cultural complex, I might say that it is regrettable indeed that the Government, which has consistently supported contract work against day labour, has in the last year, despite its espousing in this Chamber the cause of contract work, contributed to the failure of

many principal contractors engaged on Government work. The Government should have second thoughts about contract work—but no doubt it has many mates who have to be looked after. This is a matter that calls for the closest scrutiny indeed.

It is known to the Committee, of course, that I am engaged in a very minor way in a business activity. After studying the Treasurer's balance sheets, I have come to the conclusion, despite my personal regard for him, that if he ever applied to me for a position I would have to refuse his application. He has a bad memory and he cannot add up. With this Budget as a reference, I could not even consider putting him in charge of the till in the back-room bar. No doubt other members have found in the Budget many other deficiencies that support my remarks. I shall refer to a few of them.

During the election campaign in November last year, the Treasurer emphatically denied that rail freights and fares would rise in the coalition's first Budget if it were re-elected. The media reported the Government's pledge. The Budget shows that those who believed 100 per cent in the Government were 140 per cent deceived.

The media, in good faith, also reported some of the Premier's promises. He said in Mt. Isa, as "The Courier-Mail" reported on 9 November, that the State Government, if re-elected, would form its own grants commission to pour money into finance-starved local authorities. I looked in the Budget just the other day for an indication of the Government's good faith; but it was the same story; it was the three-card trick again. The election was over, and local authorities were forgotten. There was to be no local grants commission to help them.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You're either a dill or you can't read.

Mr. HANSON: A separate grants commission?

Sir Gordon Chalk: Absolutely.

Mr. HANSON: In Blackwater the Premier, possibly thinking aloud, gave credence to reports that the coalition would increase the size of Cabinet by two. "The Courier-Mail" accurately reported his views on 6 November. Subsequent events have shown that the Premier told only half the truth. In fact four new Cabinet Ministers were appointed.

Sir Gordon Chalk: No—two, he said.

Mr. HANSON: Yes, but the result was four. The Budget shows the enormous cost of his half promises.

In his Budget speech last year, the Treasurer told the Assembly of an additional education allocation to lift the approved teacher strength from 16,348 to 18,635. He told the Committee that police strength would be increased by 251 officers to 4,023. But what happened? There was a shortfall of

more than 1,000 teachers, yet the Education Department overspent by almost \$35,000,000. A hopelessly understaffed Police Force was 70 below its approved numerical strength, yet managed to overspend by \$5,800,000. Under his Government's system of priorities the Treasurer could never manage to balance his Budget if classrooms were adequately manned and the streets were sufficiently policed.

It is no good the Treasurer also claiming that State taxes have not been increased for some years. There have been no increases in railway charges for some years. Good accounting requires that revenue be increased to meet increased costs as they occur. Then the ordinary man in the street will not be affected or mystified by the huge and savage imposts that have been placed upon the community.

Mr. Frawley: Rubbish!

Mr. HANSON: If the honourable member for Murrumba approves of the savage imposts of a 40 per cent increase in railway freights and a 50 per cent increase in car registrations, what I have thought of him for a long time is well and truly confirmed.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The member for Murrumba is more adept at kicking old ladies' dogs.

Mr. HANSON: Yes. He also charges for a full tank of petrol when he only half fills the tank.

The priorities of this Government must make people laugh. It will go to any length and to any expense to camouflage its lack of concern for the people. It hides behind an unjustifiably massive public relations effort and seems to believe its own propaganda. For the first time in 18 years the Government has through its Budget given an insight into the extent of its propaganda. Without any doubt, that insight would shock any honest, responsible member of the Legislative Assembly.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. HANSON: It would shock at least the 11 members who come in that category.

What worries me even more is that the figures I have been able to glean tell only part of the story. Figures in the Budget, cunningly concealed as they are, show that the Queensland Government spends more than \$2,000,000 a year (or more than \$5,500 a day) in promoting itself. That figure does not include the costs of normal ministerial and departmental printing and the like. Nor does it include the cost of legitimate promotion such as that by the Government Tourist Bureau. However, it includes the cost of salaries in the State Public Relations Bureau, the salaries of other journalists, some of whom masquerade under the title of "Community Liaison Officer", the cost of the Justice Minister's personal promotion through his departmental advertising, the cost of the Fred. A. Campbell TV commercials and,

last but not least, the "State of the Nation" extravaganza by, for and on behalf of the Premier. Although the Minister for Mines and Energy does not always use the Mining Journal for self-promotion (incidentally, this Government took that publication from the Government Printing Office many years ago and handed it out to private enterprise), I have included its cost for the occasions when he does, and I justify the difference by not including the cost of his open letters to consumers during the recent power crisis.

The Budget shows just where some of the taxpayers' money really goes. Included in it is the curious sum of \$79,000 for the wages and salaries of the staff of two in the advertising section of the Railway Department. I know that that is a mistake on the Treasurer's part. Possibly some of the money has been allocated to giving to a bemused public explanations of why the Railway Department does not have a rationalisation programme, why dieselisation has proved to be only a temporary solution to an upgraded rail system and why electrification is no further advanced than it was when the present Government took office.

For the benefit of the new members in the Chamber, I tell them—and I hope they will never forget it—to be mindful that, while the railways provided more than 29,800 jobs when the present Government assumed office in 1957, it now employs only 22,489. In other words, jobs in the Railway Department have been cut back at a rate of more than 30 a month since this Government assumed office.

I do not want to give the impression that I am here today principally on a witch-hunt or for the purpose of criticising the Treasurer, even though, as I said before, I wouldn't give him a job handling the till in the back-room bar. Although I claim that his ability to balance the till would be coloured by a doubtful quality, nevertheless we have a personal friendship. He will know that I am genuine when I congratulate him on including in the Budget some small form of tax relief for the little businessman. I refer to the raising of exemption level for pay-roll tax. Might I say that that has been pinched from Labor Party policy.

Mr. Frawley: Its policies are a pack of rubbish.

Mr. HANSON: If the honourable member for Murrumba would only look at the Labor Party policy for the last State election, he would see it stated there clearly and concisely. I believe the Treasurer should give some form of acknowledgement for the origin of his very generous concession to the small businessman.

It has been said that the Premier, unlike the Treasurer, is arrogant. Prior to the last election, the electors were warned that if they returned him to power he would consider it to be a personal mandate to do just as

as he liked. We have witnessed that repeatedly in this Chamber. In practice, it is evidenced—and this Budget brings it to light—in a big, expensive personal staff and lots of money for advertising himself and his own political party—not to mention the most expensive feature that is raised time and time again, a lovely air taxi.

The Treasurer's accounts show that the Government as a whole overspent the budgeted \$1,081 million by just less than 4 per cent. However, the Premier's Department overspent by more than 12 per cent. In other words, his attitude was, "To hell with the Treasurer, responsible government, and everyone else. I'll spend when I like, how I like and on whom I like." And the "whom" is usually the Premier himself.

I repeat that the Premier's Department overspent at a rate three times greater than the average for the Government. He did that during the same year as he moved the expensive advertising branch from his department to the Department of Works. If it had not been for that, he would have really been in the red. This is the same person who, day after day, piously, yet very meekly and very innocently, complains through the media about the spending of the Federal Government. As I said before, one should look at one's own shortcomings and failings before criticising others. It is notable that within the Premier's Department the Public Relations Bureau overspent by 17½ per cent. What a shocking state of affairs! It is quite obvious to me and to members of this Assembly generally just who runs whom in this State.

Mr. Frawley: You'll run for cover at the next State election.

Mr. HANSON: If members such as the honourable member for Murrumba and many others who rush constantly to the Premier's assistance when he faces attacks such as this are happy with this state of affairs, they should go to the electors and explain in an honest, dispassionate way the ruthless overspending that has occurred in the Premier's Department generally and the State Public Relations Bureau in particular.

Mr. Frawley: I wouldn't tell them about some of the policies you blokes want. They don't want to hear them any more.

Mr. HANSON: The honourable member for Murrumba should go into the hotels at Redcliffe, Scarborough and other places on the Peninsula, engage in conversation with the ordinary bloke and tell him as his member of Parliament, "This is the state of affairs at Parliament House. This is what the Premier has done. Do you approve?" I have no doubt that those people, if they have a little bit of the old Australian courage, will provide the honourable member with a very ready and quick answer. It will not be the dog that will be kicked. He might get kicked himself.

It is disquieting that Parliament is not given the opportunity to query the spending of the department that the Premier administers. I am led to believe that the Estimates for the Premier's Department will not be debated this year. But that is only a taste of what is to come. We are fast reaching the stage where the Premier will become a law unto himself. History has witnessed such men—the Corsican ogre, the brigand of Berchtesgaden, and Louis XIV of France, with his famous statement, "L'état, c'est moi!"—"I am the State!" The situation in this State is absolutely ridiculous. I say emphatically that any person who believes that he can wilfully stride the political scene and, with a spike on the end of his boot, kick whoever is in front of him is riding for a fall.

We see the Premier indirectly spending the State's funds on the national scene, inflaming the people of Australia—Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria. He has flown in the State's aeroplane to those places, venting his spleen upon a Government that has been democratically elected by the people of the nation. It is something to be regretted. It does not facilitate the planned development of this State. No one can tell me that it does.

On 30 April this year the political reporter of "The Courier-Mail" speculated that a redistribution of State electoral boundaries was almost certain within the life of this Parliament. That reminded me of the much publicised meeting in October last year of the Premier, his National Party president, the Treasurer and his Liberal Party president. Everybody knows what happened on that occasion. It was the greatest barney of all times. It must have been comparable with what one hears as one proceeds along the corridors past the Government caucus meeting on Wednesday afternoons. The rowing that goes on is tantamount to what happened in Tammany Hall years ago, with the honourable member for Windsor, on soft note, his tonsils inflamed, venting his spleen on other members of the coalition, and the honourable member for Murrumba, on top note, giving everything.

Mr. Moore: You know your speech is being recorded. If the Hansard staff were taking it down, I would give you an appropriate answer. You have me over a barrel. It will be your turn in the barrel next week.

Mr. HANSON: I am not worried about lightweights. I love backing the top weight, if possible. That is the handicapper's choice and usually it isn't a bad choice either. The honourable member for Windsor will never be the top weight and well he knows it.

The reports of that meeting in October were that the Premier and the president of the National Party presented the Treasurer with a two-page list of demands as the terms on which they would call an early election.

One of those demands was for a redistribution. If the Premier demands a redistribution on his terms, just as he has demanded the use of the taxpayers' funds on his terms, the taxpayers' plane on his terms, television advertising on his terms—and he refuses to be questioned on his actions because these are his terms—all I can say is God help Queensland!

If there is a redistribution, there will be a gerrymander such as has never been seen before. The Premier is desirous through political manipulation of completely annihilating not only the Labor Party but also his Liberal counterparts as well. Those of us in the Chamber know of the overtures that have been made within the political scene to members of the Liberal Party to join him in an unholy alliance—join him, change their great Liberal philosophy—

Mr. Moore: Nonsense!

Mr. HANSON: I know that no approach has been made to the honourable member for Windsor. Everyone in the Chamber knows the reason. I know that he is very upset that he has never been asked. I hope the Premier extends an invitation to him, because I am certain that the electors of Windsor will treat him in a predictable fashion next election day if he contemplates such a move.

Let him not deny that a considerable number of Liberal Party members have been interrogated and told that the fruit is ripe for the picking. Many of them have been offered Cabinet posts. I remind some National Party members that envious eyes are upon their positions and that, if the move starts, they are in a very shaky situation indeed. They will be ruled right out of the Cabinet. Some of them are already waking up to that fact. Unfortunately for them, if the Premier decides upon a particular course—after all, he believes that he is the political deity of the times—nothing will stop him.

Dr. Scott-Young: When are you going to talk about the Budget?

Mr. HANSON: The honourable member for Townsville suggests that I am not speaking on the Budget. If he had been in the Chamber all the time I have been speaking, he would realise that I have adequately dealt with it. I have posed questions about unexplained expenditure. I know that the Treasurer is outside conferring with officials, trying to add up his sums. He accuses me of gaining information in certain quarters—quarters to which I have never referred these matters, gentlemen whom I have not seen for many months. If at any time the honourable member for Townsville desires to engage me in a debate on the Budget—a debate on the unexplained expenditures, the over-spending in the Premier's Department and the State Public Relations Bureau and the savage imposts that have been placed upon the State's rural areas by a 40 per cent

increase in freight rates and the 50 per cent increase in motor registration fees—I invite him to do so. If he is in favour of those matters, he should get back to the surgery. I have no doubt that he is a very good surgeon indeed. I would trust him with the knife but for the fact that I do not want to put the State to the expense of a by-election!

I believe that in my speech I have fully covered the many pertinent matters that are exercising the minds of members of the Opposition. We believe that in the Treasurer's presentation of the Financial Statement over the years, he has piously looked to heaven, at the same time biting his fingernails and talking about whether he would be able to balance, whether he would have a deficit or whether he would have a surplus. It is clearly evident that on this occasion in conjunction with the Premier he has gingered up every member of the coalition because he thinks a Federal election is in the offing. It might be, too—and the result might surprise members of the Government.

Dr. Scott-Young interjected.

Mr. HANSON: I remind the honourable member for Townsville that Government members are the people who have not addressed themselves to the Budget. He would be one of them. All their remarks have been directed towards venting spleen and venom on a democratically elected Government in Canberra.

Government members have criticised the coal levy of \$6 a tonne. Mr. Fraser and Mr. Anthony are on record as clearly stating that if they assume the Treasury bench in Canberra, the \$6 a tonne will stay.

An Opposition Member: They support it.

Mr. HANSON: The National Party members do support the levy, yes. The only reason the Treasurer is complaining is that he had to spend many a sleepless night readjusting his own Budget. Anyone who walked up George Street was aware of the huge bill that was spent in the Treasury Department burning the candles trying to readjust figures, because he intended to make a savage bite on the coal companies of the State. Let us hear him deny it.

Rex Connor went to Japan a few months ago for consultations with businessmen there. He was responsible for gaining a very justifiable and generous increase for the coal companies of the State—something they had never enjoyed before. Whereas formerly the companies had to go cap in hand unilaterally to make contracts with Japanese companies, the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy, since assuming office, has secured for all companies increases, on a graduated scale according to the quality of the coal, which he maintains are justified by world standards.

Criticism of Mr. Connor is misguided. I know a person connected with one of the companies. I have been associated with him for a long period. He said to me, "The Connor guide-lines are tough, but at least you know where you're going. At least you know that you're getting some honesty and some direction." Unfortunately, that is something that is not inherent in this Government, as was evidenced 18 months or two years ago in the Mining Royalties Act, when contracts entered into by the Government were broken. The Government came in for a considerable amount of odium from the people in this State and others who were anxious to invest money in Queensland and to promote mining enterprises.

Mr. Hewitt, I have put a case on behalf of my constituents in this Budget debate. I hope some cognisance will be taken of the points I have put up and that the coalition in future will mend its ways and give the people of this State some form of relief and some form of sensible administration.

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

Mr. LANE (Merthyr) (2.15 p.m.): I wish to make a few comments on the Budget introduced a short time ago by our very capable Treasurer. I shall attempt to be brief so that all other members of the enlarged Government parties will have an opportunity to comment on this, their first Budget.

Mr. Frawley: That is very noble of you.

Mr. LANE: I thank the honourable member. I am sure that newly elected members will have many bright ideas that they wish to advance in this debate which, in our Parliament, is traditionally an open one in respect of the subjects that may be discussed.

In commencing my contribution, I pay tribute to the Treasurer and his officers on bringing down a Budget which, in all the circumstances of our economic climate, is surely quite reasonable. Some of the increased charges might cause a little heartache here and there, but I do not think any of them will force anybody into bankruptcy. It is reasonable that rail fares and freights should be increased this year because a number of years have passed since they were last raised. In the present economic climate we should aim at trying to make the railway system pay its way. Earlier this century it was imperative that people in the outback and other remote areas should be given the advantage of cheap rail freights and fares, but I think we can now put some of that philosophy behind us and try to recoup an equitable contribution towards the upkeep of our railway system.

I was not displeased at the fairly reasonable increase in rail charges. On the other hand, I am a little concerned about the increases in conveyancing duty, stamp duty and Titles Office fees. Many young people are struggling to buy a block of land, build a home and start a family. In such circumstances I wonder if the increases in fees are

really essential and whether they may not react in some way against the ambitions of young couples who are trying to settle down in their own homes. It is a pity that increases had to be imposed in this area.

I commend the Treasurer and his adviser on these matters, the Minister for Justice, on increasing the liquor licence fees for spirit merchants from 6 per cent to 15 per cent. For some time this Government has been striving to find an answer to this new type of liquor retailing that does not provide anything in the way of real facilities for the community, other than cheaper bottle sales from the back of a shed. Because of the facilities provided by hotels in the way of residential and dining facilities, which they have been expected to provide for generations, hotels are entitled to some advantage over the spirit merchants.

I do not think it is unreasonable that learners' permits and drivers' licences should have attached to them a small fee for the licensing of motor vehicles. The Federal Government seems quite determined to put down the motorist and to do everything it can to disadvantage him, but even so the motorist must be prepared to contribute in a small way toward the revenue of the States. The increased charges for learners' permits and drivers' licences that are included in the Budget are surely not unreasonable.

I know that many of my constituents and associates are very pleased about the pay-roll tax relief given by the Treasurer. The lifting of the exemption rate from \$20,800 to \$41,600 provides great relief to small businesses. A number of people I know will find this very helpful in their struggle to maintain their businesses and to receive a reasonable return from them. It will help them to retain a small but very necessary avenue of employment—one that the country badly needs at the present time.

The Government is to be commended on providing for an additional 500 teacher aides to be recruited this financial year. They will provide very valuable assistance in the State's primary schools. We understand that this addition will bring the total of teacher and library aides in schools to over 3,000.

The pre-school programme is well under way. It is expected that approximately 350 units will be available for use by the end of this financial year. One of the units is in the suburb of New Farm in my electorate and is almost completed. It will provide a much-needed facility in a densely populated area where some of the families are underprivileged and disadvantaged. The pre-school will provide the children of some of those families with a new opportunity to commence school and gain the benefit of the instruction that is so necessary for them in the four to five year age group.

There is some confusion about the Commonwealth's financial involvement in pre-school education. When people ask me just what is happening, I find it very difficult to

explain the position to them. The Commonwealth has been turning pre-school grants on and off like a tap, as it has suited their peculiar political whims or the peculiar mismanagement that is presently so apparent in Canberra. However, the State has pushed forward with the programme and, as I indicated, within a matter of weeks there will be evidence of the State's involvement in my electorate with the opening of a new one-unit pre-school in New Farm.

At the other end of my electorate, the State Government has expended quite considerable funds on the purchase of a block of land in Ascot for the construction of a large pre-school facility. Almost \$200,000 has been expended just for the purchase of the land. That shows the extent of the determination of the Government to fulfil its promise to provide one year of pre-school education to all children in the State wherever they may be.

In the area of State aid to non-State schools, the increased grant from \$81 to \$111 per annum for each primary school child is certainly very much welcomed, as is the increase from \$132 to \$177 per annum for non-State secondary school students.

I am glad to be able to compliment the Government on once again acknowledging the principle that the State is responsible for the education of all school students, whether they be educated in State schools or in non-State schools of their choice. An additional \$2,250,000 will be expended in this way. I am sure that it will be welcomed and acclaimed widely in the circles in which it is received. The most important point is that the Government is preserving the principle that at this level of Government anyway the State is responsible for the education of all children and recognises their right to a Christian education if that is the choice of their parents.

I should like to deal with cultural grants more extensively than some other subjects. I am pleased that in the field of cultural activities there is to be quite a large increase of \$450,000 in the Vote for the coming year. In 1973-74 the figure for cultural organisations was a mere \$750,000. The total grant reached \$1,120,000 last year and the Treasurer has said that he intends to increase it to \$1,575,000 in the coming year. This does not include the salaries of the staff of the Director of Cultural Activities.

The construction of the large cultural complex at South Brisbane is welcomed. In undertaking the project, which at this stage is estimated to cost \$45,000,000, the Government and the Treasurer in particular have given concrete evidence of the extent of their vision. The complex will incorporate an art gallery, museum, public library and performing arts centre.

For some time this State has been making grants to cultural organisations. I should like to bring into the discussion today the

method by which grants are made. The system that currently prevails is that organisations are expected to apply to the Director of Cultural Activities for a grant. This must be done prior to a given date each year. Groups are expected to anticipate their activities for the ensuing 12 months. In this regard, I suggest that the Government should allow greater flexibility, particularly for smaller cultural groups that perhaps are not quite so well organised that they can anticipate 12 or 15 months ahead their activities for the year. The present system caters for the large and more professionally managed groups and cultural organisations and sometimes pushes aside the small but worthy organisations that are just as deserving.

One small organisation that I have in mind is the Italian choir known as the Giuseppe Verdi Choral Society, with which I am associated. It makes a real contribution to music in this State and receives wide acclaim in many quarters. It has been in existence for over 16 years and during the past four years has performed at some very large public concerts. In 1971 the repertoire of the Verdi society was consolidated. From that time on, under the leadership of the maestro, Mr. Oleg Lapa, who happens to be one of the senior library staff in this Parliament, it has gone from strength to strength.

Those who have come in contact with the Giuseppe Verdi Choral Society would appreciate its efforts. In 1972 its members participated in numerous charity concerts, Warana Festival concerts, educational societies, Dante Aleghieri Society, the German Society and the like. In 1973 they stepped up their activities even more and in August of that year gave a major concert at the S.G.I.O. Theatre. Very favourable reviews were received for that concert. They were acclaimed by the critics in the daily newspapers, yet they were required on that occasion to pay approximately \$500 for theatre hire. They have therefore had to so organise that they will make a substantial profit. On the one hand, they have to raise funds by running functions and the like and, on the other hand, they have to practise in order to be able to perform these concerts. They were left with a fairly large debt following the S.G.I.O. concert. Dr. Lovelock, who is one of the music critics for "The Courier-Mail", attended it and commented on the performance in this way—

"The programme was well varied and well arranged with something for all tastes, from Bach and Mozart to Negro spirituals and present-day 'Musicals'. As far as my knowledge goes, this is the first big public concert undertaken by the choir; they should be encouraged to continue."

I do what little I can to encourage them to continue. Again in 1974 this choir engaged in a number of charity and educational activities. In July 1974 they performed in conjunction with the Youth Orchestra at The Mayne Hall of the Queensland University.

The hiring of orchestral music and payment for the youth orchestra totalled \$600, with the hall hire costing \$300. This concert, too, was a great success and once again was acclaimed by our local critics. A newspaper critic said of that concert—

"So that the concert of the Giuseppe Verdi Choral Society at Mayne Hall on Saturday night, with more than 30 Italian tenors, baritones and basses enthusiastically doing their own thing, was an enjoyable experience. But the choir strikes a reliable norm of well-nourished tone, with excellent balance, unanimity and pitch. At their best they are very good indeed."

Those are the comments of independent critics on these performances. The choir were again required to pay for the hall on this occasion. Already this year they have undertaken a major tour of North Queensland, where they performed in Ingham, Mareeba and Innisfail in conjunction with the Innisfail Conservatorium of Music. On this tour they expended about \$3,000, without taking into account the contribution made by the Italian airline Alitalia towards their expenses. Some money has been raised from private enterprise, but none has yet been received from any Government source and it is this very factor which brings me to criticism of the management of the Directorate of Cultural Activities set up by this Government. I have spoken to the Director of Cultural Activities, Mr. Creedy, on several occasions about the activities of this choir and asked him how they could be encouraged by the Government to press on with their training and improve their repertoire. I emphasise that the choir has 30 male singers, 28 of whom are Italian migrants from all walks of life—doctors, dentists, labourers and bricklayers—and all of whom are good singers of serious music. Their accompanist is Mrs. Doris Johnson, M.B.E., who received recognition in the Queen's honours list at the beginning of this year. Their excellent conductor is Mr. Oleg Lappa.

Mr. Casey: Do you attend their concerts yourself?

Mr. LANE: I attend all their performances and many of their social fund-raising functions. Their performances give great pleasure even to a person like me with no formal musical education.

I was very pleased to be accompanied to the choir's performance in Ingham by the present temporary chairman, the honourable member for Hinchinbrook.

As I said, I have been in touch with the Director of Cultural Activities on many occasions and asked him how the choir could be assisted. The first time I spoke to him, some 12 or 18 months ago, I received what could only be described as a blunt, rude, bad-mannered answer to my queries. In the course of that conversation he seemed to make a special point of being rude. I immediately gained the impression that he

was an imported culture snob, and I am not sure that he has improved much since. Mr. Creedy informed me that the choir would have to make an application about 15 months in advance and put themselves in the queue. I asked him whether there were any facilities for giving assistance to groups such as the choir on a less formal basis during the course of a financial year. He informed me that if they did not have enough good management and gumption to devise their programme 15 or 18 months ahead and know exactly where they were going, he would not take any responsibility for them. He told me that he was given no flexibility by the Government in making grants to cultural organisations. He said that the Government was to blame for his taking the attitude that he could not assist such choirs.

Mr. Frawley: Who is this—not Creedy?

Mr. LANE: Yes.

Mr. Frawley: He is as useless as a \$2 bull. He has done the same to me.

Mr. LANE: He is probably the worst-mannered public servant I have met, if that is any satisfaction to him.

I went back to the choir and asked whether the officers would interview Mr. Creedy to see if he could help them, in spite of the fact that I was not pleased with his attitude when I approached him. Some of the officers of the choir interviewed Mr. Creedy, and they came to see me looking quite terrified after the treatment he had given them. He spoke down to them as if they were a weird form of inferior animal; he had no patience with them; he was as abrupt and rude to them as he had been to me, and he gave them absolutely no encouragement.

I find quite perplexing some of the rave notices Mr. Creedy has had written about him in the daily Press. I have seen a couple that he has written himself, which, of course, have heaped fairly heavy praise on him. He must have some of the journalists in the daily Press in his pocket, if one can judge from reports they have written about how he assists various organisations. That certainly has not been evident in my dealings with him.

The choir, discouraged by Mr. Creedy's attitude to their approach, again asked me how they could be assisted in meeting the debts they expected to incur in performing at major public concerts. I then obtained some forms from Mr. Creedy's office. I managed to get in touch with the office while he was absent, and I received reasonable courtesy from a member of his staff. It was not until some weeks later, when the officers of the choir found the forms confusing and asked me to assist in filling them in, that I again contacted Mr. Creedy's office. I was told quite bluntly that I should not have spoken to a member of his staff in his absence because no-one else in his office had

authority to give information to members of Parliament, not even simple information such as guide-lines on how organisations should make their applications. Once again in a polite way I asked Mr. Creedy if he could find some time to spare to assist this worthy Italian choir, whereupon he told me he would only deal with it once he received an application in writing, and thus he had no intention of filling out the application form with members of the choir. I doubt whether that is the sort of man we need to encourage the many and varied cultural organisations in this State.

Mr. Frawley: No, we don't. We should give him the big "A".

Mr. LANE: I think the Government could well examine whether he is fulfilling the role for which he was appointed. The Minister for Education could well take a look at this at some future date. Nevertheless I feel that some constraints should be placed on this director. I do not think it unreasonable to require the Director of Cultural Activities to make a full report to Parliament annually rather than append a few brief sentences or paragraphs to a back page of the report of the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities. I mean a full report on his activities, including a report of the seven tours he has made of the State—God knows what for!—the numerous interstate conferences he attends to hob-nob with his fellow culture-snob friends in the South, and a report on what he really does produce and what initiative he takes in encouraging culture in this State.

The Minister might well consider whether the present director should be kept on at all. There should be greater flexibility in respect of the receipt of applications and the allocation of funds so that they do not have to be made months before the commencement of the financial year for a programme planned 15 or 18 months ahead. Some of the small organisations are just not capable of doing that sort of planning. That does not lessen their status as an organisation or render them less worthy of receiving a cultural grant. I do not admire the attitude of the Director of Cultural Activities in blaming the Government for everything when he makes excuses or attempts to fob people off. His blaming his Minister and the Treasurer for the lack of flexibility in respect of cultural grants is not a good approach. If he says that to me, no doubt he says it to other people.

Mr. Frawley: He goes to the opera.

Mr. LANE: Does he?

Mr. Frawley: Yes. He takes the honourable member for Port Curtis with him.

Mr. LANE: I do not know what he does with his time. The Government might well consider expanding the directorate of cultural activities. It is to be hoped that when the complex is set up at South Brisbane, Mr.

Creedy will not have a large role in that establishment or any real say in it. A directorate of cultural activities should be made up of officers who are prepared to take initiative, men who are prepared to get off their backside and get out of their office and into the homes of people who seek assistance in filling in the necessary forms of application for grants. They should help them to set their organisations on the road. We need men who do not have prejudices against certain organisations.

Mr. Hanson: He is a racist.

Mr. LANE: I do not know whether he is. He may well be. Perhaps the Minister should consider appointing another officer—an ethnic officer—to encourage culture among migrant groups. Migrants to this State bring with them their own culture, much of which has tended to strengthen our own. Their organisations should be encouraged by someone who understands their particular problems. I suggest that an ethnic officer for ethnic cultural activities might well be appointed.

Mr. Bird: Send them to see me.

Mr. LANE: I thank the Minister. I intend to do that.

Sir Gordon Chalk: If you can't do any good with the Minister for Education, come and see the Treasurer.

Mr. LANE: I now have two wonderful offers, one from the Minister for Education, the other from the Treasurer—both of whom are extremely polite and well-mannered gentlemen when dealing with people. The same cannot be said for the Director of Cultural Activities. However, I have spent enough time on him.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Row): Order! I would like to cultivate a little more silence in the Chamber.

Mr. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Row. I shall not take up much more of the Committee's time; I am sure many of the newer members would like to make contributions to this debate.

I shall conclude by complimenting the Treasurer on his allocation of additional funds to the Police Department for the provision of foot patrols in the metropolitan area. He has labelled the funds to be used for that purpose, and just as people who contribute money for specific purposes are reluctant to see it absorbed into Consolidated Revenue and lost, I am sure that he would not want these funds to be channelled into anything other than the provision of additional foot police. Many metropolitan members will be watching this situation in the near future to see that the money is put to its intended use. This will enable the number of men on the beat to be increased and should help to reduce the crime rate.

Mr. CASEY (Mackay) (2.47 p.m.): Over the years the Treasurer has adopted the practice of giving each of his Budgets a title. This year he has followed his usual practice, and has labelled this one a "Press Ahead" Budget; but he has omitted from that title the very significant word, "Brisbane". The Budget is nothing more than a "Press Ahead Brisbane" Budget. I have studied it carefully together with the Estimates and as far as I can see, most of the advantages flowing from it accrue to the people of Brisbane and South-east Queensland, whereas most of the disadvantages throw a heavier burden on people in the rest of the State.

The worst feature of the Budget is the huge increase in rail freights, which certainly will not have any great effect on people in Brisbane and the south-eastern corner of the State.

On the face of it, the proposed reduction in road transport permit fees appears to be a good move. However, I suggest that country people will suffer from the reduction in that money that would otherwise have been collected by the Main Roads Department for the maintenance of Queensland country roads will not now be available to it. Most of our country roads are death traps. This contention is supported by an answer given by the Minister for Police in reply to a recent question. The Minister's answer clearly showed that the Queensland country road toll is four or five times that of the metropolitan area. In spite of this the Main Roads Department's Vote this year is \$25,000,000, a sum equal to its expenditure in 1974-75. If we take into consideration the 30 per cent escalation in costs that has been referred to, we can see that by the end of this financial year Queensland's main roads will have deteriorated by 30 per cent from their present condition. And God knows our roads throughout Queensland are already in a shocking condition! It is as simple as that; the finance spent on road maintenance and repairs will, in effect, be reduced by 30 per cent.

My label of the "Press-ahead Brisbane" Budget is further justified by Cabinet's refusal to allow the Australian National Line to trade intrastate in Queensland. As I shall show a little later this will have a far-reaching effect simply because in these days of containerisation and the modern handling of equipment it is becoming far more attractive—and it will be even more so when rail freights are increased—for merchants in North Queensland and western areas to purchase their requirements directly from Sydney and Melbourne manufacturers than to buy them in Queensland. It is time the Government looked closely at its decentralisation policies. Until now it has been sliding along thankfully on the facilities that existed when it took over.

Four main advantages accrue to the Government from decentralisation in a State like Queensland. The first is the relief of

economic and social hardships in areas that have problems or are distressed. Many areas of the State are so affected. Secondly, a more balanced economy is to be achieved by taking full advantage of the variety of natural resources in various regions by using them to the best purpose in the areas in which they are located. The third is the relief of congestion in the metropolitan and major suburban areas. The congestion in Queensland today is very costly to the Government. It costs a great deal more to provide services in congested areas than it did five years ago. The fourth advantage is the maximisation of the future growth of the whole State rather than only certain parts of it.

An examination of the development problems of North, Central and Western Queensland discloses several very real problems that you, Mr. Row, as a Northerner, should appreciate. Firstly, areas remote from the metropolitan region have an inadequate infrastructure. Many parts of the State suffer from an inhospitable climate compared with that enjoyed by our southern friends and colleagues. They are also faced with high costs, unfair freight rates and poor services. Many social problems arise in isolated communities. Indeed, as was drawn to our attention the other day, our educational facilities are lower because usually our teachers are young and are moved quickly from place to place. According to the survey by the Queensland Teachers' Union (which knows its members very well), the best-trained teachers are located in the metropolitan area.

All these problems can be overcome by the Government. Governments can even overcome climatic problems. In the United States of America cities have been built in the heart of deserts. Many of these areas have become highly industrialised simply because people have been attracted to them.

The position in Queensland is disclosed by the Government's glossy publication "Development Expenditure in Queensland" compiled by the Premier's Department in an attempt to indicate how much the Government is doing in the State. It is the strongest condemnation of the Government's centralist policy. I extracted some figures from it. I do not want to weary the Committee, but I point out that in number development proposals for North Queensland in the public sector equal 28 per cent, in Central Queensland 15 per cent and in southern Queensland and the Brisbane metropolitan area 57 per cent. The value of the proposals in North Queensland is equal to 16 per cent, in Central Queensland 18 per cent and in southern Queensland 66 per cent.

The position is more anomalous in the private sector of development. Only 13 per cent of the private proposals to be commenced in Queensland in the next few years are to be in North Queensland, six per cent in Central Queensland and 81 per cent in South Queensland. That is a shocking state of affairs. However, the position

becomes worse if the three biggest projects are excluded from the areas I have mentioned. (I will refer to those three projects in a moment.)

The value of proposed public projects for North Queensland, after the top three have been excluded from each area, accounts for 19 per cent of the State's total, for Central Queensland a lousy 6 per cent, and for South Queensland, including Brisbane, 75 per cent. The situation is much worse in the private sector, too, after the exclusion of the top three projects—with only 9 per cent in North Queensland, 5 per cent in Central Queensland and 86 per cent in South Queensland, including the metropolitan area.

The top three proposed public projects for North Queensland include the Duchess railway. Although that has been classified as "public", I understand that it is being paid for by the company involved as part of the structural development required of it, in an agreement similar to the Goonyella project and others. In that event I hardly think it could properly be called a public project. Expenditure in the Mt. Isa water supply, based on the Julius Dam, is the second project in North Queensland that is said to be public. Much of the finance for that has been contributed by MIM Holdings Ltd. and the Commonwealth Government. The third project listed is the beef roads, which is being financed entirely from funds provided by the Commonwealth. Those are the three top projects in North Queensland that the Government lays claim to.

In the private sector, the top three are the B.H.P. South development of its phosphate deposit, sugar mill expansion and expansion by MIM Holdings. Without those projects, the over-all percentage is considerably reduced.

I could give lengthy details on this matter, but the simple fact is that a careful and close perusal of the development expenditure in Queensland as listed in the Government's publication shows quite clearly that the encouragement for development expenditure in Queensland is concentrated on South Queensland and the metropolitan area—virtually 80 per cent in both the public and the private sectors, yet 55 per cent of the population lives outside the Brisbane statistical area, which includes Brisbane and its surrounding area. Does that indicate a fair allocation for development expenditure in the public sector and encouragement to the private sector in other areas throughout the length and breadth of the State? Certainly not! Is it any wonder there is a population drift from the country!

I could quote figures back to 1901, the time of Federation. Only 10.8 per cent of Queensland's population lived in Brisbane then, whereas today almost 45 per cent do. A further increase occurred between the last census and the previous one taken, proving that it is a continuing drift. That is evidenced also by a continuing decline in the percentage

of our population living in rural areas. In 1971, when the last census was taken, only 20 per cent of Queenslanders lived in a rural environment, as against 65 per cent at Federation. Certainly, there was a build-up in our provincial city areas, which in 1971 accounted for 26.99 per cent of the State's population—although only a small increase occurred between the 1971 census and the previous one. By far the biggest increase has been registered in the southern zone.

What extra effort has the Government really made in the encouragement of decentralisation? What real effort is shown in the Estimates tabled by the Treasurer? I have been through them from cover to cover looking for evidence of direct encouragement to decentralisation. Reports published by the Governments in New South Wales and Victoria reveal that millions of dollars are spent each and every year in the encouragement of decentralisation in the population and industry in those States. In Queensland, the great scheme that the Government says proudly that it has sponsored to subsidise rail freights for export industries located more than 25 miles from a port area cost a lousy \$23,000 in 1974-75 and the estimate for 1975-76 is only \$25,000. Does this seem to be a huge contribution by the Government to help in the decentralisation of industry in Queensland? Certainly not!

The Budget includes a subsidy for inland fish supply service. Nobody would deny the people of Western Queensland the right or opportunity to have a feed of good fish, particularly when the fish comes from such areas as Mackay and Cairns, which supply some of the best fish available anywhere in Australia or, for that matter, in the world. Last year \$1,500 was spent on this service.

It seems good to see that we have a Department of Urban and Regional Affairs. With great expectation I searched through the Estimates to find the provision made for that department. What a farce! The amount is absolutely nil. The Vote is purely for the Department of Survey and the Department of Valuation and has nothing whatever to do with regional affairs. Nothing is set aside separately and specifically to encourage regional growth in Queensland. It is simply a farce.

For the first time \$275,000 is provided this year to subsidise western power and fuel costs. This is commendable. It is right that because of their isolation the western areas should receive a subsidy on the cost of power and energy. Again only a very small figure is provided, considering the so-called special effort made in this year's Budget covering estimated expenditure of \$2,840 million. Is it any wonder that I call it a "Press Ahead Brisbane" Budget.

Let me outline the special provisions for Brisbane. The Treasurer has included \$269,000 to administer the Metropolitan Transport Project Board. That is almost as much as the value of the western subsidy.

Last year the Budget set aside \$3,000,000 for the Urban Public Transport Fund and this year the figure is \$16,050,000, \$13,500,000 of which will be spent on railway works alone. All of this information is contained in the tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement.

The Budget sets aside \$900,000 just to subsidise the Brisbane City Council bus scheme.

Sir Gordon Chalk: What about the sugar industry?

Mr. CASEY: I will come to the sugar industry in a moment. The Treasurer has been bleeding it for years and years. He bled it more when he was Minister for Transport. He helped to force every sugar mill in Queensland to stop carting sugar-cane by rail. He drained the very life-blood from it when it faced serious economic problems. Through his iniquitous freight rates when he was Minister for Transport, he forced almost every sugar mill in Queensland to stop the haulage of cane by rail and turn to road haulage. This made our North Queensland roads unsafe. He should hang his head in shame. But still he talks about the advantages that as Treasurer he has given to the sugar industry.

He well knows that the sugar industry is the only primary industry in this State that has never received a subsidy or special support from this Government. When the industry was facing real troubles several years ago, all the Government was prepared to do was go along to the Commonwealth Government and ask it to assist the industry with loan moneys. As you would well know, Mr. Row, being a cane grower, this is the last year of repayment of those loan moneys. The sugar industry has worked its way out of any trouble that it was in. Owing to Labor legislation introduced in this Parliament 50 and 60 years ago, the sugar industry is strong and viable and today it is the pride of our primary industries.

It is a pity most of the other primary industries in Australia did not take a leaf out of the sugar industry's book. If they had, they would certainly not be in their present trouble and difficulty. The meat industry would not be subject to the pressures it is experiencing from the big overseas combines that today are controlling the meat markets in this nation and throughout the world. The wool industry would not have got into difficulties in the 1960's and 1970's if it had instituted an equitable pricing and distribution scheme along the lines of the scheme the sugar industry has had for so long. The Treasurer need not start quoting the sugar industry to me. I have said that unfair rail freights were one of the biggest deterrents to the establishment of northern industry. Let us deal with railway operations in the last 10 years, and I will do this by going through the Treasurer's own tables. I will give him back his own figures. In the past 10 years, on an over-all

basis, the North Queensland Division of the Railway Department has made an operating profit of over \$96,000,000. During the same period the Central Queensland and Mackay railway system has made an over-all operating profit of \$98,000,000 while the south-eastern system has suffered an over-all loss of \$15,000,000. I know the first thing the Treasurer is going to say is, "Well, we had all the establishment costs down here in the south-east corner."

To be fair to the Treasurer I must say that his tables do show these establishment figures separately. Although we might criticise each other, I think he will agree that I am not an unfair person. I have taken a look at the general establishment costs over this 10-year period, and they total \$215,000,000. This is an average of \$21,000,000 a year, which represents about 16½ per cent of the average over-all cost of operating the railways in this period. So therefore it is reasonable to say that we can use this 16½ per cent as the total on-cost figure within each division. For the 10-year period, if we use that percentage in each division, we can reduce the profit of the North Queensland system to \$57,000,000 and reduce the profit of the Central Queensland system to \$53,000,000, but we increase the loss of the South Queensland Division to \$93,000,000, and this is where the money has gone. Certainly it is the South-east Queensland Division of the Railway Department that runs at a loss. During that entire period the North and Central Queensland systems have not had an operating loss in any year, but in South Queensland there has been a loss every year.

The total loan expenditure of the Railway Department is the highest in the State, as is the borrowing figure shown in the Treasurer's Financial Statement. We also find elsewhere in the Consolidated Revenue figure, that the Railway Department has the highest debt-servicing figure that the State has to meet each year. This shows the great impact that the over-all expenditure by the Railway Department has on the State's expenditure.

The Treasurer says that he is going to increase rail fares and freights by an average of 40 per cent. This means that in some areas the increase will be greater than in others, and some areas will cop a darn sight more than 40 per cent, if my understanding of what the Treasurer said the other day is correct. If this is to be the case, then the bigger increases should be in the unprofitable areas in the South-east Queensland system, and I urge the Treasurer to ensure that this is so when he introduces the new railway freight tables. Honourable members can bet their boots, however, that the mining and sugar industries and their dependent areas will be the ones which cop it in the neck. They will be the ones which feel the weight of the Treasurer's heel once more.

Let us have a look at some of the differences in costs which people in those areas already face. These are very simple ones.

Take clothing, and everyday necessities. Recently my attention was drawn to advertisements in a North Queensland newspaper and a Sydney mail-order catalogue for exactly the same articles of clothing as shown in photographs. For a woman's printed A-line shift, the cost in Sydney was \$6 and in North Queensland \$11.90—almost double. A pair of boy's denim work shorts cost \$2.75 in Sydney and \$4.50 in North Queensland—again almost double. Can you tell me, Mr. Row, how that is equitable to the people of North Queensland? There is something wrong somewhere. Denim jeans cost \$4.99 in Sydney and \$9.50 in North Queensland. The position is worse still with clothing for small children. The price of a boy's knit bodyshirt was \$2.75 in Sydney; yet in North Queensland it was \$7.30 for an exactly similar article.

I remind honourable members that I am speaking about prices in the coastal area of North Queensland. When one goes out to the areas represented by the honourable member for Mt. Isa and the honourable member for Flinders and other western areas where additional freight costs have to be met, the situation worsens. An intolerable burden is placed on people living there.

Turning to food, I will take beef first. One hears a great deal about the problems in the beef industry, but beef is considered to be cheap at present. Recently a national chain store advertised on the same day sides of mutton at 19c a lb. in Brisbane and 28c a lb. in Mackay—a difference of 9c a lb.—and 29c a lb. in Cairns. I will take lamb next. If anyone can tell me the difference between the freight structure for a side of mutton and the freight structure for a side of lamb, I will eat the lamb's tail. The price of lamb was 35c a lb. in Brisbane, 42c a lb. in Rockhampton, and 49c a lb. in Mackay and Townsville. The price of T-bone steak was 69c a lb. in Brisbane, while the price varied in country areas to as high as 89c a lb. in Cairns. What a difference!

Of course, honourable members are all aware that rackets are being worked by every wholesaler who can pull strings in the meat industry in this State, usually to the detriment of butchers in local areas.

Recently a man in Mackay received a consignment of goods from Japan. The freight on the goods from Japan to Brisbane was \$16 and that from Brisbane to Mackay \$35. It cost him more than twice as much to bring the goods from Brisbane to Mackay as it did to bring them from Tokyo to Brisbane. I suppose the reason for the high freight between Brisbane and Mackay was that the contractor concerned was not in on the freight contract racket, which also is being worked to the detriment of industries in North Queensland.

Rail freight rates are loaded in favour of Brisbane manufacturers, and Queenslanders no longer see warehouses in the northern

and western parts of the State. That again is to the detriment of the people living in those areas, particularly during the long wet season when stocks are depleted considerably and people have to go without the essentials of life for long periods because they cannot be brought through from Brisbane. In fact, Brisbane has become the only distributing centre for manufactured goods in the State of Queensland. Because of that, the northern and western areas of the State receive what Brisbane does not want or whatever is left after Brisbane's needs have been supplied.

Let me look a little further, Mr. Dean, and see what else is provided in the Budget for Brisbane. One finds that the first \$1,000,000 of \$100,000,000 is to be spent on the development of the new port of Brisbane. In my opinion that \$100,000,000 will create another white elephant like Port Alma, but in this instance it will be on the mud flats of Fishermen Islands in Moreton Bay. Surely the Treasurer does not want to be remembered as the man who implemented a project that will plague future Treasurers as the financial problems of Port Alma have plagued him for so many years.

Brisbane will still be a river port, even if the new port is built on the mud flats of Moreton Bay. The decision is tragic, particularly when the State has so many deep-water ports along its coastline. It appears even worse when one realises that 75 per cent of the goods exported through the port of Brisbane originate from areas outside a radius of 150 miles from Brisbane. It would be far better to reorganise the whole transport system of the State on the basis of ports, and I believe it is time that was done. We must have an integrated transport system. We must have a transport system geared for the year 2000 and for the next century. We can no longer rely on the antiquated ways of the last century that we were prepared to accept as we moved into this century. We need an over-all integrated system of road, rail and sea transport to make the best use of the great resources we have. The sites for many deep-water ports are among our greatest resources, particularly when we consider the potential for an export trade from Queensland to the Pacific area and the developing nations.

The Government has kept very quiet about it so far but I will refer to another tragic decision it has made—one that has not been revealed or released. It is looking at the various gradings of all the ports in Queensland. It has virtually made the decision to spend upwards of \$45,000,000 of the profits from last year's sugar crop to upgrade the port of Lucinda. Earlier the Treasurer was talking about the sugar industry. I would remind him that that \$45,000,000 will not be coming out of loan funds but out of the accumulated profits of cane farmers, mill

workers, farm hands and others in this State who have worked hard in the sugar industry to make it our best agricultural industry.

That is where the \$45,000,000 is coming from. The Treasurer does not have to worry about borrowing loan money, and he does not have to argue with the Commonwealth Government or anyone else over it. It is coming direct from the sugar industry. The industry itself is financing that project. Tragically this Government is allowing it to be wrongly financed. It is going to upgrade the port of Lucinda which is less than 80 sea miles from the deep-sea port in Townsville. It is still not too late to reverse that decision. The Treasurer and the Cabinet should have a very close look at the matter again before that money is wasted.

The bonus that the Queensland sugar industry received from high prices last year is going to be spent to the advantage of one company, namely, C.S.R. Ltd. It is the only company that ships sugar through the port of Lucinda. I attacked that company in the Address-in-Reply debate earlier this year. Because of the prolonged wet, problems have been experienced during the present sugar-crushing season, particularly in northern areas. It is the first time we have struck that problem since we have gone over completely to mechanised harvesting. Many northern members will recognise the problem. When the weather is dry enough to crush, the crushing rate at some of the C.S.R. mills is inadequate for the throughput necessary to give a good return to the farmers. Those mills are in that position because the company has not spent money on upgrading crushing rates to meet the expansion in the sugar industry. Some of them are way behind, but we still find that the Government is prepared to help and sponsor that company. In the Address-in-Reply debate I indicated how C.S.R. Ltd. and this Government are complete cohorts. When we see what is happening, we realise that neither is a friend of the farmer.

After I made that statement during the Address-in-Reply debate the general manager of C.S.R. Ltd. flew from Sydney to address a sugar conference at Lennons Hotel in Brisbane. He got up on the stage, hung his head in front of all the sugar-growers and admitted that his company had been wrong. He admitted that perhaps it should have been a little more informative and discussed the possibility of the take-over with the growers in the mill areas concerned. He said that the company was very sorry, and perhaps it had been wrong. Like hell it was very sorry! It was glad it did it that way, and it will do it in the same way again if it is given the opportunity by this benevolent Government.

On the subject of ports in this State, there is worse still to come. The Government is considering a secret report which is designed to downgrade certain ports in Queensland. The port of Mackay, which

possesses the world's largest bulk-sugar terminal, is to be downgraded by this Government to the status of a B grade port. The decision has not been made public, but it is on the way, and moves are afoot to have the status of other ports relegated in the same way. Cairns is another port that is being looked at by the Government with a view to downgrading it to B status. This reacts to the detriment not only of present trade through the port but also of future trade prospects, because the port journals are compiled and circulated to shipping companies all over the world. The ports that provide the outlets for Queensland's sugar industry—our greatest primary industry—are to be downgraded by the Government. I wonder whether the Government will downgrade the proposed port at Fisherman Islands when the time comes. I very much doubt it.

Mention has been made today of the so-called State Cultural Complex to be developed at South Brisbane at a cost in excess of \$45,000,000. If yesterday's Press report is any indication, the cost will rise ad infinitum. The construction of this centre is to be financed, I might add, by the Golden Casket. At least when the Golden Casket was financing the mothercraft and hospital funds, people knew where the money was going and that it was being put to good use.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It all went into Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. CASEY: Oh yes; but it helped the Treasurer balance his Budget. Certain specific funds, known as the mothercraft funds, were set up. The Minister for Police knows what I am talking about, because while he occupied the Works and Housing portfolio he administered those funds.

This so-called State Cultural Complex is anything but a State cultural centre. Rather it is a Brisbane cultural centre, and its facilities will be available almost exclusively to the people of Brisbane.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It will be available to 33½ per cent of the people in the State.

Mr. CASEY: The Treasurer talks about 33½ per cent. The people of Brisbane are getting 100 per cent of the development. This centre is to be made available to the people of Brisbane and paid for by the mugs from the bush.

Where are the major road projects in Queensland? Are they in the developing areas that are contributing so much to the finances of the State? Are they in Weipa, Clermont or Blackwater? Certainly not. I could stand on the roof of this building and spit on the major road development projects in Queensland. Right behind Parliament House we have the Brisbane expressway system leading to the freeway.

Recently additional funds were given by the Commonwealth Government to the State for the upgrading of the Bruce Highway

between Sarina and Marlborough on condition that the money would be spent over five years. However, the Main Roads Department made it plain that it would spread the expenditure over a period of 10 years. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads makes a practice of going crook at Charlie Jones. I am glad Charlie Jones stood up to him because Charlie Jones has ensured that within five years this vital link in our coastal highway will be upgraded. Thank goodness he pulled the Main Roads Department into line.

This Government thinks so little of the North that earlier this year when funds were tight—largely the result, I might add, of the huge expenditure incurred before last year's State election—the Main Roads Department locked up all the toilets in the rest areas between Rockhampton and Mackay. Travellers were deprived of those facilities, many of which were located in flood-prone areas. Motor vehicles were delayed for lengthy periods between flooded creeks, and when people wanted to relieve themselves they found the toilets locked. That was done simply because the Main Roads Department was trying to save money. The Government was very lucky that it did not have a bad outbreak of disease on its hands. That would have cost it, through the Health Department, a lot more money than it saved.

Time and time again honourable members representing western electorates have spoken about the lack of doctors in western areas to cater for the health and well-being of their people. Very few specialists in Queensland are to be found outside Brisbane. As I have said on other occasions, people have to come to Brisbane for specialist treatment but before they can get assistance from the Government they have to be virtually paupers. They have to pay their own way to get medical care and attention. Then it is not a tax deduction. I blame only the Commonwealth Government for that. I have written to successive Commonwealth Treasurers—Liberal-National and Labor—drawing their attention to this anomaly, and I have always received the same reply. It seems that the Treasury officials in Canberra dictate to the Commonwealth Treasurer, just as I understood from the honourable member for Windsor and other back-benchers yesterday, that Treasury officers in Queensland apparently dictate to our Treasurer. Thinking that some help in the way of travelling allowance for people in country areas could be obtained through Medibank, I wrote to the appropriate Minister but again I received a rejection in exactly the same terms. This is a very serious matter. Often people put up with complaints and illnesses simply because they cannot afford to spend the money and time until too late, and then they cannot be cured. I have been associated with two families that have been caused great distress in this way.

Another example of the way country areas are treated by the Government is the siting of the centre for the treatment of skin cancer. North Queensland, with the largest white-skinned population of any tropical area in the world does not have the main State treatment centre for skin cancer located in Townsville or Cairns or anywhere else in the North. It is in Brisbane. Certainly help is available for people who have to travel back and forth for treatment, but more than travelling costs are involved—such as accommodation costs in Brisbane for the patients and relatives who have to help look after them. Those who do not have personal experience or contact with people in this predicament seem not to realise the weight of the burden placed on them.

I could go through the Estimates and give further glaring examples concerning all other departments. People come to our offices and homes with their problems, but it is very difficult to help overcome them when they are so far away from the ever-growing tight control in Brisbane. Like all Northerners and Westerners, I am becoming sick and tired of it. I am fed up with copping it for the way the Government treats people in country areas. The Government should not sit back and rest on the laurels it won in December last year. It knows full well that that was an exceptional election, that it was swept back into power with a very big majority because the Federal Government was so much on the nose. The people of the North have had a gutful of the way the Government's policies impose on them time after time. The 40 per cent freight rate increase will be the last straw.

My advice to anyone living more than 100 miles from Brisbane is simply this: "You are being treated like a mug by your own State Government. If you want more-secure employment, better education, and better job opportunities for your children, if you want to enjoy the best of social and cultural activities and cheap living costs, if you want to be looked after by a benevolent Government—move to Brisbane. This National-Liberal Party Government treats all those who live within 100 miles of Brisbane as though they lived in *mañana* land. This is the place to come. Come down here. Come and enjoy it. Don't stay in the North or in the West where you have to put up with the heat and the dust and the flies for six months of the year and the mosquitoes and the wet weather for the other six months".

Mr. McKechnie: Is this a travel talk?

Mr. CASEY: It's no joke. This is the way country people are starting to think and feel about Queensland today. Although they are not greatly rapt in the Whitlam Government, they are sick and tired of hearing this Government blame the Commonwealth Government for all its problems.

Mr. Moore: When are you going to crawl back to the Labor Party? Get up off your knees.

Mr. CASEY: Again, for the benefit of the honourable member for Windsor and others who cannot read very well, let me quote some figures from the Treasurer's Estimates. We keep hearing about the Commonwealth Government. Let us have a look at the tables presented by the Treasurer with his Financial Statement. A comparison should be made between the Commonwealth's general revenue assistance to Queensland this year and the assistance in previous years. The figures should not be taken in isolation. In the period from 1972-73 up to and including the year 1975-76, the grant to Queensland has risen by almost two per cent. In that four-year period there has been a drop in the percentage revenue assistance to every other State except Western Australia, where it has increased by 0.1 per cent. I am taking these figures from the Treasurer's own tables.

What happens with the disbursement of funds? Whether we're getting a fair go I don't know, but somewhere along the line mismanagement is occurring. Something is amiss if we are getting more from the Commonwealth and are told we are getting less—somebody has to be telling lies. The people of Queensland are beginning to ask: "Who is telling the lies? Who is cheating us? Who is leading us up the garden path?"

I have quoted the Treasurer's figures to make my point. There is a definite anomaly. Any honourable member may look up the tables just as I did. They are tables 7 and 8 to be found at page 9. They will educate any honourable member who doubts what I say. Since the era of the "Great White Father" Bob Menzies in Canberra—the years from 1962 to 1966—our share of general revenue assistance from the Commonwealth has increased by almost four per cent. When that percentage increase is considered in terms of Commonwealth revenue, that accounts for a big difference.

I turn now to works and housing loan funds. Despite the fact that there has been a drop this year—and I am as critical of that drop as any other member, because I think Queensland has an urgent need for housing—we are still one of only two States (the other is Tasmania) that have had a higher percentage grant than in 1972. Again, I have taken my figures from the Treasurer's tables. In case the Treasurer disbelieves me and thinks I am quoting incorrectly, and for the benefit of the honourable member for Cooroora (who I think has been commenting behind me), let me say that I am referring to table 22 on page 39.

I believe that this Government has started to lose touch. It is becoming complacent towards the people and is becoming more susceptible each day to pressure from big business here in Brisbane. I blame the Treasurer as much as anyone for that. I believe that he does not travel round the State sufficiently to find things out for himself. He should travel about more. Perhaps I might give him the advice that the Duke of Edinburgh would probably give him.

He should get his finger out and get out and about the State of Queensland a bit more and have a real look at its problems. The Treasurer knows that I admire his ability. I state here now, as I have stated so often before inside and outside the Chamber, that Sir Gordon Chalk has carried this Government on his back for many, many years. In fact he has been carrying it for so long that it is a wonder he is not stooped like an old Chinaman. I believe that he has been allowing the Premier to do all the running round the State instead of getting out and finding out a few facts for himself. Consequently the Premier is floating round about as high as his new pressurised aircraft could take him.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. CASEY: I know that the Treasurer has been out to different places at various times. I have seen him in Mackay during two election campaigns since 1969 and he came up that way for the opening of the Goonyella project. He has been to many other places in Queensland. But he usually goes on occasions when he cannot see the real problems of the area through the dust of flying horses' hooves and cannot scent what is going on for the smell of the horse manure that is lying around.

Queensland is a great State. Brisbane in its south-east corner is only a very small part of it indeed. Unfortunately it has too many lecherous bludgers who are siphoning away the life-blood of the remainder of the State and it is up to the Government to try to remedy that.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (3.37 p.m.): I rise to support the Budget. One of the most forward steps taken by the Treasurer is the abolition of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. Death duties, like the Federal Government, must be removed. I wonder whether enough thought has been given to what would happen in Queensland if all death duties were abolished. I realise that the State would lose \$20,000,000, but it would receive increased pay-roll tax and stamp duty in addition to a saving in costs of administration. If death duties were abolished completely in Queensland, there would be massive investment from southern States. It is from that source that the increase in other avenues of Government revenue would come.

Death duty is a particularly harsh impost. I do not think anybody realises the hardship it has caused. For instance, if a beef producer had died at the height of the boom when his property was more highly valued, his descendants would have to pay more in death duties than the present value of the property. This is just not right. I compliment the Treasurer on going this far in this Budget. I hope that in the very near future he will announce that in the next financial year this duty will be abolished completely.

I should like him to give the people of Queensland some hope that its abolition will not be dragged out over many years.

The increase in allowances to help country children get to school will be appreciated by all country people. I do not plan to outline all matters connected with this subject. The honourable member for Warrego did a good job explaining them. I am a little concerned at the help given to get children to school in Brisbane. Ten schools at one end of my electorate have no septic system. Some children in my electorate cannot get to school. Surely such areas should be given assistance before further help is given to another area in which parents can get their children to schools that are either equipped with septic systems or connected to sewerage mains.

Of particular help will be the 500 scholarships for grade 11 and grade 12 pupils. Many towns with high tops have no grade 11 and grade 12 facilities. These scholarships will give the children in those towns some chance of furthering their education.

Assistance to non-State schools is increased considerably in the Budget. I compliment the Treasurer on this. I should like him to consider next year whether it would be sound economics to give some encouragement to non-State schools to increase their enrolments. Perhaps he could ask the Minister for Education to look at this matter first. Possibly a special scheme could be started to afford further assistance to non-State schools, and so save the Government from having to spend so much money on expanding State school facilities. Surely it is more economic to help people conducting these schools than to do the whole of the job ourselves. I might mention that many independent schools are run by churches of various denominations, and if ever there was an age in which children should attend schools that put emphasis on providing some religious training, it is certainly today.

The pay-roll tax exemptions were well received by small businessmen, and they did not come too soon. The partial lifting of road permit fees should be welcomed by all western people, but again this has not come soon enough. I am pleased that a reduction has been made, and the quicker we can get rid of the rest of the permit fee, the better. But I think people should realise that this will produce some problems. The increase in rail freights will mean more road transport and more trouble with our roads, and the cost of maintaining them will be a very great burden on the State, especially when we are not getting much help from the Federal Government, particularly for the maintenance of rural arterial roads.

An increase in motor-vehicle registration fees was announced just before the Budget. The Government had to get money from somewhere to try to keep the roads in some sort of order. But I point out again, as

I did by means of a recent question, that there are some people who are unduly hurt by this increase in registration fees. Live-stock transport operators who, because of the depressed beef-cattle industry, have to leave their trucks in the shed unused for perhaps a week at a time, are paying a disproportionate share of this increase.

Mr. Moore: You have chased all the A.L.P. men out of the Chamber.

Mr. McKECHNIE: They will be back later on.

Housing received quite a bit of help in the Budget, but I wonder whether perhaps we should have provided a little less for the employment of new teachers and a little more for teacher housing. I have talked to teachers in my electorate, and they say the housing facilities for teachers are just not good enough. This is a problem, especially in country areas. Teachers come to a town and cannot even get rental accommodation without going to a great deal of trouble.

This leads me to another point. I hope that the Minister for Works and Housing will do something about increasing the allocation from his meagre resources for the building of more Housing Commission homes in country areas at the expense of Brisbane and the other coastal cities. Something has to be done to stop the drift to Brisbane and other coastal cities. There are people who wish to stay in country areas. In my electorate I have 60 applications from people who want to stop there but cannot get Housing Commission homes. Surely it is better to build houses out there, thus allowing those who want to stay there to do so, than to increase the population of Brisbane and create more smog in a city which is already overcrowded. The building of pensioner units in country areas should also be increased somewhat. Surely it is better to allow pensioners to stay in the community in which they have lived all their lives than to force them to come to Brisbane.

I would like to give particular thanks to some of the organisations in my electorate that have done something constructive by taking advantage of Government subsidies to build aged people's homes. The severe shortage of funds is hampering efforts to provide improvements to school facilities, especially septic systems, which I have mentioned before. Surely it is more sensible and more hygienic to provide septic systems for country children, even if it costs a lot of money to get water to the schools, than to put carpets on the floors of better-situated schools. Everywhere we look it is the same story—shortage of funds.

One of the areas most badly affected by shortage of funds is local government. With the present depressed state of rural industries, local authorities are having great difficulty in collecting rates owing to them. After all, they cannot get blood out of a stone.

Primary producers are not earning any money, so they cannot be expected to keep paying their rates. Local authorities now have the impossible task of making too little money go too far. They need a percentage of the annual taxation revenue to be made over to them without strings attached. Malcolm Fraser has promised to do that.

Mr. Houston: Your State Government opposes that.

Mr. McKECHNIE: It does not. It is a plank of the new National-Country Party policy in the Federal sphere, and Malcolm Fraser agrees with it and has promised to implement it. What the present Federal Government, or any future Federal Government, must realise is that local authorities are in a better position to assess their needs and how they want to spend money than anybody in Brisbane or in Canberra.

Many debts have been incurred by local authorities in the provision of roads within their boundaries. The State Government has very generously taken over the maintenance of some of these roads, but local authorities are still burdened with the original debt and the debt-servicing charges. I hope that at some time in the future a Government, State or Federal, will give local authorities some relief from that burden.

Recently local authorities have been called upon to pay greatly increased valuation charges for valuations carried out by the Valuer-General's Department. That has been an added burden on local government. I am aware that the State Government has financial difficulties, but they are not as great as those of local government. I look forward to the day when there is a change of Government in Canberra and a new policy is implemented under which local government will receive some sort of a fair deal.

Mr. Houston: It was starved for the 23 years that Liberal-Country Party Governments were in office.

Mr. McKECHNIE: Local government will receive much better treatment when Malcolm Fraser comes to office. I do not deny that Labor set the ball rolling, but it had a reason for doing so. It did not want to help local government; it was simply part of Labor's plan to centralise all power in Canberra and do away with the States. The honourable member should be ashamed of that plan.

Mr. Houston: That isn't so. Why don't you tell the truth?

Mr. McKECHNIE: You support Gough Whitlam—

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

Mr. McKECHNIE: The honourable member for Bulimba knows that Labor plans to do away with State Governments. The

reason why local authorities have received so much help from Labor is that the Labor Government wants to bribe them into helping Whitlam centralise government in Australia.

No doubt one of the bad aspects of the Budget was the increase in rail freights. Everyone in Queensland should be made aware that the State Government was blackmailed into increasing rail freights. The honourable member for Bulimba laughs. The Government lost \$85,000,000 on its railway operations last year. Even with an increase of 40 per cent in its charges, it will lose \$64,000,000 this year. Coming back to the reason why the Government has been blackmailed, I point out that for years the National-Liberal Government of Queensland has kept rail freights down in this State. It has subsidised the transport of goods by having the mining companies pay more than their fair share of the freight bill, and Consolidated Revenue has also contributed its share.

Look what happened in the case of Medibank. Queensland was bribed into accepting Medibank. The Federal Government said, "You will not get \$50,000,000 a year unless you accept Medibank." That was an abuse of section 96 of the Constitution, but it shows the danger that the Government runs with the railways while it leaves a debt of \$85,000,000. There is a chance that the State Government will again be blackmailed to that extent.

What would happen if Queensland handed the railways over to the Federal Government? That Government has said, "The user must pay." It would close all uneconomic lines or, alternatively, increase freights by \$64,000,000. That, of course, would be in addition to the proposed increase of 40 per cent. The 40 per cent increase would be peanuts beside that.

Mr. Doumany: What would the Federal Government do to the coal industry?

Mr. McKECHNIE: It might try to keep some mines going to get a little money for the railways. However, that would be contrary to its doctrine of not allowing overseas companies to develop enterprises in the State. Perhaps it would simply close all the lines.

Dr. Crawford: Have you seen the figures for the South Australian railways?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Not lately.

Dr. Crawford: They are scandalous.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am sure they would be.

As to the 40 per cent increase in rail fares and freights—if there is anybody in my electorate or anywhere else who needs help in the presentation of a just case as to why his particular freight should not be increased, I am ready and willing to do my best to convince the Treasurer that somebody else should bear the brunt.

Mr. Houston: You are fighting a losing battle.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I am not fighting a losing battle. The way the Treasurer is thinking now, I am sure that he will be very sympathetic to certain submissions.

I said that we were blackmailed into entering the Medibank scheme. That is the sort of climate in which the Treasurer has had to frame his Budget. We were blackmailed into increasing rail freights. The Treasurer had to prepare a Budget knowing that he was dealing with a very unsympathetic Federal Government. Look at the way it has carried on! The Federal Government talks about conventions! What about the convention that Australia should be called "the Commonwealth of Australia"? That is how the Constitution refers to it. We are a Commonwealth of States, but the Commonwealth Government is trying to get rid of the States.

Mr. Gibbs: They hung Gough's picture up.

Mr. McKECHNIE: They hung Gough's picture up all over Australia, just like they hang Chairman Mao's picture in China. His picture is going up everywhere. The Commonwealth Government doesn't want us to have "God Save the Queen" as our national anthem. When the A.L.P. came into power in Canberra in 1972, many A.L.P. members found it obnoxious to swear an oath of allegiance on the Bible. What about the abuse of section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution? Federal A.L.P. members talk about convention! These days, unfortunately, money dictates the way countries are run. The Commonwealth Government has used financial blackmail under section 96.

The Premier and the Treasurer have to deal with a Prime Minister who cannot even control his own tongue, let alone the economy of the nation. That shows how much the nation has been degraded. The Treasurer has to deal with a Commonwealth Government composed of many members who call themselves "democratic socialists". That is a funny expression, if ever there was one. If anybody can tell me the real difference between Communism and democratic socialism, I will eat my hat. The one difference is that democratic socialists say that they believe in elections.

The Prime Minister is reported as saying that he has some secret weapon to use if the Senate refuses Supply. It is being freely said about the country that his secret weapon is suspension of the Constitution. Just imagine the reaction of Australians if the Prime Minister suspended the Constitution! That is the Government that the State Treasurer has to deal with. It is a Government that pays for people like Flo Kennedy to come out to Australia to try to subvert our youth and women. It is a Government that is prepared to give part of Australia to a foreign country. If part of Australia wanted to secede, that is its business, and

we should let it go, but the people of the Torres Strait area have said that they do not want to leave Australia, and the Federal Government is trying to force them into leaving.

What about the sex films that are shown in the southern part of Australia? That is an indication of the sort of Government the Treasurer is dealing with. When I was in Melbourne during the parliamentary recess, I went to see one of the so-called sex education films. As my father was the Minister who introduced the legislation setting up the Films Board of Review, I had a particular interest in seeing a film of that type to see whether it should be allowed into Queensland. I am sure that the Queensland Films Board of Review would not allow the film I saw to be screened in this State. In the film a lady who was supposed to be the educator said that, "contrary to what the churches teach, sex is enjoyable". She continued in that theme for about five minutes.

Can honourable members imagine the Commonwealth film censor, in the name of sex education, allowing in a film saying that the churches teach that sex is not enjoyable? Is there any church that teaches that? Of course not! The churches teach us that it is a pleasurable act between married couples, and surely that is the teaching they should give us. The Commonwealth Government is trying to influence the people of Australia into the belief that the churches are teaching differently.

The Prime Minister's special adviser on matters affecting women, Elizabeth Reid, resigned, and the spokeswoman for the Festival of Light, Mrs. Frieda Brown, said she was pleased at the resignation of Ms. Reid because she represented not a cross-section of Australian women but only the radicals. Frieda Brown claimed that Ms. Reid was trying to bring about a revolution.

The Treasurer has had to deal with a Federal Government that encourages inflation. Prior to the last Federal election the Labor Party said, "Inflation is a world-wide problem, so don't blame us for it." Many overseas countries have turned the corner in their fight against inflation, but it certainly has not been reduced greatly in Australia. It is being used as a weapon to destroy the States, to destroy business and to bring about in Australia socialism and Communism. Don't let anyone be misled.

I admit that under pressure from other parts of the world Australia will have some inflation. Most of it has been deliberately encouraged, however, by the policies of the Federal Government. In preparing his Budget the Treasurer has had to contend with inflation that has been induced deliberately by the Federal Government, a Government that is turning black against white, country people against city people and brother against sister.

The Treasurer has had to deal with a Government that is considering the abolition of the statutory 1 per cent of time for

religious broadcasts on radio and television, while at the same time encouraging the screening of dirty films to which I referred a few moments ago. One of the aims of Communism is to get to the youth of the nation and induce them to lead immoral lives, and we see ample proof of the claim that the Federal Government is doing just that.

The Treasurer has had to deal with a Federal Government that has refused to grant export permits to companies that are keen to establish new mines in the State and to export coal. As a result, the Queensland Government has lost \$40,000,000 and the people of Queensland have been required to pay increased taxes. He has been deprived by the Federal Government of royalties on coal exports because it saw fit to impose an export tax on that commodity. The people of Queensland have had to make up the loss by paying increased taxes. He has had to deal with a Federal Government that is trying to dodge constitutional procedure by abolishing the Privy Council, a Government that wants to cut Australia's ties with the Queen and to have the nation brought under the control of a Viceroy. It is about time the actions of the Commonwealth Government were exposed.

At a conference of Attorneys-General the former Commonwealth Attorney-General, then Senator Murphy (now Justice Murphy), was told that he could not bring in a law to do that, that it was a matter for the States and that such a law would be against the Constitution. To that he replied, "I know it is against the Constitution, but we are going to bring in the law, and by the time you get it thrown out by the High Court it will have been in existence for 2 years and we will have achieved our aims." That is the type of person the Treasurer has had to deal with.

The same Senator Murphy led the dawn raids on the headquarters of A.S.I.O., and very recently the former head of A.S.I.O. was replaced by a judge who is sympathetic towards the policies of the Federal Government. The Federal Government has enlarged the Commonwealth Police Force. Think of what this means to Australia. Do we know who the additional members of the force are? Will they be in plain clothes or in uniform? The Federal Government was so desperate to obtain additional police officers that it offered them salary rates much higher than those paid to members of the State Police Forces. Why does the Commonwealth Government want to expand its Police Force? Is Whitlam considering a suspension of the Commonwealth Constitution? I challenge members of the Opposition to deny that he is giving the matter consideration.

As I say, the leader of the raid on A.S.I.O. was Senator Murphy, now a judge of the High Court. Mr. Whitlam hopes that the High Court will be the final arbitrator of Australian justice. When Justice Murphy was a senator in the Federal Government, he demonstrated that he believes the States

should be abolished and that he would not abide by the Constitution, but now he will probably take part in judgments relative to the Constitution. That may affect future Queensland Budgets; it has certainly had an effect on this one. We are not sure which way the High Court will lean when cases come before it.

We have to deal with a Government that is eroding a historical tradition and convention, that is, the basic right of people to own their own homes. In these days, thanks to deliberately induced inflation, the cost of building a home has risen so high that people can no longer afford to build one. The percentage of home-ownership has decreased. Whitlam and his colleagues would sooner see people depending on the State all their lives, yet they are the ones we have to deal with. They have created the highest unemployment rate since the depression. If that has not had some bearing on this State Budget, I will again eat my hat.

The Federal Government has insulted America. Because of our inadequate defence, the people of Australia are fearful of Communism. We are all worried about it. We must try to defend ourselves. I am sure that it is the policy of the Opposition in Canberra to do something about this when it gets back to power. In these days of nuclear warfare, it would not matter if every man, woman and child in Australia were armed; if China came down on us and we did not have the support of the United States, we would be history.

Mr. Moore: We could outbreed them.

Mr. McKECHNIE: We might try. The way in which the Federal Government has insulted America is tragic.

I shall deal now with some of the statements made by Opposition members about the Budget. The honourable member for Port Curtis said that the Labor Party did not mind running up a deficit in periods of high unemployment.

Mr. Moore: They will print money any time.

Mr. McKECHNIE: They certainly will.

Figures released concerning the budgeted deficit in the Federal Budget reveal that it will be of the order of \$2,798 million, but so far, in a quarter of the financial year, the deficit is running at two-thirds of the projected figure. For the month of September, the figure was \$816,000,000. If we multiply that figure by 12, we realise the size of the deficit we might have. I do not expect it to be as bad as that, but, for argument's sake, imagine a deficit of \$6,000 million at 30 June next instead of the \$2,798 million estimated in the Budget. Do the people of Queensland realise that every man, woman and child in Australia would owe \$500 of that debt? When a small minority of people say that the Federal Government has improved their standard of

living a little, do they realise that it is akin to their going to the bank and saying, "We have to borrow \$500 this year and will pay it back out of future years' income." What a bankrupt Government we have in Canberra! What an effect it must have had on the Budget our Treasurer has brought down!

The honourable member for Port Curtis referred to the increased charges in the Budget. But I did not hear him object to the increase in the spirit merchant's licence of 150 per cent, from 6 per cent to 15 per cent. The publicans will gain a big advantage from that. He also referred to the unforeseen expenditure in the Queensland Budget. Hasn't he heard of inflation? I hope he has listened and heard me say that the deficit incurred by the Federal Government this year will probably be \$6,000 million. Goodness gracious me!

It is incomprehensible that the honourable member for Port Curtis cannot understand the difficulties under which the Treasurer has had to operate in the last 12 months. He condemned the Government for not speeding up the electrification of the Brisbane rail system. That was one of the Treasurer's actions that benefited Queensland's country people. If the Brisbane system had been electrified years ago, dieselisation of the State railway system would not have taken place nearly as soon as it did. That was one way by which Queensland rail freights were kept so low for so long.

The honourable member for Port Curtis condemned the Premier's aircraft. Everybody knows that any State Premier exerts tremendous influence in his Government. Aren't the people in Western Queensland entitled to put their point of view to him? The Federal Government has ruined the air services to those areas. The only way for the Premier to travel is by private plane. With the busy schedule he keeps, it would not be practical for him to travel by chartered aircraft.

I have tried to illustrate the climate created by the Federal Government in which the Treasurer has had to bring down a Budget which has some unpopular increases in charges. May I say again that it is rumoured that the Prime Minister is considering suspending the Constitution! All over the State we have been criticised for sending Senator Field down to Canberra.

When we have a Prime Minister of the calibre of Mr. Whitlam, who has demonstrated his complete dedication to socialising Australia—and I do not mean the socialisation that former A.L.P. men believed in (socialisation such as the member for Mackay preaches and such as Senator Field believed in and still believes in); I am talking about the Left-wing socialism that is so close to Communism that it will end up as Communism unless the people of Queensland and Australia wake up—could we afford to send

another person down to Canberra who was dedicated to destroying the Queensland Parliament and who would help centralise power in Canberra? Power corrupts, but all power must corrupt completely.

That is the problem that the people of Australia must face. We have to get rid of the Government in Canberra, and I hope that every Queenslander will play his part. I compliment the Treasurer for the Budget he has brought down under very, very difficult circumstances.

Dr. CRAWFORD (Wavell) (4.9 p.m.): Each year the Budget gives honourable members an opportunity to examine the way in which the Government is functioning and also to check up on the general efficiency or inefficiency with which financial matters are being administered by the State and Commonwealth Governments. The honourable member who has just resumed his seat has drawn the attention of the Chamber to the fact that the Commonwealth Treasurer announced only yesterday that his Budget is already in dire straits. In effect, as has been pointed out, it would appear that the deficit is so far over the budgeted amount that the Commonwealth Government (or, as they call themselves now, the Australian Government) is already looking for excuses to offer to the public. An estimate of the total deficit for this financial year would only be guesswork, but it would not surprise me if by the end of June 1966 there were a deficit of \$10,000 million.

The Budget presented by the State Treasurer is generally accepted in financial circles in Queensland as being as well balanced as is can be under trying circumstances. It is not possible, however, in the present economic climate in Australia for any Budget to provide any real insulation between the economic situation in the State and the over-all situation in the country. When one receives submissions from various groups in Australia concerning their own particular problems, one realises only too well how real those problems are.

The practising architects groups of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Queensland Chapter of the Association of Consulting Engineers of Australia have recently conducted a survey of the workload in the offices of their members in Queensland. The results are alarming and are a reflection of the serious economic state of the country.

Forty-three architectural practices, which represent 50 per cent of the total practices in Queensland, have reported \$40,000,000 worth of work in progress with \$90,000,000 worth of work—twice the amount in progress—deferred or cancelled. They have experienced an 18 per cent staff reduction in the first seven months of this year and expect this to increase to 31 per cent before the end of the year, so that one in every

three members of the staff of those professional groups will probably lose his job before the end of the year.

All the major civil and structural engineering practices in Brisbane were surveyed. Collectively they reported 54 jobs cancelled or deferred during September—only one month—representing \$102,000,000 worth of work. This work was classified broadly as follows—

Federal Government financed—	
direct or indirect	9
State Government financed,	
including eight educational	
projects	16
Local authority projects	19
Private projects	10

That gives a total of 54 jobs cancelled or deferred in the one month of September. It is interesting to note that the economy has now changed from the privately sponsored to the Government-sponsored to such a degree that in effect we are now sinking further into the mire because, of those 54 jobs cancelled, only 10 were in the private sector of the economy.

To avoid possible overlap in assessing the number and value of projects reported, electrical and mechanical practices were not included in the survey. However, it is known that many of these practices have next to no work in their offices.

Surveyors have reported a massive decline in their own work-load to the end of 1974 with the decline still continuing during this year although at a slower rate. I note that the Federal Treasurer keeps making remarks about how the economy is regaining its impetus in the private sector. These figures completely give the lie to that claim so far as Queensland is concerned.

Quantity surveyors are extremely concerned that the decline in work amongst architects and engineers will result in a serious reduction in their work and, in fact, they currently have \$46,000,000 worth of work likely to go to tender before Christmas, but have had work totalling \$58,000,000 cancelled since the Federal Budget.

The Commonwealth fiasco about medical research has also come to the notice of honourable members recently, especially when this had to be publicised after the reading of the Federal Budget in Canberra.

Obviously the continuation of medical research in Australia is of no real importance to the Federal Government. The allocation to medical research of a fraction of 1 per cent of the Australian Government's proposed expenditure on health—that is the current figure in the Commonwealth Budget—has been described by Dr. Gunz of the Kanematsu Institute at Sydney Hospital as incongruous and unreasonable. Since then there has been a public outcry, especially when members of the public see the general muddle which has been occurring with the

implementation of the Medibank scheme—now called Medimess. A small amount of extra money has been allocated to research but it seems obvious that once again the Canberra socialists have shown clearly and concisely how little they really understand the real importance of quality health care in this country.

It is worth noting that it is not possible to stop and start medical research even in a large institution because very special skills are needed by those who engage in medical and scientific research in general, and there is certainly no short-term advantage in any political sense in encouraging medical research. It is for this reason, I believe, that the Canberra socialists have cut medical research as they have. Obviously with their short-term electoral prospects, they discard what they cannot use to their own advantage. They can do away with what they regard as unnecessary expenditure in the community, and that includes expenditure on medical research. The Queensland Health Department has never been noted for being overgenerous in encouraging medical research, either. The upshot of the whole process as far as the allocation of funds in Australia is concerned has been summarised as follows:—

(a) Moneys committed in 1974-75 on a triennial basis are to be reduced by 25 per cent in their maintenance allowance.

(b) No new fellowships or overseas research fellowships are to be awarded. Possibly five research scholarships will be awarded for the whole of Australia.

(c) A total of \$330,000 is proposed for allocation for a renewal of a miniscule proportion of those grants whose triennium ends at the end of 1975. This means that the great majority of these ongoing research programmes will come to a grinding halt, entailing the dismissal of more than 200 trained research staff. As I stated, research staff cannot be obtained by advertising that such-and-such a project is likely to start at the beginning of next month. Research staff are very particular people who go through a very important type of training and they do not become available by general advertisement.

(d) An even more miniscule total of \$70,000 is proposed for allocation to new projects in the whole of Australia. Only 34 of 400 applications, which is a very small percentage, for renewal or new projects have been funded, in contrast with the usual figure up till now of about two-thirds of new projects being funded routinely each year.

Bureaucracy, be it State or Federal, has, of course, exhibited the traditional attitude which avoids decision-making—I believe this lack of finance for research from Federal funds is in accordance with that statement—especially if the decisions must be made quickly and if any person in any Government department wishes to avoid being held responsible for personally organising expenditure of public moneys. In this context Mr. Whitlam

has had a great deal of trouble with his own Treasury officials because the advice he has received from them has not been in accordance with his own ideas of how he should either raise or spend money. But it is true that the bureaucrats, again be they State or Federal, are in the position to make decisions which allow or disallow the carrying out of the stated policy of any political party. As a result there is a tendency to pigeon-hole reports and suggestions however worthy they are. As well, there is resentment of any force in the community outside the bureaucracy which suggests a change, and this culminates in a special type of obstruction to any sweeping reform or any situation involving reform which might become a political hot potato.

Protection under the Public Service Act has, of course, aggravated the whole situation. As a result of the development in some quarters of a “you cannot touch me” attitude, Government policies, particularly in Canberra, that may originally have been considered sacrosanct are questioned by the bureaucracy. This may mean that a policy is administered, in the absence of strong ministerial direction, at the whim of the senior Public Service echelon of the department.

As I mentioned earlier, advice given to Mr. Whitlam by the Treasury is frequently contrary to his own ideas, and the \$4,000 million—it has now become \$8,000 million—Arab loan grab is, I believe, a direct result of an attempt by him to go beyond the normal levels of borrowing and to try to ignore completely the advice he has received from his officers.

Recently, Mr. Whitlam, Dr. Cairns and Mr. Connor have all attempted to buck the Public Service system, but they have not made any attempt to reform the manner in which the system functions. They have, in fact, encouraged the unbridled growth of the Public Service federally and actively encouraged, through their policies, the creation of a whole new galaxy of positions—of jobs for the boys (and the girls). This has exacerbated the whole problem. It is exemplified most clearly, I believe, in the Department of Social Security, which formerly was administered by the present Treasurer (Mr. Hayden). It is interesting to note that in the first 18 months after he took over the Department of Social Security the salaries bill increased by \$15,000,000 and that involved the employment of about 1,500 additional people.

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of public servants—the figures were published recently—and I do not think that is to anybody's credit, certainly not the Federal Government's, when the economy is suffering so badly from the body blows that the present Federal Government has inflicted upon it.

The optimum size for any institution, business, school or hospital can be stipulated and

can be calculated exactly. Once an institution or business grows beyond that optimum size, whether or not it runs efficiently depends on the quality of the leadership that is available to it. Policy has to be initiated by leaders and subsequently implemented, and I have noted again this year the comment of the Auditor-General about the functioning of the State Government Insurance Office in Queensland. I think that is pertinent, because the Auditor-General states—and he has stated it previously—that obviously there is a great deal of room for improvement in the purely operative efficiency of the S.G.I.O. in Queensland.

I believe that the Minister responsible, who, of course, in this case is the Treasurer, should have attended to this matter long ago, because it is important that all Government institutions, whether State or Federal, run at their optimum efficiency. Whether or not one agrees with the principle of monopolies in insurance or any other field is immaterial to the fact that business efficiency should be paramount and the end result of an Australia-wide monopolistic insurance office would, if the present Commonwealth Labor Government's record of business administration is a yardstick, only bring complete chaos.

In recent times there has been trouble in the Police Department in Queensland.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Weren't you going to resign from the Liberal Party if it accepted Medibank? I notice you haven't resigned.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am going to deal with Medibank in some detail in a short while, so the honourable member for Archerfield can sit there and listen to what I say.

As I said, the Police Department has come in for a great deal of criticism recently, and it is interesting to note what has taken place, including the bringing of two gentlemen from Scotland Yard to investigate certain aspects of police activities. However, it is worth mentioning that when the Police Department came under criticism in days gone by, a very active programme was undertaken to remedy the situation. Brigadier McKinna was brought here from South Australia eight or 10 years ago to investigate the Police Department, as an outsider with his own dispassionate viewpoint and therefore not prejudiced. After that investigation had been carried out—I emphasise that it was not an intra-departmental investigation—the present Commissioner, Mr. R. W. Whitrod, was appointed. Whether Mr. Whitrod has been a success or not is immaterial to the fact that a very real effort was made by the Government eight or 10 years ago to correct the problems the Police Department then faced.

It is important that Queenslanders realise that with the present problems in the Police Department another very real effort is being made to correct the situation. The attitude of attempting to correct problems and to make a major department of government

function efficiently is to be commended. As I mentioned, many departments, both State and Federal, do not adopt that attitude.

In considering the spending of money from the present State Budget, it is important that the Juvenile Aid Bureau should not only be retained but expanded. The work of that bureau is very much appreciated by the public in general; but the Juvenile Aid Bureau appears to have rather poor public relations. As the Minister for Police is in the Chamber, I say to him now that I think his public relations in respect of the Juvenile Aid Bureau could be very much improved. He could retain and maintain a vast public interest in that particular aspect of police activity if he undertook a public relations programme.

Mr. Hodges: It does not come under me; it comes under the Minister for Community and Welfare Services.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I believe that the police are involved in spite of that. I believe that juvenile aid should be handled by the Police Department.

As to the Education Department—the way it has been organised and the way it has functioned over the years is something that should be commended as very constructive Government action. Most of those in the hierarchy of the Education Department are the products of active teaching in the schools. I have always felt that those who make administrative decisions and become bureaucrats by promotion should at least have had the practical experience to know what they are talking about. Of course, that does not necessarily apply in State or Federal Health Departments. The medical members of those departments do not, in effect, practise medicine, and many of them have not practised medicine for many years.

Over the years a system of progressive legal reform has been brought about by this Government. In spite of many irritating and infuriating aspects of that legal reform, very real progress has been made. As a result, the laws of the land are tending to look after the citizens who need that particular assistance.

The honourable member for Mackay mentioned the difficulties in providing doctors in outback areas. I have never seen any real evidence that any Health Department, State or Federal, cares very much about the provision of medical services in the Outback. It is an indictment on health services throughout the nation that so many small outback areas do not have an adequate medical service. In my view it is of the greatest possible importance that doctoring in the Outback is of the highest possible calibre. We do have a flying doctor and flying surgeons, but if anyone suggests the expansion of such services, all the difficulties are put in his way, as a friend of mine recently found.

As to the planning for health matters in general in Brisbane—very real concern has been expressed about the current building

programme at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. It may be necessary for the Treasurer to look directly at the construction of the major hospital buildings in this State, and find out why there has been such delay in their planning and construction. Block 7 at the Royal Brisbane Hospital has been under construction for ages and ages.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Since we went into Medibank we have put out something to try to speed up the whole building programme by something like 12 months.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I am very pleased to hear that. The Wesley Hospital will be completed within the specified time. The construction of a hospital can be so planned as to ensure its completion within 20 or 30 months. Even a major complex can, with utmost business efficiency, be built within a short time. I am pleased to hear the Treasurer say the matter has been attended to.

Sir Gordon Chalk: When I reply I will give you the figures to show how much we have increased our building expenditure this year.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I hope that planning can be looked at, because it is important that planning be carried out by persons who know what they are doing. When the Wesley Hospital first got off the ground one of my colleagues, who was involved with the Royal Brisbane Hospital, said, "You don't mean to tell me you'll get that built in such a short time?" The Royal Brisbane Hospital has been faced with bureaucratic delays, so I shall be pleased to hear the Treasurer's figures.

The organisation of children's hospitals is going along very slowly and here I would repeat what I have said on earlier occasions—that we should have only one major children's hospital. There is no way in the world that in a city the size of Brisbane two children's hospital complexes can function efficiently. This opinion is not merely mine but one held throughout the world. Children's hospitals raise money, function and go through the exercise of raising finance for extras, but in spite of that the end result is not a world-class unit. It is important that that matter, too, be attended to.

Throughout the State many problems arise generally in the provision of medical services, and these problems will be aggravated greatly if and when the Commonwealth Government takes over the control of medical services and centralises it in Canberra. It is important that the public know that there is widespread discontent among doctors, particularly those in country centres—Toowoomba comes to mind—who enter into medical contracts with the State Health Department. There is some trouble in Caloundra. I have not checked recently to ascertain the present position, but the original trouble was brought about by the fact that a doctor who was practising in Caloundra was unacceptable to the Health Department

and was refused the right to work in the Caloundra Hospital. As a result the whole system in the local hospital collapsed. In 1975 this type of bureaucratic interference in the functions of hospitals assumes major importance.

In spite of the activities of W. D. Scott & Co. Ltd., who have brought about an improvement in services at both the Royal Brisbane and the Princess Alexandra Hospitals, those who make the decisions in matters of health in Brisbane are not necessarily those who should be arriving at those decisions. The hospitals are not allowed to operate autonomously as they should, and very real problems manifest themselves week after week and month after month.

Money per se is not in any way connected with improvement in the quality of service in hospitals. It is very difficult to define a quality medical service. I do not believe that Mr. Hayden, in spite of the fact that over the years he has spent millions of dollars, has even the slightest idea of how to provide quality medical services.

It is interesting to note that we have not heard the Health Department raise its voice in defence of the dual system of public and private practice that has worked well in Queensland over the years. I become very upset when people in Government say, "It is not the prerogative of Government to assist private practice in private or public hospitals." In my view it should be the very core or essence of a non-socialist Government to defend and maintain all aspects of personal exertion and private enterprises, and I believe it was the lack of this specific purpose that was responsible for the fall of the McMahon Government in 1972. As that Government fell as a result of its policy of complacency and expediency, other Governments will follow the same course as years go by, and for the same reasons.

The Social Security Department which, as I said, was formerly Mr. Hayden's baby and bête noire, becomes more chaotic as time goes by. I see in today's Press that he said that about one-third of those on the dole are probably receiving it illegally or irregularly. I do not believe that the Commonwealth can run this type of department efficiently. Anarchy reigns supreme once an extra work-load is involved. This, again, was one of the early manifestations of the attempt to implement the Medibank scheme. It seems to be a very difficult matter indeed for the people in Canberra to run a really efficient service, even with the use of very expensive computers. It seems that they adopt the principle that money provides all answers; that all they have to do is buy enough expert labour and very large computers to make all work well. It is interesting to hear some of the stories coming forward about the completely idiotic manner in which the computers are handling some of the ordinary business of

the day, for which, I add, the former Government, with its administration based on medical benefits organisations, was blamed as being administratively inadequate.

Mr. Doumany: I understand that the computers can handle only one breast in a mastectomy.

Dr. CRAWFORD: I should not be surprised.

I have received so many peculiar complaints it is almost worth while keeping a file; they are hilarious. Pathology and X-ray claims, mixed up in the one cheque, are being sent to Mt. Isa or Timbuctoo instead of Brisbane simply because nobody is making any real attempt to administer the whole process efficiently. It is even worse than Lewis Carroll suggested when he wrote "Alice in Wonderland". Labor's Utopia in medical control will reflect very badly on it.

As the honourable member for Carnarvon said, the Commonwealth sold us the pup of the century on Medibank in general. The representatives of our Health Department entered into so-called negotiations between the States and the Minister for Social Security to see if this Government would accept Medibank money for hospitals. It was a non-event, because Mr. Hayden's own Act precluded any real negotiation. He had specifically spelt out the rules and conditions. We in Queensland should have stated quite categorically that we had our own conditions on this matter, and that we wished to protect our patients by having the best form of administration implemented in this State.

Mr. Hayden wrote into his Act that patients who had to receive pathological and X-ray services as private or intermediate patients in public hospitals were automatically prevented from making a claim. He put that specific provision into the Act, and we have accepted it. We should have stated at the time, with the other non-socialist States, that we would not under any circumstances accept such a condition. We should have said to Mr. Hayden, "When you have removed that from the Act and brought the other disreputable parts of it into line with our thinking and conditions, we will talk about some form of negotiation." But money talks, and it is a matter of fact that money can be allowed to wield a very big stick. We did what we did, and it is now too late to take that stand.

Mr. Frawley: The honourable member for Archerfield said it is a great contribution to welfare in Australia.

Dr. CRAWFORD: It is the greatest con game that the Commonwealth Government has played on any State at any time. I am sure that the honourable member for Archerfield is not convinced of his own statement.

It is a matter that concerns this State and the Commonwealth in other ways. It

is important that we not be a party to something that with the passage of time will bankrupt the Commonwealth as a whole. I mentioned before that the deficit revealed for the first few months of this financial year is excessively above the estimate. I believe that, for many reasons, the cost of Medibank will be such that the Treasurer's estimates will be shown to be wildly below the real mark, and we will realise how much we have to pay the piper only when the final bill comes in. I envisage a sum of \$3,000 million, which is more than twice the Federal Treasurer's estimates. I think that, as time goes by in this financial year, Australia could well find itself faced with national bankruptcy because of its expenditure on this one so-called social service.

I often wonder where Medibank money will eventually be found in the State's coffers.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Why didn't you resign?

Dr. CRAWFORD: I will finish what I am saying first.

The return of money to the State's coffers is to be worked on the principle that at the end of each month the accounts that have been paid are submitted for perusal in Canberra. When they have been perused, the Federal Treasurer or the new Minister for Social Security will, in his wisdom and generosity or otherwise, say, "We will accept this one, but we will not accept that one." Those in Canberra can tailor the return to the hospital service in Queensland to any level they wish. They can make a payment of \$20,000,000, \$50,000,000 or \$100,000,000 a year, depending on the proportion of the accounts submitted to them by the State that they are prepared to accept. It could well be that only a very small amount of the money paid will be reimbursed.

As payment is to be made in that way, I cannot see that our hospital service will benefit from any real expansion at all. One has to budget on the over-all amount of money available—and that is a very indefinite amount, particularly when the Federal Treasurer or the Minister for Social Security retains the prerogative to put his own guide-lines on the refunding of money. We are told what the Commonwealth will pay for and what it will not pay for, and if that is not considered to be control of how we run our hospital services, we need to rethink the whole procedure. It is control—and in my view a very iniquitous control—of State matters.

I believe that the advice on Medibank received from the Public Service by the Treasurer and the State health services was wrong, and that we should have carried out the negotiations in the way I mentioned. However, that is now history, and there is nothing we can do about it. I would like to see moneys made available for

specific purposes of hospital administration. I would like also to see as a matter of urgency a re-organisation of the types of hospital administration that we have in this State. What we have been discussing is only the tip of the iceberg, and it is important that we realise the full implications of the whole miserable business once control extends further to Canberra.

It is important also, since I have been talking about efficiency or inefficiency in the Public Service administration, that brief mention be made of the amendment to the Mental Health Act a couple of years ago. That is a matter that has been in the news recently. Two doctors of philosophy associated with the university—namely, Drs. P. Wilson and T. Gardiner—have made various suggestions relative to the Mental Health Act. I believe that the Health Department is being very badly advised on how the Act has come into force. It was drafted by the Queensland Health Department hierarchy in 1971. It was then deferred and introduced in late 1973 with a fanfare of trumpets and the statement that it would lie on the table of the House so that any interested party could examine it in detail and make submissions. In effect, this was purely a grandstand play. I am sure that if Dickens were alive he could make some reasonable remark about poppycock and humbug in this particular play.

In my view it was never intended that any alteration whatever should be made to that Act. In effect, in spite of very detailed submissions from people who were responsible for implementing mental health treatment in Queensland, no alteration was made to the Act. We are back to square one again because we are told that that Act will be looked at again. If it is to be looked at, it should be looked at properly. It should not be simply a matter of taking advice from the Health Department in this particular context.

In effect, there is a necessity for a parliamentary health committee with real powers of consultation to bring forward suggestions to the Health Department in line with National Party and Liberal Party policies. This has never occurred in Queensland in the past. The various Acts that come up through the Health Minister traditionally reflect Health Department policies, not Liberal Party or National Party policies. This is one of the major indictments of the health organisation in this State. It is a direct result of the 1936 Act which set up the organisation, and it is in no way related to the payment of the bill for a public or other bed in Queensland. It is purely a matter of administration.

In dealing with free enterprise in business and professional practices in this State, I have mentioned some of the problems that architects, surveyors and others have been having. About 80 per cent of our population depends upon free-enterprise business, usually in the form of small businesses employing only a

few people. I believe it is a function of the State Government not simply to pay lip-service to the maintenance of free enterprise in business and professional practice in Queensland but to take active measures to assist those businesses to continue to operate. Certain of the concessions relating to probate and succession duties are very worth-while measures, but we need much more active intervention from the State Government to maintain the free-enterprise system in order to counteract the erosion of that system by the Federal Government in Canberra in the past three years. Mr. Whitlam is now finding out how much it costs to implement his grandiose schemes. But it will be of no value if he is a repentant sinner at the end of this year, next year or 1977 if our country is bankrupted in the process.

Recently the Premier of Queensland called on the Liberal Party organisation to be prepared federally to dismantle the socialist bureaucratic exercise. I call upon the Queensland Government, and on the other non-socialist Governments in Australia, to show, through the implementation of their Budgets, that the Liberal-National organisations in all States have principles which, if put into practice, could turn poorly run and inefficient Government departments into vitally efficient sections of those Governments. Those efforts, which could then be combined with real decision-making in Canberra in the post-Whitlam era, could really build a great Australia. Mr. Whitlam has the socialist tiger by the tail. It is uncontrollable, and if it is not stopped it will bankrupt the whole of Australia.

Mr. GYGAR (Stafford) (4.50 p.m.): There are many aspects of this Budget that I could praise, but I should like to direct my attention particularly to two of them. The first is education. The Budget increases by 48 per cent the Queensland expenditure on education. That is a remarkably high increase. Unlike the socialists in Canberra, we will not be flinging this money about madly, but use it wisely in the most effective ways. From my perusal of the Budget every dollar appears to be going into areas where it will fulfil a very great need. Firstly, there is the subsidy to parents and citizens' associations. This is an excellent move. For many, many years, members of these associations have worked hard to provide better facilities for their children. It is good that this year we have been able to recognise those efforts and assist them—greatly, I suggest—with the \$100 grants and the \$4 per pupil grant for each school. There will be a vast improvement in the quality of education as a result of this assistance.

In the field of pre-schools we find that this Government is pressing ahead strongly and firmly in its determination to implement the policy of pre-school education for the maximum number of Queensland children. In the small area covered by my electorate one

pre-school has already been built and is to open in a few weeks' time and construction of two more is ready to start.

The Government has already provided 500 additional teacher aides. These people will allow our school-teachers to spend their time teaching and not have to worry about administration and discipline. They will not have to look after the running of the school. As well, 2,000 more teachers are to be provided. When they are employed I think we will then be able to truthfully say that we have reached the required teacher to pupil ratio. From here on I suggest that the provision of additional funds and the employment of additional teachers would not be money well spent. A cost-benefit analysis would show that the additional expenditure would not be justified.

We have already heard praise of our education system, even from members of the Commonwealth Government, and we know how grudging they are in their praise of Queensland. It has been publicly revealed that the Queensland education system is the best in Australia and that the children educated under it are the most literate, the most knowledgeable and the most suited for the practical world outside their schools. That is a glowing commendation of the education system which this Government has supervised for so many years and a glaring contrast to the ramshackle buildings and overcrowded conditions faced by this Government when it first defeated Labor after the big split.

There are other things in this education Budget which demonstrate the depth of knowledge and expertise that the Treasurer has brought to bear on the problem. A simple little thing which probably escaped the attention of most members was the 100 per cent across-the-board increase in the petty cash allowance to State schools. This might sound like a small, pinpricking, fiddling thing but it is not to the principal, the man who has to buy small items, balance this very small budget and do the best by his pupils. It is not reasonable that these talented, experienced and well-trained men and women should spend their time worrying about this diminutive expenditure from petty cash accounts. To overcome this problem the Government has increased the allowance by 100 per cent across the board; a small amount but a very necessary increase that must allow greater utilisation of the vast amount of talent available within the Queensland Education Department. Words cannot express high enough praise for the thought and expertise which has gone into the drafting of this education Budget. It is truly an excellent document which would do justice to any Treasurer in any State at any time.

The second aspect of this Budget to which I wish to direct the attention of the Committee is death duties. The Treasurer has abolished the payment of death duties on estates transmitted between spouses. It is

just another step along the path—in accordance with the policy of the Government parties—which will lead eventually to the total abolition of death duties in this State. The step taken in the Budget is only natural justice. The joint efforts of husband and wife have gone into accumulating these sums, and if the wife has been at home looking after the children and keeping the house, surely she has contributed as much to that money as the husband has and is equally entitled to its benefit and enjoyment. As I said, it is only natural justice that that joint effort should be recognised and that no duty should be paid on the money.

I wish to expand on that. I say that any form of death duty or succession duty—call it what you like, Mr. Gunn—is nothing less than gross injustice, and I am pleased to see that the Government is committed to its total abolition. This is one way in which members of the Government parties differ vastly from the socialist gang who make up the Opposition here. Why should a worker who earns money and decides that, instead of living a good life himself or spending money on gambling, beer or a flash car, he will put it away and pass it on to his children, to make their start in life better, not be allowed to do so? He has paid tax on it when he has earned it. Why should he not pass it on free and clear to his children?

That concept is anathema to honourable members opposite because they are completely opposed to any form of inherited wealth. They say that inherited wealth is theft. According to their proposition, any man who earns and saves is stealing from his fellow man. What a stupid and ludicrous proposition that is! Yet they have the hide to stand up and preach it—certainly not publicly; they are game to say things of that type only behind closed doors at the little cliquy meetings they hold. They would not be game to face the people of Queensland on that issue, because they know their feelings.

The imposition of any sort of succession, inheritance or death duty or tax is a degradation of the individual's right to earn and live his own life and spend his own money, and I am proud to see that the Government is committed to their abolition and has now taken a great step along the path towards their abolition. That step is appreciated very much by the people of Queensland and has been rightly praised very highly by them.

I am a young man, and I like to look forward to what sort of a country we are building—not forward just a couple of years, but forward to the next century, when my children will be growing up. I have to ask myself: what sort of Australia and what sort of Queensland do I look forward to, and what measures can bring about that improvement in standards of living and in quality of life that I hope can be achieved as time passes?

The most important thing that I look forward to in the short term is the total destruction of the Federal Labor Government—the greatest drag on the people in the last 25 years—and ultimately I hope I live to see the total discrediting and destruction of the A.L.P. as a political force in this country. We have never seen, Mr. Gunn, such a gang of opportunists, grafters and incompetents as we have in Canberra at present. They stagger from scandal to scandal, from defeat to defeat. Day by day the list of their turpitudes grows. The Gair affair; Khemlani; the sacking of Ministers—it is all there—and, overriding the whole lot, a massive incompetence that has brought about huge unemployment and inflation the like of which we have never seen before.

Mr. Frawley: I heard that Lionel Murphy was under the domination of the the scientologists.

Mr. GYGAR: That is rather strange, but there are many strange things about the Federal Government. As one reads the newspapers day by day, one comes to believe almost anything about the bunch who plead to have the confidence of the people of Australia. Surely this time—this December, when I hope we will see another Federal election—the people of Australia will realise just what the Australian Labor Party stands for and will throw the A.L.P. Government in Canberra onto the scrap-heap of history where it belongs.

Mr. Frawley: They know it now.

Mr. GYGAR: They do know it now. The public opinion polls show that. The glib silver tongue of the silver-tailed Whitlam will not fool them again.

Mr. Frawley: Look at them! There are two disciples of Whitlam.

Mr. GYGAR: Of course they are disciples of the Prime Minister. They must be. They are governed under their rules. We all know that. They hide that, too, from the people of Queensland. They sign a pledge. They're men without conscience. Their conscience is dictated to them by the Trades Hall at their yearly meeting. Like blow-up dolls, they leap to their feet when the Trades Hall presses the button. They've got no choice. If they jump up and down now like wombats on an ant-hill, it is only because they find truth a very painful irritant.

If they want to yell out, shout and chant, let them shout in this Chamber about the last Labor man who had the intestinal fortitude to cross the floor. Let us hear his name. It was Vincent Clair Gair, the Premier of Queensland at that time. We all know what happened to him. He was the last man in the Australian Labor Party in this State to have the courage of his convictions, the last who had the courage to try to beat the machine and to go against the Trades Hall manipulators. He crossed

the floor and voted according to his conscience. He was attacked for years and years and torn to shreds. The A.L.P. wouldn't have a bar of that man of courage and conviction—at that time, at least.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: When you were at the university were you known as the campus camp?

Mr. GYGAR: I will follow up that interjection because I would not have a bar of the homosexuals and perverts who hang around on the fringes of the A.L.P., and whom that party supports every day. It is strange that the honourable member for Archerfield has such a funny hang-up about homosexuals, but I will not go into that.

Year after year the A.L.P. has come before the people of Australia, masquerading as the workers' friend—the workers' friend who has put more workers out of work than there have been unemployed since the great depression! With friends like that, who needs enemies? The A.L.P. Government has brought about massive inflation. How is that being friendly towards the worker—the worker who puts away a few dollars for his future and saves a little money to buy his own home? His savings are destroyed by inflation. At last the Australian worker has seen the truth. The mask of deception and lies is being torn away from the A.L.P., and that party is being seen in its true light. The A.L.P. is no more the workers' friend than Joseph Stalin was the friend of the religious people of Russia.

The Australian Labor Party Government has inflicted massive taxation on the worker. We have seen how taxation has doubled and trebled under the incompetence of Whitlam's socialism. Is this being friendly to the worker? Of course not. It is true that for many years Liberal-National Party Governments governed only because they had a lot of support from the trade union and worker movements. That was because those people realised what all of Australia is now starting to realise. They realised that a Government friendly to workers and a Government that looks to workers' welfare is a Government that creates a prosperous, go-ahead country, a country in which people have the courage and conviction to invest and provide employment, not a Government which, by massive taxation and imposition of tax on all types of free enterprise, closes factories and throws men into dole queues. The plain truth is that the A.L.P. is anti-Australia, because everything the A.L.P. stands for is against what the Australian worker and the Australian people stand for.

What is the Australian ethic? First and foremost the Australian worker wants to own his own home. A massive attack has been made on that principle and that ethic by the Whitlam socialist Government. First of all it abolished the home savings grant, one of the things which helped young people and people not on a high income to

buy their own home. What did it do next? It brought out that infamous document which called for the taxing of every home-owner. What was proposed was that every person who owned his own home would have his house assessed at its rentable value, so that if a person could rent his house at \$40 a week he would have to pay additional income tax on that \$40 a week. How could anyone who espouses such a revolting policy as that pretend to be in favour of home-ownership?

The Federal Labor Government went even further. Believe it or not, last week the Federal Minister for Housing stated clearly and openly that if he had his way no Government finance would be used for homes for purchase. The Labor Party is attacking the very roots of the Australian ethic to own one's home. It cannot be done under this Whitlam gang of incompetents, and will never be able to be done under the stupid socialist policies of the Australian Labor Party.

Mr. Hodges: The means test will drive a lot of workers from their homes and make them rent their houses.

Mr. GYGAR: The Ministers in Canberra, of course, rent their homes, and think it is a fair thing. It would be wonderful to be like Dr. Cairns.

Mr. Frawley: For \$5 a week.

Mr. GYGAR: I thought Dr. Cairns was paying the princely sum of \$7 a week for his large home. Members of the Labor Party are so detached from reality that they probably thought that is what rental of homes meant. There must be some reason why they want to turn Australia into a nation of home-renters not home-owners. Why don't they go to the polls on that issue and see just how far they get with the Australian people?

Australians have always taken pride in their independence. They demand the right to lead their own lives, free from massive bureaucratic and Government interference. They want to be left alone. In my ethic, good government is when the people don't know they are being governed. If people can go through their lives without having the Government intrude upon them day after day and without having pinpricking bureaucracies, regulations and new taxes, they are enjoying good government. The Australian wants to own his home, lead his own life and forget about Government impositions, be they regulations or taxation.

In Canberra we have this mad bureaucracy, which has gone berserk. It is taxing, taxing day after day; it is grinding people into the ground. The bureaucracy is increasing daily and is governing every aspect of the people's lives.

Mr. Lindsay: We'll be put out of our misery soon.

Mr. GYGAR: We certainly will, when the Labor Party is tossed out on the scrap-heap where it belongs.

The Australian wants the opportunity to make his own way and to get ahead. He wants to make a better life for himself and for his children. Australians have a vision of social mobility, a vision of the time when they can climb up the ladder and take their children and their grandchildren with them. The Australian has the ambition to do better, to move up and to move ahead. It is an ambition that could have been realised over the past 23 years.

Mr. Katter: They want to bring us all down to the same level.

Mr. GYGAR: The Federal Government would do just that. It does not want to see equality; it wants to bring about mediocrity and to grind everyone down to the same level. I speak with some compassion on this matter and will show the reason why I stand on this side of the Chamber and could not have a bar of the incompetents on the other side.

I shall tell a story of something that happened over a period of 23 years and had a profound effect on me. It has shaped my life and will continue to shape it until the day I die. I was born in 1947, when Australia was even then suffering under the bureaucracy of the Australian Labor Party. The A.L.P. wanted to nationalise the banks, tear apart free enterprise and pour all of us into the same stereotype socialist mould. Fortunately, the Labor Party was tossed out two years later.

Mr. Lindsay: I'll bet you were handing out cards.

Mr. GYGAR: Unfortunately, I was not old enough to do that. If I had been I am sure I would have seen through the tissue of lies that surrounds the Australian Labor Party.

In 1947 Australia was still reeling from the effects of the war and economic disruption. My parents lived in a galvanised-iron shed that had a concrete floor and was without electricity, water and light. For that matter it did not even have any doors or windows. My father was a real worker; he was out driving railway spikes to make a few shillings to keep the family together.

Mr. Frawley: These blokes have not worked in their lives.

Mr. GYGAR: Looking at their figures, I can quite believe that.

That was in 1947 under Labor. I think of the life of my parents and the time that they had. In 1949, fortunately, the Australian people saw the light and tossed Labor out. After 1949 the people of Australia were able to look up and look ahead to a better life. They were able to climb up and grasp life with both hands. My parents now own their own nice, modest home in which they

can be comfortable for the rest of their lives. They have a car and money in the bank and, lately, they have even had enough money to buy a few shares. That is the sort of progress that people can make, look forward to and strive for under a Liberal-Country Party Government. But what has happened since 1972, since the great rot set in?

Mr. Armstrong: The bottom fell out of it.

Mr. GYGAR: It certainly did.

Young people cannot look forward to buying their own homes. They will not be able to service the loans at the rate of interest that the Federal Government—the workers' friends!—has thrust upon them.

Australia used to be a land of opportunity. Now it is a land of fear and insecurity. The blame for that rests fairly and squarely on the heads of Mr. Whitlam and his accomplices who sit in this Chamber. The Liberal-Country Party coalition Government pulled this country from the morass of World War II into greatness. Australia became recognised as the greatest country in the world. And it was! I hope that, in the next few months, I see the restoration of Australia to a path where, once again, it can be the greatest country in the world. We want a country where there is happiness amongst the people, not fear and trepidation about the next day.

A few years ago, how many people used to wonder whether they would have a job the next day? They do now, and more of them are worrying day after day. Years ago children leaving school did not have to worry about finding a job. They knew that out in the wide world there was opportunity. Ability was rewarded, as well it should be.

Mr. Warner: It was a different Federal Government.

Mr. GYGAR: Of course it was. That is the crux of the matter.

For 23 years Australia was a great country. It had its ups and downs, but we never descended to the bottom of the mire as we have under Whitlam and his cronies. People want to live their lives in peace and security, without fear. They certainly cannot do that now. If there is an ounce of sincerity or truth in the bones of honourable members sitting opposite, they must recognise that fact.

Mr. Hanson: We are going through a bit of purgatory listening to you.

Mr. GYGAR: The honourable member for Port Curtis said that it is purgatory listening to me. I know that very many A.L.P. members suffer that sort of torture when they are forced to face up to what they have done to this once-great country.

Mr. Lamont: The honourable member for Port Curtis is not in purgatory; he is in limbo.

Mr. GYGAR: I shall come to religion later.

We must face up to the fact that drastic measures are needed in Canberra to pull us out of the mess we are in. We must throw away the foolish stupidities of the last three years. The Australian people will show, as they showed in Queensland on 7 December last year, that they do not want this sort of rubbish. They do not want socialism at any price. They do not want fast socialism or slow socialism. That is what people of our conviction must face up to. The people are against socialism, whether it is fast or slow. If we want to be tossed out as we were in 1972 in the federal sphere, the quickest and easiest way is to tread the same primrose path of socialism to our destruction as Mr. Whitlam is treading at the moment. We need decisive action to restore Australia to a position worthy of Australians. We have to recognise that Australia is built on individual effort, and it is only through individual effort and the reward from that effort that we will once again go ahead and become great.

The Australian Labor Party does not stand for hard work. Every time someone works hard, the A.L.P. wants to tax him out of existence. People who want to get out and get ahead are anathema to members of the A.L.P. The disgracefully high marginal rates of income tax which are presently imposed are destructive of any initiative, drive or force in the Australian people and must be wiped out—and that must be faced up to by the Liberal and Country Parties. In previous years we, too, have been guilty of that crime against Australia's working people. As they have earned more, we have taken more. The old socialist lie that has been spread for 100-odd years is that the rich should give more. It is not the rich who are taxed; it is the people who want to work. I submit that our marginal rates of income tax should be pegged at not more than 50c in the dollar, whatever a person earns.

We now see the spectacle in Australia of working people trying to make ends meet through having one job during the day and then using a bogus name for a cleaning job or some other form of moonlighting. They are not game to give their correct name. As soon as they do, the ferrets from the Taxation Department hit them. Although these workers might be receiving \$2.50 an hour, because of the disgraceful marginal taxation rates they take home only 50c of it. We have to stamp that out. I hope that the Government that comes to power very, very soon has the courage to do it, because what this country needs to put it back on its feet is real courage.

Another thing the people are fed up with is the Federal Government's myth of social security, which is turning Australia into a welfare State. The A.L.P. has some sort of weird philosophy along the lines that we must help those who will not help themselves.

I don't buy that. By all means let us help those who cannot help themselves, but let us stamp out these dole bludgers and social security cheats who are the white-haired boys of the Australian Labor Government. Good, hard-working, honest Australian workers do not want to see their tax money going to surfies, bludgers and the rest of those who wouldn't do a day's work in an iron-lung. They are fed up with them. I am referring to the workers—the persons whom honourable members opposite are supposed to be representing.

The Australian people are fed up with a few other things, too, and I might as well touch on them while I am at it. I refer particularly to the foul-mouthed lesbians and militant homosexuals in whom the Australian Labor Party finds such great comfort. Admittedly the idea of the women's conference that was held in Canberra was excellent. In Australia women are standing up for themselves. At last they are discovering that they should look to Queensland to see the part women should play in politics and public life generally.

Mr. Frawley: We have two good women in Parliament.

Mr. GYGAR: We certainly do. Queensland has a history of looking at women as people and not as some sort of strange sex objects or whatever they seem to be in some of the Labor States. Women are people and the populace recognises it. They are part of humanity—not "male" or "female".

So the Canberra conference was called. It could have been of benefit, if it had not been for the characters that the Australian Labor Party imported for it. We had the spectacle of the person who was aptly described in the Chamber as a "foul-mouthed harridan"—this Flo Kennedy, who was praised by Mrs. Whitlam as a wonderful, nice lady.

Mr. Frawley: "Charming", she said.

Mr. GYGAR: Yes—charming! I am sure the people in Queensland who saw her on television did not think she was charming. The foul-mouthed obscenities that she spat out, the degradation of religion and the blasphemy which poured out with every sentence she spoke—do honourable members opposite think that is typical of the behaviour of Australian women?

Is this the sort of person they want Australian women to emulate? I am sure that Government members would be quite happy if all of these foul-mouthed individuals voted for the A.L.P. at the next election and if all of the decent Australian women voted for the Liberal Party and the National Party. We would win in a landslide. Women in the so-called progressive element seek a strange image. What is progressive about being able to swear like a wharfie? What is progressive about blasphemy? What is progressive about lesbianism, homosexuality and

the degradation of God? That is not progress; it is relegation to the Dark Ages. I think we are more civilised than that.

Are the homosexuals that the A.L.P. trots out from time to time the people that future Australians will want to model themselves on? Certainly not the average Australian. In saying that, I do not imply that we should bring down Draconian laws against homosexuals or anything like that. If homosexuals want to practise their weird deviances behind closed doors, that is their business but if they want to parade them in public, that is our business. The public has a right to object, as they do.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. GYGAR: They are squirming again, and well they might. They do it every time anybody tells the truth about them. A Government member can measure his success in this Chamber and how close he is to hitting home by the redness of the face of the honourable member for Archerfield and the amount of fidgeting done by the shadow spokesman on justice.

I will now get onto another thing that the A.L.P. tries to hide from the people. All members of the Australian Labor Party are committed to the idea of spreading prostitution throughout the land.

Mr. Young: They have already prostituted Australia.

Mr. GYGAR: Correct. The A.L.P. has prostituted Australia and now wants to finish off the job.

This is something else it discusses behind closed doors and then tries by implication to deny in public. The A.L.P. is committed to it. Its members have signed their little documents. They have signed away their conscience. They have signed away Australia's future. These are the things the A.L.P. stands for. They are not the sort of thing the Australian working man or the average woman stands for and they are most certainly not the sort of thing I stand for.

History will judge these A.L.P. people and it will judge them in a few months' time. Domesday is looming for the A.L.P. It happened in Queensland on 7 December 1974—the Pearl Harbour for Labor. It will happen soon all over Australia. The people are crying out for an election. They have seen the light. They have seen the false promises of the A.L.P. exposed and the mask it wears in public ripped away. The sooner election day comes, the quicker this country will get back to one fit for the people who populate it.

Mr. BYRNE (Belmont) (5.24 p.m.): In speaking to this debate I do not intend to follow along quite the same lines as my colleague the honourable member for Stafford, nor do I intend to fill this Chamber with a plethora of sesquipedalianisms, which seem to be the heart and essence of the present Federal Government's endeavours in economic and scientific fields.

When the Federal election was held in December 1972, I did not belong to any political organisation. I point out that no doubt there are people on this side of the Chamber, certainly, one would expect, people on the other side of the Chamber—as well as people with various political sympathies within the community who, at the time of the Federal election in 1972, thought, “Well, that Government has come in on the crest of a wave. It has made promises. It looks like it might achieve something. It appears to have something.”

So some people who were not in any political organisation, and certainly people on the other side of the Chamber, were hopeful; but I have to ask the members of the Opposition these questions: Do they feel that what was promised then is what has come about? Do they feel that they could give the same support to that political organisation which presently holds the Federal treasury benches as they did after the 1972 election? I believe that honestly they would have to say that at least in some respects they would have to qualify some of their support.

In the past two years there have been huge percentage increases in prices as revealed by the Consumer Price Index, in wages as expressed on an average basis and in Government Consolidated Revenue from increased tax gains. I ask: who, as a result of these increases, has benefited to the greater and lesser degree—industry, as represented in price increases, employees represented in wage increases, or the Government represented in tax revenue increases? A brief glance at the figures would prove that the group which has benefited most is the Government. The more money that one has the more power one has, and the less money that industry and employees have the less power they have.

Let us look at some of the figures—firstly, at wages and the sort of average increases that have occurred there. In 1971-72 wages increased by 7.6 per cent compared with a rise in the Consumer Price Index of 6.8 per cent, so wages were ahead of the Consumer Price Index in that year. In 1972-73 wages increased by 11.5 per cent, the Consumer Price Index by 6 per cent and Government expenditure by 11.6 per cent. I should point out that that was the year of the last Budget brought down by the present Federal Opposition. Eventually, in 1973-74, the Consumer Price Index increased by 13 per cent, wages by 18.8 per cent and Government revenue by 26 per cent and by 28 per cent in 74-75.

My point is that out of the three the group that has benefited most is the Government. Although members of the Government might say that it is the great helper of industry, although they might say it is the great helper of the worker, it is primarily the great helper of itself. Looking at the present situation, honourable members will have to agree that only in the area of tax

adjustment is a major instrument available by which we can achieve major advances in productivity and thus raise the standard of living. Let us take a fictitious company as an example of this. We will start off with a gross income figure expressed in percentage terms as 100 per cent. Let us see where its money goes today. We will say that 65 per cent of its outgoing is in wages and salaries, 12 per cent in overheads, 10 per cent in purchase of materials, 2 per cent in capital development and 6 per cent in profit after tax, with 5 per cent already paid in tax. So let us take that 100 per cent, Mr. Hewitt, and look at the situation. Four per cent goes in company tax—that is, 5 per cent out of the effective 13 per cent profit—and 65 per cent goes in wages and salaries. Out of that 65 per cent, which the company has paid as a result of its productivity, how much goes directly to the Government? Let us say that about 25 per cent of the 100 per cent goes in direct taxation from the salaries of the employees. If one adds the direct company tax, one has 30 per cent. If one then adds, out of the remaining 40 per cent that the employees take home in their pay packets, the sales tax they pay for the purchase on their personal goods, that is about 10 per cent. One then begins to see a situation in which, before very long, once the various direct and indirect taxes are collected, the company's productivity has to survive and produce for this country 40 to 50 per cent for Government expenditure.

Let us have a look, Mr. Hewitt, at how the final breakdown works out. Forty per cent goes to the Government; 30 per cent goes to the public for their personal aggrandisement and their purchase of items (and the tax is taken out of that); 22 per cent goes for overhead, and the purchase of materials, and 8 per cent goes to the company. So the Government is not doing too badly.

One reason why it is important that we look at that structure is that it is all very well for us to talk about a State Budget but a State Budget is totally determined by the economic structure that is created in Australia by the Federal Government.

Then we look at the situation of sales taxes, with wage indexation being fixed to the concept of a consumer price index. Increasing sales taxes in those circumstances is indeed a foolish move, as is increasing indirect taxes, such as postal and telecommunication charges, which the Government has done. If these increases are taken into account in the Consumer Price Index, it becomes necessary to increase the percentage that comes from companies to the Government, through indexed wage increases and that decreases productivity. How are companies with perhaps a 10 per cent profitability—they may not be big companies; they may be the smaller companies—or a 10 per cent gross income increase, able to compete and expand and, by their expansion, provide further employment? In fact, they are not.

They have had to put people off. They have had to curtail building programmes and capital development. So where has the money gone that the companies would have had for capital development and for additional employees? It has gone into Federal coffers.

Any socialist objective—indeed, any objective—that a Government has can be achieved if the Government uses its funds wisely. So if a Government takes as much as it can from the gross productivity of a company and then expends the funds on static things that are non-productive, only one thing can come about—unemployment and a downturn in economic prosperity.

If, however, the Government uses those funds in areas that would be productive—in other words, producing more capital and further employment opportunities—it might help to ease the problems of unemployment. But that, of course, is not what we see, Mr. Hewitt. In fact, apparently that is not what is desired.

I do not deny that the present Federal Government has endeavoured to be the eternal Father Christmas. No doubt the Treasurers, many Ministers and many members in the Federal Parliament have attained their childhood dreams. But if these childhood dreams mean that they are the eternal Father Christmases, who keep handing things out without having to take into account where the money comes from to pay for them, unfortunately they are missing some of the realities of life.

A Government Member: The dreams might become nightmares.

Mr. BYRNE: Perhaps those dreams have become nightmares, but unfortunately they have not yet become nightmares in the minds of the men creating them. What situation do we see develop? In its endeavours to provide more things for the community and in its endeavour to advance education and welfare facilities—commendable aims—what does the Federal Government do? It achieves its aims by gross deficit budgeting. Deficit budgeting is a very simple and easy way of saying, “We’ll give you everything today but we’re not telling you that you will have to pay for it tomorrow.” What do we see with deficit budgeting over the last 10 years in Australia? Previous Federal Governments did not give out the enormous welfare benefits and gross payments—I must admit, some of them unwarranted—that the present Government has given out. But let us see why they did not. The reason is that their deficits were usually in the region of \$200,000,000 at the most. On one occasion—in 1967-68—the deficit went up to \$600,000,000. In 1970 it dropped to \$10,000,000. Had they so desired, those Governments could very easily have deficit-budgeted and created the sort of deficit we see today—somewhere in the region of \$3,000 million. What could those Governments have given the people of Australia

if they had deficit-budgeted for \$3,000 million? Unfortunately the members of the Opposition do not seem very interested in this because it strikes at the very essence of the weakness in the Federal Government’s economic structure.

Any Government can deficit-budget and say, “Because we have budgeted for this deficit of \$3,000 million we can afford to give all these Christmas presents away.” Unfortunately that is not very realistic. How many Opposition members in the present economic climate would look for a deficit in such proportion and ratio as that which exists if they were running a business?

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. BYRNE: I see that the Leader of the Opposition wants to have cigarette commercials in the Chamber. I should have thought that that was at least unparliamentary, but probably he is receiving some economic return for such commercials. I suppose one has to exploit every means available to bring in income if one wants to overcome the largest deficit this country has ever known.

Mr. Doumany interjected.

Mr. BYRNE: Of course, the Leader of the Opposition told us yesterday that he was a fruit hawker. Now he is trying to intimate to the Parliament that he is going to be a cigarette hawker.

The situation at the Federal level is clear. With a deficit of something like \$3,000 million—the honourable member for Carnarvon pointed out that it looks as if it might grow to \$6,000, \$7,000, \$8,000 million or more before the year is out—it is very easy to see how the Federal Government intends to finance its projects.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr. BYRNE: But I point out that someone is going to have to pay for it in the long run. There is no-one in Australia to pay for it other than the people themselves.

Mr. Houston: It’s quiet. You had better start again.

Mr. Wright: This is the best part of his speech.

Mr. BYRNE: We have heard that speech is silver and silence is golden. Unfortunately, in the brief pause I gave the Committee, members of the Opposition were unable to contain themselves even for a brief moment to pause for reflection. It would appear true that those who cannot reflect have little inside them to reflect about.

I leave the Federal Budget for the moment, pointing out that the basic principle upon which it has been developed is that of going into debt—and going into debt on a very large scale.

The Treasurer found himself in an unfortunate position when he was preparing his Budget. Before dealing with that, however,

I point out that Queensland's basis for determining a Budget is unique. My belief in the matter runs contrary to the view that over the past few years Queensland has been able to produce a balanced, workable and equitable Budget, one that has been effective in advancing the State of Queensland, and in economic terms I must question the basis of budgetary processes.

It would appear that in Queensland, as in many other States, instead of using budgetary measures as policy-making incentives, the Government has used them administratively. In other words, instead of determining funds for policy ventures, it has used funds in an administrative capacity. Each year the allocation of funds to departments proves that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much noise on my left.

Mr. BYRNE: Funds expended in one year by a department would appear to be used as the guide-line for determining the allocation of funds to that department in the following year. I am inclined to think that such a practice could lead to a waste of money. That is why I say the Government concerns itself with the administration of funds rather than with the use of funds clearly and concisely in a policy-making sense. In other words, an examination of the figures would seem to point to the fact that there are basic increases of virtually equal percentages from department to department, and in the main those percentages are equal to the gross increase in Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Houston: You don't think the Treasurer does a good job?

Mr. BYRNE: He does a marvellous job. Quite candidly, I did not expect this year's Budget to be so beneficial to the people of Queensland. It has been brought down in a most unhealthy economic climate.

Mr. Hanson: What about the increase in rail fares?

Mr. BYRNE: As the honourable member for Port Curtis points out, rail fares have increased by an average of 40 per cent. But I point out they had not increased in the 10 years prior to this. I am quite certain that the honourable member is not complaining about the increase in the liquor licence fees. It was not imposed on him, so he is more easily able to receive economic benefits.

I turn now to the Federal Government's coal export levy. Although the Federal Government legally had the right to impose such a levy, it has set an unfortunate precedent by imposing it. A levy on the export of coal could be extended to cover other minerals and in fact other areas of community productivity. As a result of the imposition of the levy, the Queensland Government lost

\$5,000,000. How much does the Federal Government expect to receive over the next 12 months from the levy? It will probably receive something in the order of \$120,000,000. This huge sum of money has been taken from the people of Queensland. If the Queensland Government had received even only one-third of that sum, it would not have found it necessary to increase rail fares and freight rates by 40 per cent; nor would it have been forced to increase other taxes and charges.

It appears that whenever Queensland assists an industry so that it becomes economic, the Federal Government decides to reap the economic benefits and to use them for its own ends.

I shall now deal with a very pressing need in my own area—that is housing. Honourable members opposite seem to have bound themselves into a caucus, whispering behind their hands because they are not in their room to whisper. Perhaps if I pause for a moment it may sink through to them that I am trying to direct a comment to them. It appears, unfortunately, that they are as interested in housing for the people of Queensland as the Federal Government was in its recent Budget. In that Budget, Mr. Hayden had the temerity to say that, because of the increased improvements in the field of private industry housing, there was no longer any need for the Federal Government to assist greatly in welfare housing. That is a most damnable statement by the Treasurer. He said that there was no longer any need for the Government to play a large part in housing. What does that mean? Housing strikes at the very root and basis of community development and upbringing. There are many people in the community striving to get homes to live in or striving to get suitable places in which to raise their families, but they are told by the Federal Treasurer that there is no longer any substantial need. Perhaps the Treasurer has no need in this context, but I do not know what norm he used as a basis for his statement. If Mr. Hayden thinks there is no longer any substantial need, he might look a little closer at some of the people in the community who have been gravely affected by the economic mismanagement of this country in the last few years.

The purchasing of houses is only one element. There are other elements of need in housing, including maintenance and improvement. What funds have come from the Federal Government for housing? Was there an increased attempt to improve the standard of living or an increased attempt to raise community standards, to improve the places for family life and growth and to give children somewhere to live and grow up into good citizens? No, there was not. In fact, there was an effective decrease in funds because the Federal Treasurer said that there was no need. The Federal Government has committed a very great oversight. It can find funds for hundreds of different things

but not for assisting housing. Surely that is the basic essential for a family to develop and grow.

Mr. McKechnie: They want to see the workers pushed from landlord to landlord.

Mr. BYRNE: The point made by the honourable member is valid.

It appears that the Federal Government has decided that the depressed voter votes for it, and indeed electoral figures appear to indicate that the depressed voter does just that. The persons in unfortunate economic circumstances who the Federal Government said were in need are no longer in need. The Federal Government has found out that if the lot of the depressed voter is improved he finds that life has more to it than the A.L.P. told him, and he thinks of rejecting Labor. The principle is very clear. To keep the vote of the depressed person, he is kept depressed. That is unfortunate, but it appears to be true.

Why is it that the Federal Government believes there should be more rental houses than privately-owned homes? What happens when a person is renting a home rather than purchasing it? Doesn't he get a lot more out of his pay packet when he does not have to meet interest and instalment payments on a home? He thinks he is better off, and so he says, "Isn't this a good Government? Isn't this Government wonderful?" He only pays, we will say, \$30 or \$40 a week in rent instead of \$50, \$60, \$70 or \$80 as repayments on a home. He says, "I am not too badly off at all. The people in the community who are paying off homes find themselves in circumstances where they are economically unable to make ends meet, but I am not too badly off." That person says, "This Government isn't too bad." But he has no security for the future. He is totally dependent on the Government for the things he receives. He is the person who says that the Federal Government is not too bad.

Let us have a look at another element of it. The person living in rented premises also has more money to spend. The effect of that is that he spends more money on consumer goods. That opens the way for the Government to say, "Look, instead of the money going into the housing industry, it is now being used to purchase consumer goods. We are hoping that this will create more employment by creating more demand."—and, of course, creating more inflation. So we find ourselves in a cyclic area with the Government endeavouring to produce a country of rent-payers who think they are better off than they are, who have no security for the future, and who find themselves dependent upon the Government, both in youth and in old age. Yet still, in the long term, we do not overcome the problems of inflation or unemployment.

It becomes very clear that in his framing of the Budget the Treasurer encountered very great difficulties. I feel that I must comment on police. I am personally very pleased that

the Police Force will be strengthened by an 8 per cent increase in members, and that there is to be a reintroduction of foot patrols. Vandalism, delinquency and juvenile crime increases by the day. I do not deny that. I do not advocate that young people be tapped on the head with the comment, "Well, too bad. It couldn't be helped." However, I am well aware that many young people who commit crimes, both minor and major, are in unfortunate family situations. Why is there an increase daily in juvenile crime? Why is there an increase in vandalism and delinquency? Some members will tell us that it is because they do not have enough police. I point out that they are seeking corrective rather than preventive measures.

Crime arises from a society that is becoming more and more degenerate. It arises from a society in which goals have been lost; in which people no longer know what it is in life they are seeking; and in which people have given up faith in being able to succeed, achieve and reach a goal. So, whilst an increase in police strength might help to overcome problems of vandalism and delinquency (I hope also that a broadening of the Juvenile Aid Bureau might be able to correct many of the problems that arise), it still does not avoid the essential fact that, though we might try to correct social problems and social evils, we cannot overcome them unless we prevent them at their base.

It is not just in the area of police and criminal matters that we see society, in some sense, breaking down; that we see the loss of goals, the loss of principle, and the loss of something for people to strive for. It exists in many sectors of the community. Combined with vandalism and delinquency is an increase in other social problems. There is an increase in family social problems, in broken homes, in destitution, and in social aberrations that are not of benefit to the family unit. These situations continue to develop. They will go on developing until there is an improvement in the standard of housing and the standards of the community generally.

The eternal Father Christmas can no longer stay with us. We have to be sensible, and at times we have to be harsh, in sorting out stability in the economic structures. In the past few years the organisational group that has benefited most by wage rises and price rises has been the Federal Government, and, rather than use the increased funds that come from national productivity for productive purposes, it uses them for non-productive purposes—and to excess. The effect of this is to produce a situation where the individual begins to lose his right of choice, his sense of being in the community, and his goals.

The State Budget contains the means to increase the fields of education, housing and welfare services at a sensible rate. I agree that they do not increase at a rate that would please everyone, but if all people in the State were asked if they would like

\$1,000 to help them improve their standard of living, very few would say, "No"; most would say "Yes". People are happy to receive everything that a Government offers. Once it has been taken from them in taxes, they are pretty loath to say they will not take it. They have already paid for it in their taxes, so they say they suppose they should have it. Of course, if people received an extra benefit by not being taxed so heavily, they could determine their own lives a little more.

In conclusion, I comment on the present situation of the Federal Government and the Federal Opposition, and the possibility of an election. I hope that this is not a certainty. The Federal Budget was indeed a Budget of deceit in one sense. It contained many promises and gave many things away, but when do those things become effective? Pension increases do not become effective until 1 November. The increased tax-rebate concept will not appear in a person's pay packet until January. It will then be at double the rate. The taxpayer does not realise that, because he will be receiving this increased amount in his pay packet, he will get a smaller refund after filing his return in July.

When would be a good time for a Government that brought down such a Budget to face an election? Although the Government has not decided how much it will give out in increased pensions, the best time for pensioners would surely be after November. Surely the most advantageous time would be some time after January, when people find perhaps \$10 or \$20 a week more in their pay packets. They will say, "This Government is not too bad. It has reduced taxation. We are getting more money in our pay packets." The pensioners will say, "This Government is not too bad. We are better off. We are getting more money again."

But what will happen when they file their income tax returns? Instead of receiving a tax refund in the realm of \$500, they might receive a bill for \$30. If that is not deceit, I do not know what is. It is unfortunate that this talk about forcing a Federal election comes before us because such forcing could produce a situation in which the deceit of a Federal Budget could create an unfortunate and deceitful situation in society.

I support the State Budget, and I congratulate the Treasurer on its production. I hope that this community will seek the benefit of it, and of this Government, in future years.

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

Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumbidgee) (7.15 p.m.): I have examined the Budget very carefully, perhaps more carefully than most other people have. It is certainly a very good Budget drawn up by the Treasurer in very difficult economic times and I would like to congratulate him on a job well done.

This is the tenth Budget he has presented and this is the fourth time I have been in this Parliament to hear the presentation of the Budget.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order! Honourable members should give the honourable member for Murrumbidgee an opportunity to speak.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Mr. Kaus, you know as well as I do they are frightened of me. They want to try to cut me off, but they have as much chance as a snowball in hell. In fact, I am surprised to see members of the Opposition here tonight because usually I belt hell out of them and they run for cover, hide in their rooms and listen on the loud-speaker system. The Leader of the Opposition said it was a bad Budget. He is just a big bag of wind and hot air. How would he know whether the Budget was good or bad? He is just like the rest of the A.L.P. They are a bunch of knockers. They will not give credit where credit is due. When the history of Queensland politics is written, a special chapter will be reserved for Sir Gordon Chalk and the work he has done in the time he has been a member of this Parliament. I have no hesitation in saying that and nothing to gain from saying it. I say it with sincerity; it comes right from the heart.

The A.L.P. wanted to give the Torres Strait islands away. They want to give the State of Queensland away and put it under Federal jurisdiction.

An Opposition Member: We don't, you know.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Of course you do. You have said so on many occasions. The A.L.P. even passed a motion at the Cairns conference to the effect that it would hold a referendum in Queensland with a view to disbanding the Queensland Government and placing Queensland under Federal control. The A.L.P. is just a mob of centralists.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Would honourable members mind allowing the honourable member to express his opinion!

Mr. FRAWLEY: While I am on the subject of what the Federal Government would do—it has a plan to disband 131 local authorities in Queensland and replace them with 10 regions governed from Canberra. Honourable members can imagine what it would be like trying to contact somebody in Canberra.

An Opposition Member: That's not true.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is definitely true. I cannot understand how local government

aldermen or councillors could possibly support the Federal Government, yet they do. Before discussing particular aspects of the Budget, I will take the opportunity to draw to the attention of honourable members certain things that have occurred over the past few months. Last July an unwarranted attack was made by the Leader of the Opposition on Mr. Sparkes, the chairman of the National Party. He accused Mr. Sparkes of attempting to direct National Party parliamentarians how to vote in the selection of a senator. We know that is a downright untruth.

Mr. Wright: Come on!

Mr. FRAWLEY: To my knowledge National Party parliamentarians have never been directed by Mr. Sparkes. This is a far cry from A.L.P. politicians, who dance to the tune called by the Q.C.E. Why don't they admit that they're only puppets on a string here controlled from the Trades Hall? We don't sign anything—

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask honourable members to stop this cross-fire.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Please accept my sincerest apologies, Mr. Kaus. National Party politicians do not sign documents, such as those signed by A.L.P. politicians that they will obey the directions of the Q.C.E. We never sign anything like that. All A.L.P. politicians sign, and even the people standing—

An Opposition Member: What about the Communists?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I'll talk about Communists in a minute. Just hang on. I will have a fair bit to say about Communism before I am through.

Even people standing for local authority elections such as those for the Redcliffe City Council have to do this. I have the honour to represent the western portion of the city of Redcliffe, as those who know their electorates would know; but unfortunately some members of the Opposition do not even know where Murrumba is.

Even the people who stand for local authority elections have signed a document agreeing to abide by the decisions of the Q.C.E. Three A.L.P. candidates have been endorsed for the next election for the Redcliffe City Council, and I warn the people of Redcliffe that if they elect those candidates they will be putting the affairs of the city of Redcliffe into the hands of the Q.C.E. If by some mischance the A.L.P. happened to win the Redcliffe City Council election—I would bet \$1,000 against it—the people of Redcliffe would be controlled from the Trades Hall. What a shocking thing for the fair city of Redcliffe to be

controlled by the mob of rat-bags, radicals, Communists, perverts and homosexuals who frequent the Trades Hall!

The Treasurer has had a very difficult task in framing this Budget—there is no doubt about that—and his difficulty has been due largely to the misbehaviour of the Whitlam Government. Anyone who denies that does not know what he is talking about.

I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the most dangerous man in Australia today. I refer to Dr. Cairns, who is a firm socialist and a running mate of the Communists.

Mr. Jensen: He's been sacked.

Mr. FRAWLEY: He has not been sacked. He is one of those who would place Australia under the domination of Communists to achieve his own personal ambitions.

A Government Member: What about "The Strangler"?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't know about him. I do not intend to mention Junie Morosi or drag any red herrings across the trail.

Dr. Cairns is well known as a socialist Labor Party strategist. He is their cornerstone—there is no doubt about that—and in his book "The Quiet Revolution", which was printed in 1972, he outlined the way in which a free Australia could be turned into a socialist dictatorship. As we all know, Mr. Kaus, socialism is the running mate of Communism. In that book, Dr. Cairns quoted some of Lenin's views.

Mr. Greenwood: He said it is necessary to break the law.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I think that all honourable members know that. Dr. Cairns said—

"I believe there is evidence to show that the 'Revolutionary' movement in Australia, never nearly so 'Revolutionary conscious' as now, was more militant and ready to turn to violence in the nineteenth century than it is now."

I intend to say something more about Dr. Cairns to remind the people of Queensland and Australia of the dangers that face them if Dr. Cairns and the Left-wingers ever take complete control in Australia. He said—

"A revolution is needed. It is a profound change in the values which dominate us today. The delusions of supremacy we hold have to be replaced by the new Reformation.

"The new Reformation will come only when people are forced to reject the old values, and accept the new."

Mr. Wright: Who did kick that dog?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I intend to speak about that later, but first I shall finish what I was saying about Dr. Cairns.

Dr. Cairns has implemented this tactic through the Labor Government's consistent destruction of all that has been held decent

in this country. One has only to recall some of the contentious Bills that the Federal Labor Government has passed. Look at the Bill it wants to bring in to amend the Australian Capital Territory Criminal Code and legalise homosexuality. It wants to legalise incest, too. That is shocking! On a television programme on Channel 9 tonight I saw the shocking case of three homosexuals wanting to adopt a child. They should never be allowed to adopt anything—not even a dog. The Federal Government is even going to legalise marriage between homosexuals.

Dr. Cairns has indicated clearly his desire to suppress the freedom of the Press. He has said also that revolution in an advanced capitalist country can become a possibility only if there is a severe economic crisis. There is no doubt that there is an economic crisis in Australia. It has been created deliberately by the socialist Labor Government, by letting capital run wild for the first 12 months and then forcing severe credit restrictions on the community, with high interest rates. That has caused quite a number of the free-enterprise businesses in this country to go into liquidation—either voluntarily or compulsorily.

Dr. Cairns said that revolution can take place in these three ways—

“(1) By a serious national economic crisis and breakdown;

“(2) By a sufficiently strong national movement against foreign imperialism and racial domination;

“(3) By invasion of sufficient power or influences from outside to push the indigent revolutionary forces in the direction history and circumstances were taking them. This is likely to happen only in the security sphere of the Soviet Union or China.”

I am quoting Dr. Cairns's exact words. They are not my words but his words contained in his book “The Quiet Revolution”. He went on—

“It is only if the system of production breaks down badly that the prevailing standards and style of life will be generally questioned and, perhaps, replaced.

“It is unlikely that any forces or factors, like foreign interference, can change this relationship of events and, unless foreign interference is consistent with the needs of the particular national situation.”

There is no doubt that the socialist Labor Government is desperately trying to achieve that breakdown. It has created economic chaos and it is trying to squeeze the State Government dry through the implementation of a horror Budget and astronomical taxation. Dr. Cairns also said—

“It is possible that power can come in from outside in a way which may help the Revolutionaries in Australia.

“Trade unions and parties like Labor parties are themselves part of this collective of power centres, and whilst they add much

to their power if a Labor party becomes the Government, they still depend very much upon their direct relationship with the other more basic power centres.” (In other words, the Left-wing unions.) “In a significant sense Labor cannot gain power at all simply by winning an election. The ‘Left’ must realise that progress for it must be won by it, and that requires not only an effective criticism of the established order but a practical programme derived from what is needed to travel the road to the new society. The programme of the ‘Left’ must be more than militant attacks upon the established order; it must be that, and a practicable alternative, too. It must be more than form. It must be substance too. It must be more than a convincing act of militancy that makes the blood of the gentle Tory run cold.”

I am quoting Dr. Cairns's exact words—

“It must be a realistic programme of doing things in accord with the principles of the new Society which is the inspiration of the ‘Left’.”

Dr. Cairns also said—

“Moscow and Peking need a Communist Party in Australia . . .”

What a shocking thing for a man in a Federal Labor Government to say. He continued—

“. . . not because it may be able to bring about a revolution, but so that it can add to the world-wide evidence made up of such Communist parties, that Moscow or Peking is right and widely supported.”

That is all they really want it for.

Mr. Wright: What has this got to do with the Budget?

Mr. FRAWLEY: This is very important. It has a serious effect on the Budget. It is because of things like this that the Treasurer has been caused so much difficulty in framing his Budget. I do not intend to be distracted. Dr. Cairns also said—

“It is useful to have Trotsky-ists around for they are always ready to act as devil's advocates and pour ‘the acid’. If there is no serious crisis or breakdown in a Society, it appears change will be slow and gradual. There is more participation in the political process and although it does not achieve much, it is true that the political process is the most effective way to achieve most change or means of change.”

Mr. Moore: Put your finger on the place.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't have to put my finger on my place. The honourable member for Windsor is only being facetious.

Mr. Moore: Just a joke.

Mr. FRAWLEY: He and I are old classmates from school. I know very well that his interjections are to be tolerated. They are made in a humorous manner and I never will take offence at anything said by him.

Dr. Cairns further said—

“Parliament is a rubber stamp but it is possible that it can rubber stamp policies of a very different kind.”

That is quite correct. If we did not have the Senate, the Federal House of Representatives would be rubber-stamping every filthy, rotten Bill the Federal Government wanted to put through.

I will conclude my little dig at the Communists with an extract from Karl Marx's Manifesto. It referred to 10 different ways to bring Communism into different countries, as follows:—

“Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes; a heavy progressive or graduated income tax; abolition of all right of inheritance . . .”

Mr. Jensen interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order! Will the honourable member for Bundaberg please refrain from interjecting!

Mr. FRAWLEY:

“ . . . confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels; centralisation of credit in the hands of the State by means of a National bank with State Capital and an exclusive monopoly; centralisation of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.”

The Federal Government tried to take over communication and transport in this State.

“ . . . extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; equal obligation of all to work; establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture . . .”

They would turn people into what they call a group of Stakhanovites who would work on collective farms.

“ . . . combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.”

That last one is about the only decent thing in it that I can see. It also claims free education for all children in public schools. We know the type of education they would give children in public schools.

I want to deal now with the Hornibrook Highway, the 1½ mile viaduct that connects Sandgate with the city of Redcliffe. It was built by the late Sir Manuel Hornibrook and opened in 1935. Last Saturday the toll, which had remained unchanged since 1935, was removed. The Hornibrook Highway has served Redcliffe for 40 years. By shortening the trip from Brisbane by approximately seven miles it helped open up the Redcliffe

Peninsula and brought a healthy economy to the area. I suppose that I have driven across the Hornibrook Highway at least 10,000 times and have paid approximately \$1,000 in tolls. As I say, the toll has remained unchanged, at 1s. or 10c.

Mr. Jensen: How many shares do you have in it?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Not one. I wish to God I had thousands. Last year the company paid 92 per cent to all its debenture holders.

The matter of the Hornibrook Highway is often used by the A.L.P. for political purposes, especially at election time. In 1972 the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Houston, endeavoured to mislead the people of Redcliffe by telling them that if the A.L.P. were elected to office in 1972, it would remove the toll and would immediately start planning a new bridge. His statement was, of course, untrue.

When the Federal Government took over the taxing powers from the States in 1942 it agreed to give money back to the States in the form of grants. I doubt whether the Federal Government gives back half of what it takes from this State by way of taxation. Any money that is provided for the maintenance of the Hornibrook Highway will have to be made available by way of main roads grants from the Queensland Government.

Mr. Jensen: What about the toll on the Bribe Island Bridge?

Mr. FRAWLEY: It was lifted long ago.

Estimates of cost of replacement of the Hornibrook Highway vary from \$5,500,000 to \$12,500,000. I think an accurate estimate would be \$8,000,000.

I am amazed at the action of the Federal Government in giving to Germaine Greer a couple of hundred thousand dollars to make a pornographic film. There is no doubt that half the Labor Party back-benchers in Canberra pictured themselves as stars in the film and that that is why they agreed to give her the money.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Of course she's a lesbian!

Mr. Moore: Who is?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Germaine Greer. No man in his right mind would bother with her. She's even worse than Dracula's daughter.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FRAWLEY: Instead of wasting \$1,300,000 on the purchase of “Blue Poles”, the Federal Government should have given

the money to Queensland to help improve its roads and to help meet the cost of replacing the Hornibrook Highway. Look at the money the Federal Government wasted on the Women and Politics conference in Canberra. A lot of good women attended the conference, and they were disgusted at some of the things that went on there. It was a waste of money and a degradation of womanhood. The Federal Government brought in a mob of harridans to try to disrupt the conference. One of them was Flo Kennedy, with whom the honourable member for Toowong dealt very effectively the other day. Mrs. Whitlam said, "Isn't she nice! Isn't she charming!" She would be a good judge of character!

Some of the country women attending that conference raised with Mrs. Whitlam the problems facing them in their areas. The big anarchist has just walked into the Chamber. I have something here about his rubbish-dumping at Inala. He can try as much as he likes, but he will not get me off this subject. When these country women told Mrs. Whitlam of their problems—how they needed telephones and cars, and how the petrol tax was affecting them—she merely wrinkled her nose and said, "The city women have more problems than you do." What a shocking thing to say to women from the country who are burdened with these problems. The Federal Government, by its iniquitous petrol tax, has made things much worse for them.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Before I help you make your speech, I want an assurance that the people in the gallery are not your supporters.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Through you, Mr. Kaus, I point out that most of the people in the gallery are intelligent enough to be my supporters. Having listened to some of the speeches made by the Opposition rag-tag mob, they would certainly give me their support. Opposition members cannot even write a decent speech. All their speeches are written by the ghost writers at the Trades Hall. They are sent down from the Trades Hall and sometimes they get the wrong one from the shuffle. They do not even know what they are reading. The speeches are dealt out like a pack of cards.

Before I conclude my speech, I wish to refer to Senator Georges. On 3 September, Senator Georges, in the Federal Senate, made one of his rotten, filthy and vicious attacks on the Premier and the State of Queensland. He called us a hillbilly State. Senator Georges is a well-known Communist. The Communists paid his way to Greece in 1972. He had the impertinence to vilify the Premier of Queensland, a man whose boots he is not even fit to lick.

Senator Georges showed his true colours during the Springbok tour. He sat down in the streets, supported by Communists and the former member for Everton, who was a disgrace to this Chamber. I am pleased

to say that I respect the present honourable member for Everton. I predict that he will go a long way in politics. Senator Georges wanted to give away the Torres Strait islands. When he went to the island of Saibai, the Islanders would not let him land. The honourable member for Cook is not in the Chamber, but I am sure he could tell us how his friends stood on the beach with spears and dared Senator Georges to step off the boat. It is interesting to note that Senator Georges used to be the treasurer of the Queensland Rugby Union Referees Association. When he "tickled" the kitty, he was asked to resign. The association was never so well off as it has been since he resigned.

Mr. Gunn: Didn't they call him "Hydraulics"?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do not know about that.

Senator Georges did not have the decency to congratulate this Government on its choice of a senator. He was supported by Senator Keeffe when he made his contribution. He is supposed to be the champion of Aborigines. When the Labor Party convention in Cairns passed the motion to legalise homosexuality in this State, he put his arm around the fellow next to him, who damn near died when he saw it was Senator Georges.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order!

Mr. FRAWLEY: Mr. Kaus, I do not intend to be distracted by irrelevant remarks.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am speaking to you, Mr. Kaus, and I am even looking your way.

I do not want to be distracted by any irrelevant remarks of members of the Labor Party. Senator Keeffe and Senator Georges stood in the Federal Parliament and vilified the State of Queensland by referring to it as the hillbilly State. They are traitors to the State. Indeed, most members of the Queensland Opposition are traitors to the State. They are a crowd of centralists. There is no doubt about that. But what can we expect from a party with a Federal leader like Whitlam?

We have only to consider the way he tried to rot the Constitutional Convention in Melbourne. I make the charge that Mr. Whitlam tried to bribe me to attend the Constitutional Convention in Melbourne. He wrote me a letter in which he offered me free air fares, accommodation and the use of a Commonwealth car if I would go to the Constitutional Convention. Two members of the Opposition availed themselves of the offer and went down. It is a shame to think that that could happen.

I now wish to comment on the new athletic track at Mt. Gravatt. This subject comes within the Budget.

Mr. Wright: It's about time.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It does come within the Budget.

I feel that the athletic track should have been built by the State Government instead of by the Brisbane City Council, which intends charging amateur athletes \$200 for an afternoon's competition on the track. It is an absolutely ridiculous fee for an amateur body. I do not mind the council charging \$200 for the G.P.S. sports this Saturday or for the All Schools sports or for any Queensland or Australian championships, but, with young children from the age of 9 competing, it is an imposition to expect their parents to pay as much as \$1.50 for each child.

I congratulate the Brisbane City Council for building that track. It is the only decent thing Clem Jones has done in his life—except resigning from office.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Have you ever been psychiatrically examined?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't have to be; but, if the honourable member keeps that up, I will read out another letter I have about him and he won't like this one.

While I am on the subject of sport, let me give the Australian Rugby League selectors a bit of a touch up. The Queensland selectors, Bert Quinn and Mick Retchless, certainly did their job. If ever anybody in this State was robbed, it was Geoff Richardson when he was not picked as five-eighth in the Australian team. Johnny Peard, who was lucky enough to kick seven goals for Eastern Suburbs in the final against St. George, was picked only because there are three New South Wales selectors and only two Queenslanders.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Are you on the Budget now?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I can say what I like in this debate. The honourable member should shut up and let me finish.

Queenslanders have had a raw deal for years in sport in Australia. It absolutely stinks that there are only four Queenslanders in the Australian Rugby League team. I could not resist the opportunity of saying a few words about that. This debate is one of the few opportunities for a member to speak on everything and anything.

I turn now to the Rape Crisis Centre at Red Hill. The Police Minister has done a good job. I cannot see any provision in the Budget for an increase in the squad of policewomen who deal with rape referrals. I hope their numbers are increased and that they are able to handle many more cases.

Mr. Wright: You don't hope that there are more cases, do you?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I did not mean that. I mean that 70 per cent of rape cases are not reported. I sincerely trust that rape complainants go to the policewomen instead of going to the stupid Rape Crisis Centre, which is run by a group of women who do not have the slightest concern for the victims of the assaults. On every occasion, they try to prevent the rape victim from reporting the offence to the police. When a woman goes to the centre to talk about being raped, they place dummies of men on the floor and run up and kick them and call them male chauvinist pigs. That is what a stupid crowd they are. They have dummies of men on the floor and run around and beat them. I was told that by someone who went there. It is shocking to think that that should happen. The centre should be closed down. None of the people at the centre need worry about being raped—not by male humans, anyway. They are pretty safe from men; there is no doubt about that.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: What a dreadful thing to say.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is not a dreadful thing to say. I hope that the Police Minister is able to increase his squad so that more women might be encouraged to report these vicious attacks on them.

Returning to the Budget itself—as it is drawn up in times of economic crisis, on the whole the Budget is a fairly good one, but there are one or two things in it to which I must take exception. I refer first to the fee imposed on driving licences which are renewed for less than five years. Most of those people would be pensioners. Although it is only \$1 per annum, that is an imposition for a pensioner. A driver gets his first licence for 10 years, but after he has turned 50 it has to be renewed every five years. And it must be renewed annually after he turns 60.

The one-third reduction in road transport fees on all goods is certainly the first step in fulfilment of an election promise made by this Government. No doubt we will complete the job within a three-year period. We promised that road transport fees would be abolished over three years and we have made a start.

It would not be remiss of me to mention that estates passing from spouse to spouse have been exempted from death duties. It is a step in the right direction. I realise the difficulties confronting the Treasurer in working to eliminate death duties and these other taxes, because after all the State has to get its money from somewhere. Even the fat salaries drawn by Labor Opposition members have to be paid for by the people of Queensland.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: You told me that if there was any justice, the Premier should be paying them.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I deny that.

I go on record as saying that the Treasurer is without peer in the Treasurership of this State. For 10 years as Treasurer he has had an unblemished record.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: The honourable member for Rockhampton will never be Treasurer. That is a certainty. It fact, when the people of Rockhampton wake up, he will be lucky to be here after the next election.

Mr. Wright: You said that seven years ago.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I was not here seven years ago, so how could I say it?

Once again education has received a fairly large slice of the Budget. I have heard Opposition members and other people talk about education in this State. Since the National-Liberal Government came to office in 1957, education has gone ahead in leaps and bounds.

Pre-school facilities are about 60 per cent complete. There is no doubt that this Government is sticking to its word on pre-school education.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: That is a lot of rubbish and I can't believe it. I congratulate the Treasurer on the allocation that he has made for education.

I should like to say once more that the State of Queensland should take a serious look at the punishment prescribed for crimes of violence. I refer particularly to rape and murder. I have said this on more than one occasion and been taken to task by all the do-gooders for saying it. I am not worried about that. The way I see it, a man should be prepared to stand up in this Chamber and say what he thinks. I do not believe that Dr. Paul Wilson, the University of Queensland criminologist, knows what he is talking about when he claims that it is ridiculous to expect the reintroduction of capital punishment to deter crime. I believe it would.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Do you believe in amputation for rapists?

Mr. FRAWLEY: No. I think they should be tied to a post and flogged. I have said this before. I think we should bring in flogging. I would prefer that to any other method of punishment because I do not see the sense in destroying—

Mr. Wright: Before they are proved guilty?

Mr. FRAWLEY: After they are proven guilty. The honourable member for Rockhampton is being facetious and ridiculous again.

The Government appointed a select committee to investigate crime and punishment. I voted for it to be composed of honourable members from both sides of the Assembly.

I did this against my will and against my better judgment. From now on I will vote against any Opposition member being on a select committee because the Opposition members on that select committee did not go onto it with an open mind. Before they went onto it they knew how they were to vote.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: There were three Labor members on it.

An Opposition Member interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I know how he voted. He voted with the courage of his convictions, but the Labor Party members did not. They voted as directed. They were told to vote against any increase in punishment for crimes and they did it. It is down in black and white. I have the report of the select committee. As other honourable members want to speak, I will get onto my next point.

Recently in this Chamber the honourable member for Archerfield accused the State Government of hypocrisy over Queensland's litter problems. Who in this Chamber would be the biggest hypocrite over litter problems? I made a speech on this matter one day in the debate on matters of public interest and anyone who heard me knows that the honourable member for Archerfield went out to Blunder Road, Inala—I have forgotten the date but it was some time in June—and threw a pile of rubbish out of his car boot onto the side of the road.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I rise to a point of order. Normally I am not thin-skinned but what the honourable member has said is a deliberate lie and I ask that he withdraw it.

Mr. FRAWLEY: You did.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Mr. Kaus!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order! The honourable member will withdraw his statement.

Mr. FRAWLEY: No. He said it was a deliberate lie. I can't withdraw that. That is an unparliamentary term. He has no right to say that.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member for Archerfield to withdraw the remark that it was a deliberate lie.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: All right—a deliberate untruth.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable member for Murrumba now withdraw his remark.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Yes, Mr. Kaus. In deference to you, I withdraw that remark. But the honourable member for Archerfield is a big hypocrite, because he tossed that rubbish out at Archerfield.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I've got a letter from one of his constituents—

Mr. K. J. HOOPER: I rise to a point of order. I have already asked the honourable member to withdraw that statement. It is offensive. I appeal to your sense of fair play, Mr. Kaus, and for your tolerance.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is fair.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! It might be fair, but would the honourable member mind withdrawing it?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I withdraw, Mr. Kaus. But you well know I received a letter from a constituent of the honourable member for Archerfield—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I asked the honourable member to withdraw.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am withdrawing it, but unfortunately this other bloke won't withdraw it. He wrote to me and claimed that he was driving past with two witnesses and saw a man, whom he took to be the honourable member for Archerfield, get out of a car and dump this rubbish at the side of the road. I have a photograph here of those baggy trousers. Everybody here recognises those trousers; he wore them when he took the oath of allegiance here in 1972. Of course he dumped his pants at the side of the road. Everybody knows that.

Mr. Moore: It was mistaken identity; it only looked like him.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Looked like him! The only one who looks like him is Senator Georges.

In conclusion, I want to refer to the Caboolture Fire Brigade. This definitely relates to the Budget; there is no doubt about it. The Caboolture Fire Brigade has been asking the State Fire Services Council for more firemen for Caboolture. Because of annual holidays, at the present time that brigade is one fireman short for 40 weeks of the year, and there is no provision for assistance if anybody is taken ill. They applied for more firemen, and they were knocked back. They could not get even one more. There are seven men in the Caboolture Fire Brigade, and they answered 318 fire calls in the past 12 months. If ever there was a case for an increased allocation for the State Fire Services Council to enable the Caboolture Fire Brigade to employ more men, this was it. I make an appeal—

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Do you feel that the Minister for Industrial Development should recognise the United Fire Fighters Union as a bona fide union?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am going to wait until the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act Amendment Bill comes before us before I say something about the United Fire Fighters Union. I will say this: I think it

should be registered, and I go on record as saying that. I think the present situation is rotten.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I agree with you.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I believe that these fire brigade boards have more members than there are firemen in Queensland. I would like to check to see how many members there are on fire boards.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I think it should be supervised.

Mr. FRAWLEY: They should not be centralised; every area should have its own fire board. But I still appeal to the Minister to consider the matter of more firemen for Caboolture.

Mr. ELLIOTT (Cunningham) (7.54 p.m.): I wish to take part in this Budget debate—

Mr. K. J. Hooper: With that microphone in your hand you look like a poor man's Elvis Presley!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order!

Mr. ELLIOTT: I will be quite all right regardless of the honourable member for Archerfield.

In the first place, we should look at this Budget in the light of present economic circumstances. In an economic climate in which there is 5 per cent unemployment and an inflation rate of 18 per cent, I believe the Budget must be considered by all fair-minded people as a progressive document.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: What about the freight increase?

Mr. ELLIOTT: I accept that interjection. As I represent an area in which there are a large number of grain farmers, obviously it does not please me to see a possible increase of 40 per cent in grain rail freights. It has not been spelt out at this stage, even though I have asked a couple of times what the increase is to be.

Assuming that Sir Gordon Chalk is still finalising the freight differentials, I urge him to take into consideration the fact that the grain industry in my area has diversified tremendously in the last few years. When one looks back to the days of the last increase in rail freights—I admit that was a fair while ago—one recalls that the argument then used was that the grain-handling facilities provided by the railways were being used over only a very short period. In today's circumstances, that can no longer be seen as a valid argument. The special grain wagons are used much more. The Railway Department now handles wheat in large amounts from late October through till February, and it then handles sorghum and sunflower seed almost until it is due to begin handling wheat again. So I believe there is a greater diversity of use than

there was before, and obviously this must have improved the position relative to capital expenditure by the Railway Department.

When the Treasurer makes his decision, I would ask him to consider the situation not from the point of view that many people are expounding—that is, that the grain industry is one of the industries doing particularly well—but from the point of view that I shall now put forward. I admit that the returns are quite satisfactory on the basis of the price of the commodity. But we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by that, Mr. Kaus. We must first ask ourselves, “Will this continue? Secondly, we must ask ourselves, “Who in the grain industry is in a position to replace his machinery?”

Mr. K. J. Hooper: You're not crying poor for the cockies again!

Mr. ELLIOTT: How many honourable members opposite know just how much money is tied up in capital investment in the grain industry? In 1966 or 1967, the cost of a tractor for the small farmer was possibly of the order of \$3,000 to \$4,000. A small tractor now costs \$10,000 to \$12,000. In the case of the bigger farmer, it is not possible to buy for less than \$20,000 a tractor that will handle 600, 700, 800 or 900 acres under intensive cultivation on the Darling Downs.

The honourable member for Archerfield is retreating. He has obviously had enough.

What is the price of headers today? It has quadrupled, but the price of grain has not quadrupled. One cannot replace a header today for less than \$40,000 or \$50,000. By the time many grain farmers are in a position to replace their headers, the price will probably have increased to what cane farmers are now paying for cane harvesters—\$60,000, \$70,000 or \$80,000. One must look at the grain situation in that light, and I hope that Sir Gordon Chalk will take that into account when he is working out the freight differentials.

Let us now examine some of the major advances promised in the Government's policy speech. We have heard the Opposition accuse the Government of breaking its promises. I shall take first what I think is the most important point to come out of the Budget—the abolition of death duties. What was promised in the policy speech? The words used were these—

“We will accelerate the phasing out of death duties.”

What is the performance? The abolition of death duties from spouse to spouse. What a humane and humanitarian step that is. How often have we seen the plight of a widow who had worked and slaved on a farm or any sort of rural property when her husband was alive? She might have worked on a dairy farm all her married

life, milking the cows while her farmer husband was out ploughing. Should her husband be unfortunate enough to get killed in a car accident or to die prematurely in some other way, why should she be penalised? What is proposed is a tremendous step forward.

Dealing with road tax the policy speech stated—

“We will eliminate road tax over the next three years.”

What was the performance in that area? A reduction by one-third will take place this financial year. It is a very significant step forward. Over the years I have sat at numerous meetings when resolutions about road tax have been passed. My people are particularly happy about that provision. The introduction of road tax was an anti-decentralisation measure. We must work towards decentralisation. If we are to get away from the problems that beset big cities with their overcrowding and social turmoil, we must plan for decentralisation. This is an excellent step forward. If we can keep moving this way, we will get somewhere. We must never take anything for granted or sit back on our laurels. We must always progress.

In the policy speech it was further stated—

“We have decided to increase the strength of our Police Force by 5 per cent.”

What is the performance here? The Treasurer has made provision for an 8 per cent increase. That is even better than what was promised. Can that sort of thing be faulted? He has come up with the goods.

The doubling of the pay-roll tax exemption is an excellent provision. Obviously it will help many small producers of light engineering machinery. Tremendous damage is being wrought by today's economic circumstances. Many small businesses are in dire straits. In this way we are doing something definite to help them and I congratulate the Treasurer. It is an excellent step forward. I hope that it will attract more young people and others to go into business on their own.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

Mr. ELLIOTT: There are a lot of industries like that, particularly in my area. We have silo manufacturers, the light engineering fellows and many others. I am personally very pleased with the provision.

The Budget makes provision for an increase of 42.8 per cent in expenditure on education—a very significant advance. It is very gratifying to see that increase.

Mr. Jensen: It is inflationary.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Would the honourable member suggest that we should not spend money on education? Would he like to go on record as saying that we should not spend money on education? It is obvious

where his affiliations are. I am very gratified to see the increase in the number of pre-schools in my electorate. Hopefully the Minister will now be in a position to provide high school facilities for Millmerran, which would put children in that area on an equal footing with other children in the community. I have in mind children who live in Brisbane and Pittsworth and possibly Oakey and Clifton. Children in Millmerran suffer a serious disadvantage by having to travel long distances to attend school. I hope that the Minister for Education will try to alleviate the problem.

I commend the increase of 50 per cent in remote-area allowances. It is not difficult to work out that this increase will be of tremendous advantage to the people in the Outback. I regard this move as a humanitarian one. Similarly, the increase in assistance to non-State schools is worthy of praise. The socialists, of course, want to see an education system in which only one type of school is provided. They do not want to see any diversity. Parents who wish to have their children educated at church schools should be able to do so. There is room in our society for many types of education facilities. Why have a stereotype education system? Encouragement should be offered to anyone who is prepared to provide education facilities.

I congratulate the Treasurer on the provision of 500 scholarships for students in grades 11 and 12, to a maximum of \$1,000 each. Children in remote areas will benefit greatly from this budgetary measure. Many country children who have the ability to proceed to university are robbed of the chance of doing so by their geographic position.

Mr. JENSEN: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr. Kaus, to the state of the Committee. There is not a quorum present.

(Quorum formed.)

Mr. ELLIOTT: Whilst I commend many of the provisions in the Budget that assist people in rural areas, I express concern on the matter of soil erosion. My electorate has been declared an erosion-hazard area. I commend the Government for having come to grips with this problem, but I believe that the \$1,000 granted to primary producers by way of a \$ for \$ subsidy to enable them to carry out erosion-prevention measures should be increased. In today's economic climate, with the current high rate of inflation, the sum of \$1,000 is insufficient.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr. Kaus, to the fact that the honourable member for Bundaberg called a quorum and has now slunk out of the Chamber.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr. ELLIOTT: I hope that the Government will examine closely what is happening. Today, \$1,000 spent on this work goes nowhere. Since the Federal Government abolished the tax-incentive scheme for soil erosion control very little of this work has been done. If the Federal Government does not do something to help, or if the State Government cannot help—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I ask honourable members to give the honourable member for Cunningham an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. ELLIOTT: If the present situation continues, there will be no contractors left in my area to carry out this very important work. One contractor there has been engaged on soil erosion measures for a long time. In my opinion he does the best contour work in Queensland but the abolition of taxation incentives will put him out of business. That would be a tragedy for farmers in the area, and for the nation. We often hear people talk about conservation, and Opposition members are very good at it. But they think only of fashionable areas like beaches and the Cooloola sands. While I agree that these areas must be protected, soil erosion in the country is a much more insidious problem. With ever-increasing soil erosion, we will eventually be unable to produce the food needed in this country. We must do everything possible to further soil-erosion control.

To round off, I emphasise that the Budget over all is a very significant document in the light of the present economic situation.

Mr. SIMPSON (Coorooora) (8.13 p.m.): Every country, every firm, every individual depends on finance, and each is concerned with balancing a Budget. On this occasion, the Treasurer has presented a record Budget. Since 1961-62, the Budget has increased sixfold. That is a strong indicator of the tremendous growth in Queensland, and where we are going under our free-enterprise system. In 1961-62 the Treasurer budgeted for \$242,000,000, and in 1974-75 he budgeted for \$1,300 million. That is a tremendous increase.

However, it is not wise to allow figures showing an increase to assume too much significance. Canberra provides an example of escalation in taxation paid to meet the cost of government. The increase has been so marked that it has placed too heavy a burden on the community. It should be remembered that one-third of those in the work-force are Government employees. There are too many Government employees to be paid by the remaining two-thirds.

I commend the Treasurer on a job well done. As in all financial dealings, to be good in his office a Treasurer has to balance his budget. If a Treasurer has a flair for finance he will produce innovations, as our Treasurer did on this occasion with the abolition of probate duty as between husband

and wife. Although that is a step in the right direction, we do not reap the full benefit of it. The tax is abolished in Queensland, but, as a result, a larger estate becomes taxable by the Commonwealth. Hence, the beneficiary is not gaining as much as one might have thought. He is certainly not being saved the full amount of tax that would have been collected by the State Government. However, we have made the first move. It is now for us to follow it up at Commonwealth level so that the concessions granted in this Budget are mirrored by similar moves in Canberra.

I will give honourable members an indication of what I mean. On an estate of \$240,000, previously the Queensland tax would have been \$45,000, leaving an amount of \$195,000 on which death duty would be assessed by the Commonwealth. Its share of that would have been \$43,800, leaving a residue of \$151,200. Now that the State has abolished the payment of probate duty between husband and wife, the full amount of \$240,000 is subject to Commonwealth duty, which would be \$62,400. That means that the Commonwealth picks up about \$20,000 more than it would have formerly. The spouse is better off, naturally, but not to the full extent of the State's tax exemption. He or she is left with \$177,600. Honourable members can see that, although the State has made a bold move, only part of the concession is passed on to the beneficiary. We must highlight the fact that taxes are unjust when an estate passes from husband to wife.

To give another example—previously the State tax on an estate of \$200,000 would have been \$36,000. On the residue of \$164,000 the Commonwealth would have taken \$27,000, leaving a net residue of \$137,000. Following the State Budget, the \$200,000 is subject to a Commonwealth tax of \$44,000. Thus, the Commonwealth picks up an additional \$17,000, but the beneficiary is \$19,000 better off. So, although this is a move in the right direction, we are transferring some of the benefit from the State to the Commonwealth. It is for us to see that the Commonwealth is urged to introduce complementary legislation.

The greatest expenditure provided in the Budget is for education—and rightly so. This allocation has been increased by 42 per cent to enable the appointment of more staff, both teachers and teacher aides, help for p. & c., committees, assistance in the pre-school field, as well as development in other areas. There is a need in my electorate for pre-schools, as there is in other parts of the State. Perhaps the most obvious location for such a school would be Nambour, which has 1,350 high school students, over 1,100 primary school students and 200 infants. Some 180 to 200 children would be in the pre-school class. Of them, 100 are being catered for at kindergartens.

But what is happening to the other 80 to 100 who are not receiving pre-school training? Often they are the children who are most in need, because concerned parents see that their children go to kindergarten and that they get the very best. Quite often the children who most need encouragement do not get it from their parents, and do not find themselves at kindergarten. Such parents should be encouraged to take advantage of the pre-school system.

Other areas such as Imbil, Peregian, Cooroy, Coolum, Bli Bli, Eumundi, Montville and Mapleton require pre-schools, and I am sure that the Budget will provide a greater opportunity for their provision. We are fortunate in that a new pre-school will be opened shortly at Tewantin. Although temporary arrangements have been made at Coolum, we are still waiting for a pre-school to be built.

Schools create a climate that encourages young people at an impressionable age to follow pursuits that should make them better and more educated people. It is regrettable that the Commonwealth Government has decided to abolish the cadet system as an essential part of that training. It is a backward step in defence. All young people should have an opportunity to undertake this training. It promotes discipline, which is of great advantage to a country in times of need.

The provision of scholarships for children in areas that do not have high schools, particularly in the Outback, is a slight step forward in trying to balance the books of the people in large, sparsely populated areas of the State who need something going for them because they are disadvantaged in so many ways. We must endeavour to improve their educational facilities in every way possible, and this is a move in the right direction.

The Budget also provides increases in bus allowances. These should be of assistance considering the deteriorated condition of our roads. There is a great need for school-bus operators to remain viable so that children can be transported to school.

I was interested to hear that in addition to education being made a major part of the Budget, there is a follow-on in that we are educating our children so that they will have satisfying employment. It is no good simply stepping up education so that children will be given an opportunity to be better educated according to their capacities if there are not jobs available for them. There would then be the problem presented by educated unemployed who do not know what to do with themselves. The education system needs built into it the capacity to produce a future generation capable of handling the shorter working week brought about by increased productivity, and an ability to handle leisure time better than they do at the moment.

Assistance for industry in areas of high unemployment and in areas where the population is rising rapidly, such as my electorate, is essential so that such communities can be worthwhile places in which children can live, grow up in family unity, and be both educated and eventually employed within a reasonable distance of their homes. In this way their community involvement could be a natural one and not one that becomes a strain because children have to go a long way to school, apprentices have to go a long way to learn a trade, and workers have to travel long distances to their employment. These services take time, and a lot of money.

The industrial estates set up by this Government are a tremendous help in this regard, but there is a need for more of them. This is where the Treasurer has the problem of balancing the Budget; we can grow at only a certain rate, otherwise we over-extend our resources and cause instability.

Local government has an important part to play in helping to provide these services. It is interesting to see that there has been some help provided in this direction. The Treasurer, however, has his hands tied behind his back, because the only way this State can obtain finance is through the return of tax moneys from Canberra. I think we should look at unemployment benefits in a way in which they have not been provided before. Although this is a Commonwealth responsibility, the State is still involved. I feel the problem could best be handled at the local government level, because local governments know which jobs should be created, as was done under the R.E.D. scheme. That scheme had some virtues although it was very poorly operated and did not involve enough local authorities that knew the unemployment problems and understood community needs.

However, I would go further than that and suggest that we are looking too much at unemployment benefits as being purely of a cash nature. This means that the money is perhaps not spent in the interests of the wife and family, and children might still be going hungry. I think we should look to a method which would ensure that families were provided with good, wholesome food. Perhaps we could provide coupons instead of all cash, and so insist on the family drinking milk and eating meat, fresh vegetables and other good food. This might mean less wastage of a lot of taxpayers' money, and such a system would be less open to rigging by a number of people living together in a house, drawing unemployment benefits and virtually making whoopee on the proceeds. This sort of situation is not helping my area where people are toiling to pay taxes to keep these people in this fashion.

Coupled with the need for increased productivity we should look at the rail-freight increases that have been the bombshell of this Budget. Unfortunately, I still cannot find out the various rates, and I believe we will learn about them when it is too late to

discuss them. However, any increase in my area would fall on those who have to use the railways for the delivery of their produce to market, particularly pineapple growers, and for the carriage of machinery and other goods. It is some compensation that there is a good deal of road transport in the area, and road transport operators will, of course, receive the benefit of the reductions in road transport permit fees. However, those reductions will not assist people who have to use the railways.

In my opinion, such a steep increase in rail freights in one year is not in the best interest of improving productivity or curbing inflation. Perhaps the problem could have been overcome to some extent by appealing to the Federal Government to meet part of the railway deficit on the basis that railways are a strategic defence requirement. They would be required again in time of war, as they were in the last war. The North Coast line, in particular, was the virtual lifeline of this nation in the last war. In time of flood, it was often the only means of communication open. For that reason, I think that the cost of maintaining it should be borne in part by the Commonwealth, and such a contribution would be of some assistance to the State and would offset the steep rise in rail freights now proposed.

From my point of view, one of the problem areas in the Budget is the assistance provided for the construction and maintenance of roads. Again the Treasurer has difficulty, because the revenue from petrol tax, and so on, collected by the Government in Canberra is not flowing back to the States. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads indicated that, of \$240,000,000 collected in petrol tax, only about \$63,000,000 was being returned to the States. With that sort of return of the tax paid by road users, it is no wonder that the roads in this State are crumbling and deteriorating.

While dealing with roads, I wish to refer particularly to the high cost of constructing roads in Queensland. For example, in areas of high rainfall, costs can be anything up to 10 times higher than they are in drier States, and that is not given due weight in the formula that is now being used. There should be a greater return to Queensland for the construction and maintenance of roads in areas of high rainfall.

The effect of high rainfall and high road usage in my electorate has created a situation in which very few roads other than the Bruce Highway are now in a reasonable state of repair. In fact, some of them are almost impassable and some have returned to gravel. In a situation such as that, productivity cannot increase and school-bus operators and school-children are at risk. Commercial interests are either travelling twice as far to reach a certain point or closing their businesses. I know of instances in which businesses have been closed

because the people have been unable to get freight to them. There is certainly difficulty in maintaining roads through the State Government and through local shire councils.

In my electorate, there is an effective high road usage through tourism, which is an industry that is not being given sufficient credit for its viability and its capacity to produce. I think it is time consideration was given to more ways of encouraging people to come to Queensland and use the tourist facilities that are available. The potential is here, and the cost of suitable brochures and promotional work would be returned many times over. It can be done adequately only at a State level. Moves have been made in this direction, but I think we are only starting. The same road users or tourists are the ones who help to destroy the roads. So there is need to find greater aid for those areas visited by tourists from both inside and outside the State.

Danger on the road should be the foremost consideration. The traffic congestion on the Bruce Highway between the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane has to be experienced to be understood. The upgrading of that highway has lagged behind the tremendous growth of the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast is being retarded by the lack of a four-lane highway. A four-lane highway is necessary for safety, commerce and security. I hope that the Treasurer and the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads will continue to press the Commonwealth Government for greater aid for that purpose.

Primary industries in the area are faced with increasing costs. The beef and dairy industries are going through difficult times. On every side they are faced with reduced returns and increased costs. Primary producers provide employment and productivity which are so essential if the State is going to continue to press ahead. In the face of the selfish greed of socialism, we will not succeed without productivity and encouragement to free enterprise. We require vigorous enterprises providing sufficient productivity and therefore enough tax to finance what is essential for the young, old and those in need. We should encourage government to be efficient so that private enterprise is not bogged down with taxes to maintain it.

The last Federal Budget imposed a killer tax which does nothing for productivity. What is required is a flat tax so that the harder one works the more one takes home, not just the more Canberra takes in taxes. A stupid situation prevails. In order to get the cane crushed in the Moreton region, mill workers have had to work a seven-day week. They have readily responded so that the crop can be harvested, although they are still well behind because of the wet weather. The extra take-home pay of those workers is so pathetic that it is a wonder any of them bothers working the extra days and hours. But they are doing that extra work because they realise it is essential

for them to co-operate so that all in the community can benefit. The present tax system offers no incentive for a person to work hard in order to take home more. This applies to all forms of business and private enterprise.

Our nation has vast natural resources, and we should be working as hard as possible, with heads down and tails up, to produce the maximum. In other parts of the world people are dying from starvation, and it is wrong that we in Australia should be quarrelling over political issues instead of getting together and working to produce to our utmost capacity and so help those in need.

I was pleased to see that the Treasurer has allowed \$3,300,000 to the Maroochy Shire Council for loan purposes. The Maroochy Shire area is progressing rapidly and is in need of such a financial boost. This will allow the local authority to provide adequate sewerage facilities.

We need to provide financial aid in such a way as not to increase the rate of inflation. Nothing kills incentive more quickly than inflation. Furthermore, it harms those people who work hard all their lives and save for their retirement.

Thanks to the policies of the Labor Federal Government, we are presently living in a sick society, and the sooner that Government is replaced by a sane-thinking, free-enterprise Government, the better it will be for Australia. This country needs to be desocialised; incentive needs to be given back to the small businessman and to free enterprise so that the people of the nation can return to their former way of life, in which they had respect for each other and were encouraged to be unselfish. I am sure that with careful planning and restraint we will be able to wind down the inflationary rate, and that the public will respond if they feel the country can be brought back onto an even keel.

In these days of growing urbanisation with its associated transport and pollution problems, and so forth, more and more people are wanting to get away to those places where they can recharge their batteries and enjoy the natural beauty to the full. In this area we are a little hypocritical. We continue to pursue town-planning techniques which extend urbanisation and encourage bigger cities with more high-rise buildings in areas where there are none, and where people get a lot of satisfaction from natural surroundings. My electorate, the top end of the Sunshine Coast, is one such area. Because of its greenery, mountains, streams and lakes, it is a favourite spot of people in retirement. It is a very restful place for holiday-makers and day-trippers. However, town-planning of the area permits high-rise buildings and all those things which we believe are not ideal in a city—development which causes traffic congestion, pollution and other problems similar to those found in large cities.

We continue with zonings and rezonings for denser and denser living, and forget that quality of life and an area's general aspects and appeal should be important yardsticks in development. Instead of development going upwards, it should spread into the hills, with reforestation being encouraged. We must remember that there ought to be only as many homes in an area as can be reasonably hidden by trees. That is the general concept of the people in my electorate, yet it is not being followed in the local government area. Councillors say, "The town planner says we cannot do that and we have accepted his plan for what it is." On the other hand, the town planner says, "I submitted a town plan which was approved. What more do I have to do?"

We should consider seriously the problems that we are creating. The people in my area do not want it to be another Surfers Paradise or Brisbane. They want it to be known for its originality, its green scenery and its pleasant, natural places. This balance can be achieved with development and industry so long as the proper criteria are observed. We would not then have to outlay large sums in Budgets to improve problem roads and intersections. Nor would we have to buy additional park areas for the people living in high-rise buildings. In other words, they would enjoy the facilities that are already available. In the long run, that would be a saving to the community.

The Budget imposes some additional expenditure that we are loath to meet, but it is necessary in the light of pressures caused by the Federal Government's holding the purse-strings. The Treasurer has done a very good job in many ways in trying to balance his Budget, keeping in mind the provision of facilities promised during the last election. At the same time he has provided for growth in education and the effects of inflation on services already provided. I commend him on his 10th Budget. I am sure that when we are made more fully aware of its ramifications, we will be able to work within its framework and develop this State of ours into a greater and better Queensland.

Mr. HALES (Ipswich West) (8.50 p.m.): In joining the debate, I, too, pay tribute to Sir Gordon Chalk for his presentation of the Budget in such a difficult economic period. Despite the inflationary spiral of recent years brought on by the ineptitude of the Federal Labor Government, the Budget (except perhaps for the increase in rail fares and freights) contains no really dramatic tax shocks. No Budget can be wholly good or bad; but according to most A.L.P. members in this Chamber nothing at all is good or benevolent in this year's Budget.

The Budget provides for record assistance to local government, allows for massive spending in education, provides also massive amounts for our health programmes and makes possible a further increase in police strength. In an endeavour to help

small businesses survive in the current economic climate, the Treasurer has raised the pay-roll tax exemption to \$41,800. Unfortunately many small businesses have gone to the wall, including 700-odd in Queensland alone. The number throughout Australia is in the thousands. It is that sector—private industry—which employs up to 75 per cent of this nation's work-force.

Over the last three years the Federal Government, at the behest of Clyde Cameron, has encouraged the unions to go outside the arbitration system for massive wage rises. It is significant that, while wages have been increased by 29 per cent over that period, profits have declined by 28 per cent. Although some workers are better off today than they were a few years ago, the attitude of seeking huge wage grabs has resulted in a profit squeeze. If business has little or no profit, it cannot survive. Retrenchments and cutbacks in expansion are the result. Therefore, I am glad to see our Government moving in the right direction to help small private businesses.

Let us compare the budgeted expenditure for this year with that of previous years. The budgeted expenditure in 1974-75 was \$809,000,000, and this year it is \$1,399 million, or an increase of \$590,000,000. One hopes that that increase is sufficient not only to combat inflation but also to allow an advance in programmes from 1974-75.

The Education Vote has increased by almost 80 per cent in three years—from \$189,000,000 in 1973-74 to \$329,000,000 this financial year. The number of teachers has increased from 16,348 in 1973-74 to 19,579 this year. It is significant that in 1971-72, teacher strength was 13,600; so the increase has been 50 per cent over five years. The Government parties prior to last December's election promised to increase the number of teachers. Sir Gordon through this Budget has honoured that promise.

If I might digress for a few moments while speaking about education—I sometimes wonder whether all the money spent in that field is spent wisely and well. Many school-teachers, particularly older school principals, often voice their concern to me that some of the new methods are wrong and that the sooner we get back to the old teaching concepts the better. I might interpose here that I do not consider myself to be in any way expert in this field. Some of the remarks from principals alarm me. For example, there are instances of children who still cannot read properly or spell correctly on entering secondary school. It amazes me that more reliance is placed on gadgetry to make calculations than on students' mental ability. Most parents voice concern at children not being able to do the simplest mental arithmetic but depending on pocket electronic calculators to arrive at any deduction. Often these calculators in use are outrageously incorrect and if people are not able to do a quick mental calculation but

depend exclusively on gadgetry, then heaven help our nation in the future. The most common fault I have found is run-down batteries.

I should like to bring to the attention of the Minister for Education and the Minister for Works and Housing a subject that is near and dear to me—the Amberley State School. For nine years this Government has shilly-shallied on building that school. I have had the Minister for Works and Housing there to illustrate to him the conditions in which children work at the Amberley State School. I have also had the Minister for Education in Ipswich and told him about the conditions at that school. I make strong recommendations to them here and now to do something about the matter. I would like any Minister interested to come to Amberley and see the conditions in which these children work.

Mr. Bird: In view of the special circumstances there, and the colossal sum that would be required to soundproof the school, do you think the Federal Government should come in and assist?

Mr. HALES: That is right, but, unfortunately although of recent date I ate a great deal of humble pie, and asked Bill Hayden to give us extra funds for this school, he told me to go to the hot place. I can imagine what type of reply the Minister would get.

To illustrate—if Parliament House were taken as being the Amberley State School the airstrip would be 50 yards away in the Botanic Gardens. It is like having a school in the middle of the Eagle Farm aerodrome. I should like to invite any Minister to come with me at any time to look at the Amberley State School. If he then voted “No” in the Cabinet, he would be braver than I am. I hope I have got my message across.

I am pleased to see that an authority has been set up to construct housing for State employees. Recently the Queensland Teachers' Union has been quite vocal on sub-standard accommodation. The families of teachers are not the only ones to suffer. The honourable member for Flinders has often been outspoken about poor accommodation for railway employees. Like many other honourable members in this Parliament and especially like all very good and competent Government members, he recognises the needs of the ordinary worker, whom he represents very well indeed.

We have seen a tremendous influx of funds to the Health portfolio. No doubt this is due to the hard work of the honourable member for Ipswich, the Minister for Health. This just goes to show the ability of this gentleman. In my opinion, he has made an impression on that portfolio like none before him. For 1975-76 the allocation is \$231,000,000, which is almost double the 1973-74 figure of \$117,000,000. The \$45,000,000 for hospital works programmes is in sharp contrast to \$18,000,000 last year.

It is pleasing to note that not only South-east Queensland will benefit under these programmes. The centres of Atherton, Mackay, Mt. Isa, Weipa, Cairns, Maryborough and Yeppoon most certainly benefit. On reading “Hansard”, I find that the Opposition made special note last year that hospital development was confined to South-east Queensland. The Minister for Health is a fair and impartial judge of hospital requirements in this State. I am sure that he will administer his department to the benefit of all Queenslanders whether they be in South-east Queensland or not.

To one who represents an industrial mining city like Ipswich, the production of coal to generate electricity is of vital concern. The Budget provides a further \$73,000,000 for the Gladstone Power House. The Minister's Press statement of recent days which declares the Queensland Government's intention to install two more units at Gladstone and two similar units at Wivenhoe Dam has been a great disappointment to me. I believe that Swanbank should be increased in size. Although the recent coal miners' strike placed the S.E.A. in a vulnerable position in supplying power to South-east Queensland, I do believe that once the Gladstone Power House is complete, this vulnerability will vanish, and I still believe that with reserves of more than 400,000,000 tonnes of coal in the West Moreton area, of which only 41,000,000 tonnes will be used in the predictable life of the Swanbank Power House, if the Swanbank Power House is not enlarged to use at least some of these reserves then most of these reserves will not be mined, in view of the urban sprawl, and future generations will condemn us for not having the foresight to use this fuel. It might take 100 years to exhaust easily won coal by open-cut methods in this State; but the time will come when our generation will be condemned for lack of foresight if we do not win this coal now.

As I said earlier, no Budget is wholly good or wholly bad but that is perhaps my one and only criticism.

I am thankful that the Treasurer has provided for an increase in the police strength as this is in line with Government policy speeches last December after which this Government's policies were so resoundingly applauded and voted upon by the electors of Queensland.

A number of members have at times spoken about the rental crisis in this State. Opposition members, particularly the honourable members for Bundaberg and Rockhampton have spoken with great concern, and, if I recall correctly, the Leader of the Opposition has called on the Federal Government to supply a further \$50,000,000 to Queensland for welfare housing. The accommodation crisis can only get worse in today's economic climate. Business confidence, particularly in the real estate industry, is still low and there has been a definite decline in the construction of rental accommodation by the private sector. This is

solely due to the small return on capital. An entrepreneur in this field can now expect meagre returns on capital invested—at the best possibly a net 8 per cent or 9 per cent—out of which he would still have to pay income tax. Therefore private enterprise has almost totally withdrawn from this field. It amazes me that under these circumstances the Federal Government has savagely reduced Queensland's allocation for welfare housing.

Let us look at some of the figures involved. In 1974-75 the amount provided for welfare housing in the State was \$61,000,000, of which the Federal Government provided \$43,800,000. This year's Budget again makes provision for \$61,000,000 for welfare housing of which the Federal Government's share was a meagre \$31,000,000 so that to keep to the same figure as last year the Queensland Government has had to supply \$30,000,000 as against \$18,000,000 last year. If the Federal Government had granted \$43,000,000 as it did last year, then with the State's contribution of \$30,000,000 this year we would have been able to sustain the building programme and keep pace with inflation. It is not this Government which is suffering from the petulance of the Federal Government but the ordinary working man, who cannot afford high rentals and who, as the honourable member for Carnarvon said, is going from landlord to landlord in today's economic climate; but it appears to me that any call or request to the Federal Government from either side of the Chamber will fall on deaf ears. It would seem that although the Federal Government does not want people to rent homes it also does not want people to own homes. Who would consider owning a home if the Federal Government introduces legislation suggested by the Priorities Review Staff which in a recent report suggested a home tax, which would have two savage aspects which were reported in an article in "The Courier-Mail". The article stated—

"One was that a home should be assessed for rental value and that value, even though it was not earned, should be added to a home owner's income and taxed accordingly.

"This meant a home worth \$25,000 could have \$36 a week added to the income and the owner would be taxed on that.

"The other main aspect was that if anybody built a house of more than 12½ squares, they might be subject to an additional building tax.

"This also applied if a person added extensions to a home which made it bigger than 12½ squares."

Therefore, the proposal is to tax a home owner on the rental value of his home, plus an additional tax if his home is over 12½ squares.

I see this Budget as I see all budgets—as a series of debits and credits. Some of the major debits are: stamp duty increased

on cheques; conveyance fee increased on real estate purchases; rail fares and freights increased 40 per cent; court and Titles Office fees increased. I maintain that the credits certainly outweigh the debits. To my mind, the credits are: road transport fees reduced by one-third; pay-roll tax exemption increased from \$20,800 to \$41,800 (that is certainly worth commending); and phasing out death duties between spouse and spouse. It is pleasing to note, also, that Federal Government death duties are payable only over \$25,000, which means that most couples with combined assets of less than \$50,000 will not now pay death duties. There are many more credits, including payments to the Blue Nursing Service and payments to primary schools to assist in purchasing equipment that would otherwise be funded by parents and citizens' associations, which in the main work very hard for school requisites.

In conclusion, Mr. Miller, I would say that, all in all, it is a good Budget that will continue to keep Queensland on the move.

Mr. WARNER (Toowoomba South) (9.7 p.m.): Many times today the Treasurer has been commended on the Budget he has brought down. If he will excuse me for doing so, I, too, would like to commend him.

I believe that the Treasurer's action in beginning to phase out death duties is of historic importance. This has been advocated for many years, but it has never been more important than it is today in Queensland, especially to country people.

For many years death duties have ruined families and left a trail of hardship and concern for future generations. No single proposal could have done more good for the people of Queensland than the total exemption from death duty of assets passing from husband to wife or from wife to husband. In my opinion, Queensland will benefit enormously in the years ahead from that major taxation reform.

The amendment to the Gift Duties Act to enable gifts to pass from spouse to spouse without duty can only complement the abolition of death duty. This much desired concession will protect a wife or a husband from unnecessary distress. At long last people will be able to plan ahead for the welfare of those closest to them. And what could be more important than that? Queensland will be the envy, I believe, of every State in Australia for this move.

It will also be envied for the recent financial changes in the field of education, which will be especially welcomed by rural families in Queensland. Toowoomba, which holds a unique position in Australia in that it has more scholastic institutions and seats of learning than any other provincial city, has gained a tremendous amount. A notable feature of the boarding schools is that many of their pupils come from rural areas

where there are very few schools, and reductions in numbers have already taken place in the boarding schools partly because of the downturn in the beef industry but principally because of the savage attitude adopted by the Australian Government to rural families in reducing the income tax deduction allowable for schooling and introducing other dreadful measures.

The State Budget now gives assistance to non-State schools and this is to be increased from \$81 to \$111 per annum for primary students and from \$132 to \$177 per annum for secondary students. These increases and the inclusion of the remote area allowances are a step in the right direction. However, if in the immediate future private schools are not maintained by greater subsidies, the State will feel the burden. It will have to cater for the increased attendance at State schools of students who up till now have been accommodated in private boarding schools. It is not difficult to work out the financial burden that would impose on the State. If the Australian Government matches the proportional increase to country students they will benefit considerably.

I do not believe that I should continue without bringing to attention the noticeable omission of any increases in student allowances. The present \$54 a year for day students and \$220 a year as a living-away allowance is available only to a small number of low-income families. The allowances are quite inadequate and need revision, and I ask the Treasurer to look at that matter.

A commendable feature of the Budget is that 2,000 extra teachers can be recruited, if necessary, in the next year. This provision extends to the much required teaching aides. But we could be putting the cart before the horse because I believe that lack of classrooms and overcrowded classes are far greater problems.

When it is remembered that 15 private and 16 State schools operate in Toowoomba alone, with a vast number of schools turning out potential students in that section of the State, it is patently obvious that thousands of young people will eventually gravitate to tertiary institutes. It is the Government's responsibility to build new classrooms and have some scheme to house new students who cannot find accommodation on campus. In itself this is becoming a major problem. Students who are unfortunate enough not to be able to find lodgings within the precincts of a college are experiencing extreme difficulty in finding suitable quarters. It is a matter of the greatest importance, and should be scrutinised in great depth by the Education Department. Steps should be taken to alleviate the situation.

Although it is a commendable effort to make tertiary education available to all persons who have the ability and desire to seek training or retraining for the purpose of advancing their employment status, it is

to be hoped that the Federal Labor Government will soon realise its obligation to create an economic situation that will enable every graduate of institutes of advanced education to be employed. Our opponents can criticise the Queensland Government's education policy as much as they like, but the fact still remains that in the past financial year this Government has increased the amount spent on education buildings alone from \$28,000,000 to approximately \$40,000,000, and now in this Budget provision is made for an increase of 42.8 per cent on education as a whole.

With the provision of \$45,000,000 for new hospitals and rebuilding, a great deal can be done towards upgrading essential hospitals. This will be very welcome. The Toowoomba General Hospital opened in 1897. It serves as a base hospital not only for the city of Toowoomba and Darling Downs, but for a great area of South-west Queensland. Accommodation at that hospital is severely over-taxed. The present bed status is 407. For a city the size of Toowoomba, with a population of over 60,000, the accommodation is inadequate. It does not appear that any forward planning, until lately, has taken place. Much needs to be done to bring that hospital to the stage where it can function efficiently as a modern base hospital.

It is a fair assumption that by the turn of the century the population of Toowoomba will have expanded to 100,000 inhabitants. So it can be readily seen that the expansion of hospital facilities must be tuned or geared to that growth rate. The hospital and medical facilities provided in the city of Toowoomba are utilised by an ever-increasing number of persons who live as far afield as Stanthorpe on the border and Roma in the West. As well, many people who live outside the area come to Toowoomba for specialist treatment and rarely go to the metropolis for their further medical needs.

The present medical section is housed in an antiquated, gloomy and totally inadequate building, which was constructed as long ago as 1892. It reflects no credit on any Government, whatever its political persuasion, to allow such a structure to remain in use for so many years. Ward D, which is used for the care of senile men, is an old dilapidated wooden structure, which, by modern standards, is hopelessly inadequate. It is overcrowded and possesses very few conveniences.

The buildings that contain the surgical and thoracic departments are fine, modern structures, but there is evidence that at times their capacity is taxed to the utmost. Likewise, the maternity hospital, which was built in 1955, is quite inadequate at the moment and shows signs of bursting at the seams.

It can be clearly seen that to keep pace with population growth an area must receive large sums of money for the provision and expansion of hospital facilities as well as

for those necessary adjuncts to hospital care. The Treasurer has made a wise move in finding money for such an expansion.

The plight of many people who are closely associated with the land is a serious one, and it worries me to see incentive and prosperity now giving way to dejection and complete frustration. For many there is no way out other than bankruptcy.

Our State's economy is based on primary products, and a large credit balance of payments can be achieved by using our primary products to the utmost. However, with very little if any market for beef and with the insecurity of prices and lack of long-term contracts for beef and other products, no one in this field of endeavour can have any sense of security. The increase of 40 per cent in rail freight rates will do no more than add to their problems. Those loaded with heavy debts and high price rises and the lack of employees to help work their properties certainly will not look favourably on this rail freight rise.

We should make a greater effort to bridge the gap between city and country profit-making. More freight and other concessions of major importance should be offered to country people. All this would assist decentralisation and thereby enable us to make better use of the vast resources that we have in our inland areas.

We can help the commercial world, which has made tremendous progress over the years, and give it the stimulus it needs and deserves. Unless we can arrive at a working arrangement between the producers on the one hand and the consumers on the other, as well as some arrangements between primary industry and secondary industry, we will continue to suffer as we are suffering today. I see little use in lending money to men on the land if they have to be destitute before they are eligible to receive it. It is obvious to all but the blind that the Federal Government is not greatly concerned about solving the problems that beset the beef industry. Surely it is logical to insist on some form of long-term contractual procedure.

It is time we woke up to the fact that the present set-up is a scheme designed by the Federal Government to divert attention from its own real purposes of disruption and total lack of concern for the rural industry as a whole.

The Federal Government needs to show a responsible attitude and to subsidise this industry with adequate long-term loans at low interest rates. Such a measure will enable it to get back on its feet once more.

The State Government's decision to help beef men who derive 80 per cent of their income from beef production to pay outstanding local authority rates by making to them a loan at 4 per cent was welcomed.

However, as I said before, what they desperately need were direct financial grants or long-term loans interest free for at least the first two years. Most graziers would hesitate to saddle themselves with more loans than they had hope of coping with. Let us not forget that it is up to us to see that we do all in our power to help them.

With its enormous deposits of coal estimated at hundreds of millions of tonnes, which experts agree will last for hundreds of millions of years at a much greater consumption rate than that at present, Queensland has vast potential. That being so, we must surely turn our thoughts to the way this energy can be used to the best advantage. Planning by private enterprise must be encouraged now. Plans for its use should be considered immediately, and private companies given every support to start a viable concern. Many companies continue to prosper in Queensland and this is an indication that, in spite of the continual chop-and-change policies of the Federal Government, industry can still expand in Queensland with our support and a Budget that aims at a balance and not a deficit.

The Millmerran Coal Company in my area has already spent more than \$500,000 in exploring Darling Downs coal deposits and studying the conversion of the coal into liquids, such as petrol and diesel fuel, lubricating oil, waxes, resins and chemical feedstocks, and into high-heating gas which could be used as a substitute in South-east Queensland market for the now dwindling natural-gas supplies. Darling Downs coal yields a higher proportion of liquid and gaseous products than any other Australian coal.

Natural-gas supplies are limited and, unless drilling is re-established and private enterprise given the incentive to look for oil and gas, there will be no natural-gas supplies in the near future. Opportunities for the sale of Millmerran steaming coal to Japan are enormous, but if the policy of Mr. Connor and the Federal Government is to restrict any Queensland expansion, they will be responsible for jeopardising the future security and livelihood of coal miners and their families, the expansion of the coal industry and the extra employment it would undoubtedly mean in Queensland. I believe that Millmerran coal can, and should be, converted to power. The citizens of Southern Queensland would benefit if a power station were built somewhere in this vicinity. If coal proprietors could get long-term assurances, which would mean capital outlays, they could provide cheaper coal for local industry and electricity throughout Queensland.

I could go on and on telling honourable members how good I think the Budget is, but time is limited. I conclude by commending the Treasurer on bringing down such a good Budget.

Progress reported.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.23 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Trustee Companies Act 1968-1974 in certain particulars.”

It is more than 80 years since it was first considered desirable to give statutory recognition to trustee companies. The objects and purposes of such companies may be best set out in the words of the preambles to the Acts of 1888 and 1890 which can be summarised as follows—

“Whereas from the uncertainty of human life and other causes great difficulty often arises in securing the services of suitable persons to undertake the duties of trustee, executor, and other similar offices, and whereas certain companies have been formed with the object of affording persons the opportunity of obtaining the services of permanent corporations for the performance of the duties of such offices and thus to remove much of the uncertainty and insecurity which attend the appointment of private persons, it is expedient to confer upon the said companies the powers and privileges set forth.”

The Acts then proceeded to enumerate those powers and privileges. The ability and professional integrity, competence and financial soundness of trustee companies is generally recognised. Each trustee company has invested \$100,000 in the name of the Treasurer as security for the due performance by it of its duties as executor or administrator, and the whole of each company's assets is charged with liability for any loss through breach of trust.

The particular aspect of trustee company legislation with which I propose to deal tonight relates to the remuneration which the companies are permitted to charge for the performance of their duties. Initially in 1888 and 1890 respectively each company was permitted to charge, in addition to all moneys properly expended and commission on guarantees or sureties, commission on income at a rate fixed from time to time by the directors but in no case exceeding 5 per cent. This maximum permissible charge has never been increased.

In 1892 that legislation was amended to permit a commission at a maximum rate of 2½ per cent to be charged on the capital value of an estate. This was increased in 1952 to 4 per cent and has not since been increased. At that time approval was also given for charges to be made for the preparation of income and land taxation returns, inspection and reports upon real estate, arrangement of insurance and keeping of books of account.

In 1968 legislative approval was given for trustee companies to make charges for acting as an auctioneer or real estate agent in the sale of any property, preparation and passing of succession accounts and estate duty returns and like accounts or returns, carrying on or supervising any business or undertaking and a fee not exceeding 0.5 per cent per annum on capital sums invested in the common fund.

Although directors of the trustee companies determined the commissions to be charged within the statutory limit, it was not the practice, until recent times, for the maximum commission to be charged. Commissions were charged on a sliding scale, with the larger estates and incomes attracting the lower rate.

Owing to rising costs in a labour-intensive industry requiring a high percentage of skilled staff, trustee companies have found that it is increasingly difficult to maintain their services to the public. In fact one company has shown a loss on its trust operations each year for the past five years while another has shown losses in two of those five years and the profits in the other three have been insignificant.

The sole purpose of the Bill is to enable trustee companies to meet their operating costs by increasing the commissions they may charge. In respect of the capital value of an estate, it is proposed to increase the maximum permissible commission from 4 per cent to 5 per cent and in respect of income received on account of the estate from 5 per cent to 6 per cent. In addition a further charge, in relation to trusts in perpetuity, at the rate of 0.1 per cent at the end of each five years on the value of the estate is proposed. Similar increases equal to or greater than those proposed have recently been approved in Victoria and Western Australia.

So that these companies may continue to maintain their services to the public and for the other reasons I have set out, I commend the Bill, with its minimal increases, to the Committee.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (9.29 p.m.): Over the years considerable criticism has been directed at trustee companies. I hark back to a speech made in 1968 by the then honourable member for South Brisbane (Mr. Bennett). The points he made at that time were fairly valid. He criticised the huge costs involved in having estates handled by trustee companies.

Mr. Moore: Why don't you move that his speech be taken as read?

Mr. WRIGHT: It would be worth while if the honourable member read it. I suggest that he does read it. I have a copy that I could present to him.

At that time the honourable member for South Brisbane criticised the Union Fidelity Trustee Company of Australia Limited. He went on to explain the delays, the multiple

costs that are incurred and the tactics used by these trustee companies. Regardless of the criticism that might come from the members of the legal fraternity in the Chamber, we have to accept that it is the Union Fidelity Trustee employees—the so-called legal experts—and the legal people themselves who profit when someones dies.

I wonder how many honourable members have tried to get an estate matter expedited. I wonder how many times Government members have written to the Public Curator Office, Union Fidelity or a solicitor asking that an estate matter be expedited. I think all of us have been asked to make representations on behalf of our constituents. I know that I have been time and time again.

The Bill will increase the payments being made to these companies. I accept the point made by the Minister that some of these companies have experienced financial trouble but surely when the value of estates is increasing, the percentum does not need to be increased. We know that the benefits are derived simply by reason of the value of the estates going up.

The criticism of the honourable member for South Brisbane in 1968 is still valid. The delays in estate matters are shocking. We have to do something about them. Instead of introducing legislation to give trustee companies a greater percentage, we should be setting up a body to start checking on the handling of estates. We should be going to Union Fidelity and saying, "This one has been going since 1968. This one has been going since 1969. What are you doing about them?" They are the causes of delays in settling estates. What always bugs me is that many of the wills that are contested and go to litigation were originally drawn up by officers of Union Fidelity Trustee. I have had instances of this and I think it is a shocking disgrace.

Mr. Frawley: Do you think they do this—

Mr. WRIGHT: The honourable member may have a good point. We go back time and time again and discover that these people say, "You had better leave it in our hands. You know the Act says we are bound to invest your moneys in a certain way. How about writing into your will that you give us the power to decide how to invest your money?" Then there is a blue over beneficiaries. If there is a dispute the Union Fidelity Trustee Company employs a top barrister or silk to fight the matter; but the litigation is paid for out of the estate. The legal eagles sit back and waste the money in estates. The beneficiaries are the losers. I wonder how many testators would have changed their minds had they foreseen what would happen after they died and their estates were being administered by Union Fidelity and other trustee companies. It is time we did something about expediting estate matters. It is shocking the number of people who suffer

because of these delays. The Public Curator is the best instrumentality for handling estates.

Mr. Lane: What percentage does he get?

Mr. WRIGHT: It is the same—4 and 5 per cent.

A Government Member: How long does he take?

Mr. WRIGHT: That is the same argument. I have figures that were at hand at 30 June 1974. I find that 8,253 wills to the value of \$101,420,148 were handled. In fact, the total number of estates handled was 28,888 and the total value was \$142,954,628. The benefit derived by the Public Curator would have been about \$71,000. Why not expand the Public Curator Office? This is the biggest problem. It is not that that office is incompetent.

Mr. Lane: Do you want to phase out the legal profession?

Mr. WRIGHT: No, I just want to give it some decent competition. Some of its members need phasing out and they certainly need decent competition. The honourable member talks about free enterprise. The basic foundation of that philosophy of the Government parties is competition. But solicitors do not have the competition they deserve. The trustee companies do not have any competition and the Public Curator Office is the ideal competitor. But we do not let it work. We frustrate it.

Mr. Greenwood: Would you monopolise it?

Mr. WRIGHT: No, we would not monopolise it. I know that the honourable member has a vested interest in this argument. He and his colleague from Brisbane would not like to see any legislation that hit the pocket or purse of the legal fraternity. So he is biased and I am very sorry that we cannot accept his argument. He has a very, very special reason for speaking in these debates.

Mr. Greenwood interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: I would hate to be defended by the honourable member because for sure I would be found guilty.

Mr. Moore: Would you say hypnotism is better?

Mr. WRIGHT: If the member for Windsor listens to my voice and looks into my eyes, I might put him to sleep and stop him from scratching his forehead, because I assure him it will not make his hair grow.

Coming back to the subject—I think that criticism of the trustee companies is valid. The delays in the finalising of the estates proves it. Again, the costs that the estates have to pay back up this argument, so increasing the quantum—the percentage, anyway—will not solve the problem. Surely we need something that will expedite the

finalising of these estates, a checking system of some type. One knows what happens to beneficiaries who continually write to Union Trustees and other trustee companies asking when the estate will be finalised. The company says, "Oh, we wrote to such-and-such a beneficiary and we haven't had word back yet." The matter drags on and on and there are always delays. I hope the Minister will see fit to do something about this. He could certainly do it in the Public Curator's office, too, because we encounter unnecessary delays there.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. WRIGHT: I know they certainly charge. What bugs me, too—I have had some solicitors tell me this—is that the fellows in the Union Trustees office in particular are not legally trained—they are accountants or clerks—and if they want a legal opinion, they employ a barrister or some other person who has great legal knowledge, and again the estate pays. So I do not think the criticism of trustee companies will ever stop. It will remain valid while there are delays in the finalising of estates and while the beneficiaries are losing out. I would be pleased to hear more reasons from the Minister for this increase because it is not good enough simply to say, "Some companies have been losing over the last couple of years." We should look at their efficiency and their methods of running their offices. We should look at their overheads. This is the whole trouble. I know solicitors are always complaining about it. One fellow came to me recently and said that his overheads are now 63 per cent. Perhaps the honourable member for Brisbane will tell us about his overheads.

But maybe this is the problem: maybe the requirements in dealing with estates are no longer necessary. Perhaps we should try to simplify this. Surely we can find a way to overcome the problems that arise out of wills themselves. As I said before, too often the wills drawn up by these trustee companies are the ones that cause trouble.

The Opposition will be looking very, very closely at this legislation. At this point we are not very happy with it at all.

Mr. LOWES (Brisbane) (9.38 p.m.): This is a Bill which deserves the support of all members of this Committee, except perhaps those who might be committed to a rabid form of socialism. In endorsing such a Bill as is now before the Committee, we are agreed that, despite the existence of the Public Curator, there is a necessity for trustee companies, and we are not making an attack on the Public Curator. The Public Curator is a statutory body which performs a very worth-while and honourable duty, but what we are doing here is according the principle of free enterprise and giving people a choice. We are giving the people of this State the privilege of choosing between

the Public Curator, which is the statutory body, and the private trustee, which is an incorporated body.

Queensland Trustees and the Union Fidelity Trustee Company of Australia have been operating in this State for over 80 years. Queensland Trustees were incorporated here in 1888, and Union Fidelity started operating two years later. I submit that the fact that they have operated for so long is justification for their continued existence. Some doubt has been raised, without any basis whatsoever, about the ability of these trustee companies to perform their function as trustees. In the past 20 years I recall two cases heard by the Supreme Court in Brisbane in which there was a suggestion that the trustee companies had not performed their functions correctly or had not carried out their functions as expeditiously as they might have done. In both of those cases the complaints were found to be without basis, and the behaviour of the trustee companies and their conduct of the cases was found to be quite proper.

Let us look at these companies and see what their functions are. Their principal function is that of acting as trustee under a will made by a testator at a time when he was exercising his freedom of choice, and when he had testamentary capacity. Knowing what his or her affairs were and what the complexities of administering the estate might be, knowing who the next-of-kin was, and knowing whether the next-of-kin had the expertise, perhaps, to administer a complicated business or a family company, the testator or testatrix used his or her freedom of choice and appointed a trustee company as trustee.

In another case, possibly a next-of-kin has been appointed the executor of a will, or possibly a widow, a person living outside of Queensland, or a person who, because of other pre-occupations, is unable to undertake the onerous duties of the executor of someone else's will. It is a duty that no-one undertakes lightly. To carry on another man's business, to carry on his estate, to gather in his assets, to sell his assets when one sees fit and when one believes the best profit is to be made, to distribute the assets in accordance with the terms of the will—all these duties are very onerous, and for various reasons, some of which I have mentioned already, executors have seen fit to turn to somebody else who might help them in time of trouble. They turn, quite naturally and understandably, to one of the trustee companies.

They may also turn to the Public Curator. All misconceptions are unfortunate, but there is, unfortunately, a belief that when any person dies intestate the Public Curator is, at law, the person primarily entitled to administer the estate. Of course, that is not so. It is a fallacy that has been propagated over the years by perhaps over-zealous agents of a statutory body.

One of the most important functions of trustee companies is to take over on behalf of the trustees appointed under a will the administration of the estates of other persons, and they have done that very properly.

Mr. Wright interjected.

Mr. LOWES: Not at all.

Mr. Wright: Of course they do. They bash them till they hand over, and you know it.

Mr. LOWES: I assume that the honourable member is talking about trustee companies.

Mr. Wright: Of course I am.

Mr. LOWES: Not the Public Curator?

Mr. Wright: No, the trustee companies.

Mr. LOWES: Trustee companies have no power of persuasion; they are approached. They do not have agents policing hospitals. They do not have matrons, superintendents or secretaries of hospitals as their agents. The ordinary man in the street, exercising his freedom of choice, goes to Queensland Trustees or the Union Trustee Company and asks for their assistance. To assist such people, the companies are incorporated, and they are set up in such a way that they can administer an estate giving absolute protection by way of a bond, to which the Minister has already referred.

Trustee companies can act as attorneys to people going out of Australia, and if for any reason a person wishes to appoint another to act in his stead because of illness or absence, he can appoint a trustee company to carry on his business. In so many cases that is very important. In many cases it is not advisable for a man to go away and leave his business in, say, the hands of his partner. We have seen brother rob brother and friend rob friend. With a proper professional trustee there is somebody on whom one can rely, someone who is bonded to the Government, and someone who has a staff with all the necessary expertise.

Trustee companies can act as commission agents, a right that was given to them some years ago. They can carry out the proper functions of an agent, receiving only those proper charges to which any other agent would be entitled.

One of their most important functions is acting as a trustee for perpetual estates. This is where they perhaps carry on the most worth while of all their functions, that is, administering estates in perpetuity, most of which have as beneficiaries charitable organisations. I can bring to mind trusts such as the Scartwater Trust in North Queensland. Unfortunately, the honourable member for Townsville South is not here. He could give us a great dissertation on the benefits which have accrued from that trust to young students in North Queensland. Many of them have obtained a secondary education through the Scartwater Trust.

Those are only some of the very important functions carried out by trustee companies. They are functions that are all too seldom mentioned. The introduction of a Bill to give adequate and proper remuneration to trustee companies for their work provides a good opportunity to mention these things. Every man is entitled to recompense for his labour. Perhaps the honourable member for Rockhampton does not agree with that. Trustee companies have a very worth-while function to perform, and it is only right and proper that they should be properly reimbursed.

The honourable member for Rockhampton spoke about unqualified people. My own experience has been quite the reverse. As employees trustee companies have accountants, valuers and people experienced in real estate matters. In addition, they are entitled, as are all trustees, both private and statutory, to go outside their own offices and enlist the aid of lawyers, accountants, valuers or persons in any other fields whose expertise may be necessary for the further and better administration of an estate.

One of the duties of officers of trustee companies that has been added by recent legislation is the preparation of such important documents as regular land tax returns. Of course, they have prepared income tax returns for some time. Staff have to be experts in income-tax law, which is becoming increasingly complex and important. They have to be experts in matters of estate planning; they have to be experts in all matters of the law of property, both real and personal; they have to be experts in gift duty matters. Gift duty is mentioned in the Budget; the Treasurer has provided for exemption from duty on gifts passing from spouse to spouse.

I was interested to read in today's "Telegraph" that the proposed remission of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse will be dated from 25 September, and that a complementary amendment will be made to the Gift Duty Act to provide exemption from duty on gifts passing from one spouse to another. I am hopeful that the Treasurer will also make that legislation retrospective to 25 September. After all, gift-duty law is complementary to succession-duty law, and it would seem right and proper that the amendment to the Gift Duty Act should also operate from that date. But that is somewhat by the way.

The functions of trustee companies are laid down fairly conclusively, but I would suggest that the Minister give consideration to allowing trustee companies to be appointed to act as trustees for victims of motor vehicle and industrial accidents arising from negligence.

I have had a good deal of experience in acting for such victims, and I have seen many people who have found themselves in receipt of what may seem to them to be large sums of money. Suggestions have been put forward that an award for damages

should be paid by way of an annuity. I would never accept such a proposition. It is highly desirable that victims who, possibly because of their lack of business acumen or as the result of serious injuries sustained by them, are incapable of looking after their own affairs have their interests looked after by trustee companies. When making an award for damages, a judge could appoint a trustee company to handle the affairs of a victim and order that the money be used for the benefit and advancement of the victim.

I refer to another article in today's "Telegraph", one concerning a family in New South Wales consisting of a mother and two boys, one aged 10 years, the other aged nine years. The mother is a widow of a 41-year-old man who received fatal injuries in the course of his employment. There was no argument as to liability; the only question was how much. Mr. Justice Isaacs awarded her the sum of \$72,000, which included \$11,000 for her two sons.

Such a case hits the headlines. Quite often we read in newspapers headlines such as "\$132,000 awarded to worker". These awards make the headlines because people seem to think that they are tremendously high. But when we calculate the future economic loss of a 41-year-old man who, as was acknowledged by his employer, was a good worker and one who would have been earning \$220 a week after tax, and when we consider that he had a reasonable chance of working for another 20 years, we see that an award of \$72,000 is equivalent to only \$3,600 a year. Could anyone say that such an award is a handsome one to a widow with two children? I would question whether such an award is adequate. The point is, however: what chance does she have of knowing how to administer a lump sum of \$72,000? What would be the likelihood of her having sufficient expertise to know how to manage such a sum? She has two children who are nearing their most expensive years, and she has little or no practical knowledge of investment. I recommend to the Minister that he investigate the possibility of amending the appropriate laws to enable trustee companies to be appointed to handle such awards.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: This is a situation in reverse; a barrister briefing a solicitor.

Mr. LOWES: I can assure the member for Archerfield that the advice coming in this direction is as good as that which generally goes the other way.

My learned friend has reminded me of a recent case that was settled in Brisbane. A young Army man back from Vietnam on leave was doing what most young Army men do while on leave, that is, he was out with some of his friends enjoying himself. Unfortunately he was involved in a motor collision in which he received greivous head injuries that resulted in paralysis. He received the sum of \$50,000 in compensation. On the

strength of that award—and before he even got his hands on it—he bought himself a car. There is always the smart car salesman who will sell a car on the promise that a person is to get some money, and in this case he knew that \$50,000 was involved. Before this young man even got his hands on the money he was involved in a further serious accident—possibly because of his injuries—and the car was a complete write-off. At that stage he was not entitled to access to any money.

In this context the victims of the present inflationary spiral are the trustee companies. The honourable member for Rockhampton spoke about the inflationary spiral being sufficient to offset the rising costs of trustee companies. That is not true. It has been proved clearly and conclusively that, whereas there has been a cost-of-living spiral of about 17½ per cent, the increase in the value of estates over a period of five years (that period gives a good and proper picture of the story) has been only 3.6 per cent. It is no good looking at the Consumer Price Index. It does not reflect the true position. If anyone has any doubt about that, all he need do is look at the share market and he will see what has happened there in the past three years. On the other hand the wages of males in trustee companies have increased by 22 per cent, while those of females have increased by 42 per cent. In addition, there is a very strong chance that, despite indexation, there will be further increases.

Victoria has already considered this matter. Earlier this year the Victorian law was amended to make proper provision for trustee companies. The rate was increased to 5 per cent, the same as we are proposing here. When the Victorian amendment was being considered, the Victorian Attorney-General said, "It should be borne in mind that in Victoria the companies have a record which justifies some consideration from this Parliament." What is true in Victoria is equally true here.

I entirely support what the Minister said and what was said by the Victorian Attorney-General. This industry has a large labour content. It behoves Opposition members to support an industry that has such a large labour content and keep these people in work.

(Time expired.)

Mr. HANSON (Port Curtis) (9.58 p.m.): Before I address myself to this very important matter, I must comment on a most extraordinary situation. We witnessed the very hurried exit of the Treasurer from the Chamber this evening. The reason for his haste was that he was absolutely shocked and disgusted by the performance of some Government members in addressing themselves to the Budget. The Treasurer can go into dreamland right now. The machinations, intrigues and devious motives of the Minister for Justice (who introduced this measure) in company with the Treasurer will probably keep honourable members in the Chamber

until all hours of the morning while, at the same time, they have a great laugh to themselves. I hope that courage and guts is displayed in the Government caucus next Wednesday so that the Treasurer and Minister for Justice are pulled into line. Who do they think they are running around the place, strutting the stage—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): Order! The honourable member will deal with the Bill before the Committee.

Mr. HANSON: I shall do so, Mr. Miller.

I agree with the comments of the honourable member for Rockhampton about the shocking delays in matters handled by trustee companies. It is about time that not only the trustee companies, but also members of the legal profession took a very hard look at themselves. I for one have a high respect for many members of the medical profession, the legal profession and others. Throughout a long period I have been highly delighted with the quality of service and the performance of many of the men engaged in those professions. But the warnings are out, and today unfortunately a creeping paralysis is afflicting the legal profession. The people of this State are not getting the service they deserve. They are certainly not getting it from the trustee companies. That has been the position for a long period, and I can personally go back many, many years. Their record was shocking even before the turn of the century.

I agree with the former member for South Brisbane (Mr. Bennett), who many years ago said that a dreadful amount of litigation occurred in our courts because of the inadequacies, the errors, the misjudgments and the bad advice given to testators by trustee companies.

Why, Mr. Miller, do you think that in 1915-16 the Labor Party, when assuming office for the first time in this State, was forced to introduce legislation to create the office of the Public Curator? Why? To bring competition into the State and give the people a fair go—something they had never experienced during the virtual monopoly the trustee companies had enjoyed in the administration of estates till that time.

What a howl there was on that occasion. What a cry arose from those on the conservative side of politics in Queensland. They spoke about the ruination of the State through this great socialist enterprise that was being thrust upon the people. They spoke about how we would be destroyed and made Jack Fihelly's life absolute hell for a long period because he had the guts and the courage, in company with the Premier of the day, to stand up and fight to give the little people of this State the justice they had not experienced before. For a long period the trustee companies had engaged in absolute plunder in the State.

What are we witnessing tonight? Legislation is being introduced by the Attorney-General for the prime purpose of increasing the fees of trustee companies. In a spirit of advocacy he espouses the belief that the companies need an increase because they have been incurring losses for years and years. I would like someone with competence in accounting to look at their books. Why not call in the Auditor-General to ascertain his opinion on how things are shaping in the trustee companies?

The charges they make are tremendous. Has any honourable member ever seen an account from a trustee company? They are very big indeed—making some of the bookies' charts look like a rag picker's. They inflict upon people a multiplicity of items for the estates they are handling. The amounts are absolutely shocking. If they see fit to come cap in hand, crying, why are they not willing to allow someone highly competent in the field to peruse their accounts to see what has gone wrong?

The honourable member for Brisbane mentioned a couple of points that are pertinent to the issue. I want to know where the genesis of the legislation lies. From whom did the idea spring? It came, of course, from the trustee companies themselves. The Attorney-General has acquiesced. Why has he acquiesced to bring in a measure to increase their fees? I will explain why. It is because of the political support that has been offered, both materially and otherwise, at election time. They are political blood brothers. I have no doubt that the legal section of the Liberal Party—and I speak in terms of the executive and other circles as well as the parliamentary field—supports and advocates the measure, and has sold the idea to the Attorney-General as some form of reward for services rendered.

The honourable member for Brisbane brought up the point that the wage bills of the trustee companies are excessive. Everyone else in business in the community has an excessive wage bill. Every solicitor, every hotel-keeper, every businessman has an excessive wage bill and has to meet his responsibilities. Why should the trustee companies suddenly start to whimper and whine about the fact that their wages bills have increased and claim that they will have to inflict more savage imposts upon the people to whom they owe responsibility?

The honourable member for Brisbane said their investments on the stock exchange have gone bad. I do not think that the ordinary people who have been gulled into placing their estates in the hands of trustee companies should have to worry about the investments of the companies going bad. If they are poor investors, it is their responsibility.

Mr. LOWES: I rise to a point of order. I did not say that the investments of trustee companies had gone bad at all. That

is a very scandalous suggestion from the honourable member for Port Curtis. I said that the share market had gone bad.

Mr. HANSON: If the honourable member did not say it, I will say it. They are very, very poor investors. Apparently they have to come cap in hand and plead poverty. I am not here to plead poverty on behalf of the trustee companies that for nearly 100 years have wrecked the people of this State, bludged on the people of this State and robbed the people of this State.

A good look into some of the more intricate details of trustee companies over a long period reveals that they have cunningly and deviously looked after estates whether in perpetuity or otherwise; but by Jove they have looked after themselves very well indeed.

How many times, in conversations with people, have we heard complaints about how a company has administered an estate for a widow or family and, of course, placed its own very highly qualified person in charge of the estate. They are qualified all right—qualified in the interests of the trustee companies; so much so that in two or three years' time the estate is broke and they flog the business or enterprise to one of their friends. This has occurred on a shocking number of occasions. It deserves the keen attention of the Justice Department. I sincerely hope that before considering this increase in charges, the Minister had a very close look at trustee companies to see that they are not fiddling the books. I have no brief for them whatever.

With other Opposition members, I believe there should be great competition from the Public Curator Office, which would give the trustee companies a good run for their money. When we are returned to office as a Labor Government we will do something in a positive sense to give greater service not only in this field but in the comprehensive and the more simple sides of the law. The people of this State deserve it. We do not want to take the bread and butter out of the mouths of the legal practitioners. But many of them, if they are to be believed, are greatly overworked in that they have a multiplicity of duties, and unfortunately the people are not getting the service they deserve. Throughout the length and breadth of this State there are centres in which every Saturday morning a representative of a legal firm gives his services gratis to help the people. This is very worthy, but it is not enough.

The figures disclose a downturn in the number of estates handled by the Public Curator over the past two years. In 1972-73, 23,326 wills were prepared or recorded. In 1973-74, the figure was 21,888. That indicates a decline. It is the political philosophy and aim of this Government to sabotage

the Public Curator Office as far as possible. We have only to look at the appropriation to find out whether the Government is willing to place more qualified personnel in the Public Curator Office. The Government is starving that office of qualified staff. It has been doing this since it became the Government. The full ideal behind the creation of the Public Curator Office has not reached its ultimate or optimum. That is to this Government's disgrace. I believe that the Public Curator should have more highly qualified and better-paid staff so that it can compete with these trustee companies and, as I said, give them a run for their money. I will be very anxious to see the Bill when it is printed. In company with other members of the Opposition I have very grave doubts as to the integrity of some of these trustee companies. I hope that the Minister remains ever vigilant when he receives a submission from them.

Mr. Chinchen: Is the Public Curator handling your will?

Mr. HANSON: Don't worry about me; they're handling mine.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (10.11 p.m.): I rise to support this Bill. The Minister has outlined good reasons for its introduction. The Opposition has made great play of how we should make the Public Curator more efficient. I would like to place on record the fact that my will will not be administered by the Public Curator, nor will it be administered by a trustee company. Too many people rely on these organisations who claim to be professionals to do this work, when they should get a good reliable friend or relative to carry out this duty. I would suggest to the people of Queensland that they consider very seriously the person they choose to administer their will. I am sick and tired of having to step in and try to speed up the finalising of estates. Whenever I ring the Public Curator's office, the people there are very courteous and I have had a lot of success in my dealings with them. I compliment them for the way in which they have responded to any calls I have made on them.

An Honourable Member: It shouldn't be necessary.

Mr. McKECHNIE: That is the point I am getting at. There is a chap in my electorate who used to work for the Public Curator and he tells me that years ago if somebody wrote to an official in the Public Curator's office and did not get a reply within a month that officer was called in to explain to the Public Curator himself why no reply had gone out. I suggest to the Minister that he take some steps to make the Public Curator's office a little more efficient.

Mr. Wright: What about the trustee companies?

Mr. McKECHNIE: Yes, it is O.K. about the trustee companies. I just said I would like to see people not having to deal with the Public Curator or the trustee companies. I think there is too much of this attitude of people thinking that they cannot handle their own business or cannot give that business to a good friend or close relative to handle. It is usually expedited much more quickly when somebody has a personal interest in the beneficiaries of the estate he controls. Sometimes it is not possible when we are dealing with something like the Scartwater estate, which was mentioned earlier. That might be beyond an individual's capacity and would need either a trustee company or the Public Curator. I can see that there is a need for the measure that the Minister has proposed, but at the same time I ask him to try to take some steps so that people will not have to wait so long to have estates settled.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.14 p.m.), in reply: I think that some of the matters raised in this debate were to be expected. The honourable member for Rockhampton spoke generally of the delays in finalising estates by the trustee companies. We are aware of those delays, as is every member of the Committee. Indeed, as the honourable member for Carnarvon pointed out, so are there delays by the Public Curator. I would like to mention, because probably I see more of these than any other member of the Committee, that there are delays by executors in a number of other areas as well.

Mr. Wright interjected.

Mr. KNOX: There are all sorts of reasons. Most of the matters that come to me involve private people who do not go to individual members of Parliament because they think I have some authority over these matters, but I have not. It astounds me that there should be delays of the types that do occur. Upon inquiry, I find that many problems have not been overcome—in fact, a multitude of problems—and they are not always associated with the Taxation Office, the Stamp Duties Office or other Government departments. In quite a number of cases it has been difficult to trace relatives or people who are beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries; in other cases people have managed to devise for themselves extraordinarily complicated wills—usually, I am sorry to say as a result of not getting proper advice—and I think that honourable members generally would be aware of that.

When one considers the thousands of matters that are looked after by the trustee companies and the Public Curator, the number in which there is inordinate delay is really quite small. However, delays do cause quite a lot of distress, and other members of Parliament and I become aware of those delays. I assure the Committee that for every case in which there has been a delay

there would be many thousands in which there has not been any delay and matters have gone through very smoothly.

Mr. McKechnie: Except that there is no personal interest.

Mr. KNOX: I am an executor of a number of wills. All I can say to the honourable member is that, although I have a personal interest in them, I do not have as much time to devote to them as somebody who is retained professionally to deal with them. In such cases, many people—no doubt other honourable members in this Chamber who have that responsibility do it—delegate the responsibility to professional advisers and pay them a fee. Personal interest and initiative are still there in a supervisory form.

Recently a case was brought to my attention in which there is a great deal of personal interest by the executors of a will—so much so, in fact, that they are having a difference of opinion. The beneficiaries are being prevented from receiving the benefits to which they are entitled under the will because of that difference of opinion among the executors. Apparently things such as that happen quite frequently.

Therefore, I suggest that honourable members should not make general statements about delays being usual. They are not usual. Because delays can have a distressing effect on beneficiaries, members of Parliament become aware of them. However, I assure the committee that many hundreds of matters handled by either trustee companies or the Public Curator go through smoothly without any delay.

Mr. Wright: Did you check on the efficiency of Union Trustees, say, before you agreed to this legislation?

Mr. KNOX: Yes. I examined all the relevant documents of the companies, and they are subject to scrutiny under the Act. I assure the honourable member that their request for consideration of this increase in fees is justified, as has been the case in a number of other instances in which fees have been increased.

The honourable member for Rockhampton did say that increased turnover and the fact that estates have increased in size should compensate for increased costs.

Mr. Wright: Well, it does.

Mr. KNOX: It does in normal years. But when the rate of inflation in the nation is as high as it is at present, and as high as it has been in the last few years—I read in tonight's newspaper that Australia's inflation is the fifth worst in the world—it is impossible for the companies to meet their costs out of increased turnover. The value of money is decreasing rapidly, and costs are increasing at such a rate that the companies are not compensated by the increase in turnover. That is what has happened, not only

in that area but also in the area of auctioneers and other people who rely entirely upon increased turnover to look after increased costs.

As I pointed out in my opening remarks, for years there was no change in the rates. For over 40 or 50 years there has been no change. But when there is escalation owing to inflation, there is no way they can be contained. That is what is crippling the whole nation. It is just a byproduct of that influence on our economy. Until we can reduce the rate of inflation, which is beyond tolerance at the moment, there is no hope of the situation being rectified. If inflation continues at its present rate, Parliament will have to reconsider this matter and other matters of a like nature within the foreseeable future. That is what has caused the situation. For many years the normal situation obtained, and the increased turnover did look after increased costs, because the increased costs were not escalating at the present rate. The background to this is purely the economic pressures on the community. The trustee companies have been more than tolerant in trying to handle the increased costs. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, both of them have suffered losses of some magnitude in recent years, and the situation cannot be allowed to continue. It is important that they continue and be viable in the interests of the many people who benefit through their administration of estates. If they collapse, many thousands of people in the community will lose because of their lack of knowledge, understanding and expertise in the proper administration of estates. Many estates have been running for many years and heavy reliance is placed on the quality of the administration of the estates for their benefit. It is important that that be understood.

The honourable members for Rockhampton and Port Curtis extolled the virtues of the principle of the Public Curator. I am not going to take anything away from the Public Curator. The work in that office is performed with honesty and the best of intentions, and it provides a high professional service.

Mr. Wright: It is still understaffed.

Mr. KNOX: Maybe there are problems of staffing in the expert fields. Nevertheless, that office is doing a commendable task, and the annual report reveals that from year to year.

I would ask the honourable member for Port Curtis, as the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt endeavoured to ask, how much confidence he has in the Public Curator. He calls on us to swing our whole resources behind the Public Curator. If the Australian Labor Party were returned to office, he would wipe out the trustee companies. That is the statement he made. He would have all their work taken over by the Public Curator.

Mr. HANSON: I made no such statement.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): Order! Is the honourable member taking a point of order?

Mr. HANSON: I think that the whole thing is wrong but—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I asked the honourable member whether he is taking a point of order.

Mr. HANSON: Yes, I am. The Minister's remarks are in complete error. I made no such statement. I said that we would see that they got very healthy competition.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ask the Minister to accept that denial.

Mr. KNOX: I accept the honourable member's denial. I will put it another way. The Public Curator is the great principle supported by the Labor Party to the exclusion of other interests in the community which are just as capable of looking after estates. I ask the honourable member for Port Curtis now to declare who looks after his estate or will look after his estate in due course. I know it won't be the Public Curator. I happen to know the people who look after his will and personal affairs. There is no way in the world he would entrust his personal affairs to the Public Curator.

Mr. Hanson: I think you're wrong, too.

Mr. KNOX: I think I am right. The honourable member for Port Curtis talks loudly and long about the great virtues of the Public Curator's office to the exclusion of all others. We contest his sincerity in this matter.

Mr. Frawley: He has too much to hide; he wouldn't be game.

Mr. KNOX: The honourable member for Port Curtis has been an expert at manipulating his affairs so that people do not know very much about them. In fact I understand that he was invited by the A.B.C. to appear on the television programme "This Day Tonight" in support of the proposals put forward by the honourable member for Merthyr that members of Parliament reveal their assets, and I am told that he refused to do it.

The honourable member for Brisbane rebuffed effectively the remarks made by the Opposition. He is very experienced, of course, in the administration of estates. His suggestion that trustee companies be appointed as trustees in cases of motor-vehicle and industrial negligence is worthy of consideration and should be examined. Perhaps he could follow it up at a later date.

The Bill is absolutely necessary in the interests not of the trustee companies but of the people on whose behalf they act. It is wonderful that it is possible to have these companies, whose reports are tabled in the House and subject to public examination, continue in their business for the benefit of so

many thousands of people. The trust that people have in them in seeking their advice in the first place on the preparation of documents and the confidence shown by people in the companies' administration of their estates are a tribute not only to the companies but also to the community in which we live. There are not very many countries in the world where companies of this sort can flourish. Australia happens to be one of them, and let us hope that, despite the efforts of the A.L.P. to socialise everything in sight, it stays that way.

The honourable member for Rockhampton tried to suggest that in complicated wills many difficulties had been designed by trustee companies.

Mr. Wright: Very often they are.

Mr. KNOX: He forgets, of course, that the trustee companies handle a disproportionate number of wills. I suggest they have no less difficulty with contested estates than the Public Curator and private individuals who administer estates have. Some of the complicated estates that are given to the trustee companies to administer are not the result of their advice at all.

There have been some recent notable cases—I do not intend to canvass them because they involve the personal affairs of people, and they have been reported in the Press—in which difficulties have arisen not as the result of professional advice from either trustee companies or solicitors. People had certain ambitions for their estates and it was impossible to put their wishes into effect. In some instances wills have been contested by relatives who felt they were entitled to benefit in preference to other persons mentioned in the wills. It is almost axiomatic that among contested estates there will be those administered by the Public Curator or by the trustee companies. They are handling a large share of this business.

I hope that honourable members will support the motion and that the Bill will now proceed to be printed.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Debate resumed from 25 September (see p. 832) on Mr. Knox's motion—

“That a Bill be introduced relating to the appointment, registration and functions of justices of the peace; to repeal certain provisions of the Justices Act 1886-1975; and for connected purposes.”

Mr. JONES (Cairns) (10.33 p.m.): I was amazed to hear the Minister's admission that the Government does not know how many justices there are in Queensland, or where they are located. I am pleased to note that with the transfer of the administration of justices from the Premier's Department to the Department of Justice, a computerised register will be compiled, which will be available for public inspection.

The power to make appointments previously vested in the Governor in Council is to be abandoned and appointments are to be vested in the Under Secretary of the Justice Department. This will probably accelerate appointments but some of the prestige that goes with the commission may well be lost.

I believe that the basic responsibilities of this office are not well enough known by appointees. Appointments formerly recommended by members of Parliament were made not so much to confer an honour as a favour, or they were regarded more or less as honours for favours done. In times of pressure every honourable member must realise that a person he is recommending as a justice of the peace is possibly not the best person in the community to become a justice. Because a person applies to become a justice of the peace a member feels that he cannot refuse to make the recommendation and risk offending one of his constituents. That is a very poor method of selecting a person to undertake the responsibilities and duties of such an honourable office, for it is indeed a very old and a very honourable office.

Before I proceed too far on this line, let me mention something that has come to my attention over a long period. No person can be sworn as a justice of the peace and receive his commission unless he takes an oath. The swearing of an oath is very important indeed as part of the formality of taking office, but over the years we seem to have prescribed a Christian oath only. I know that this matter has been widely canvassed and the some derision has been directed by people in other places at newly elected members of Parliament not responding to the oath of office. I think that our society is changing to the point where we cannot preclude all persons who are not religious, or who are not Christians. More particularly, we are now accepting only Caucasian Christians. In effect, no person can become a justice of the peace who is a Moslem, a Hindu, a Buddhist, an agnostic, an atheist or of the Jewish faith—unless he is a hypocrite and takes the Christian oath. The mere fact that a man or woman is not a Christian should not debar him or her from receiving such a commission.

The laws of evidence provide for the taking of an oath in various forms. I do not know whether the Oaths Act may be breached by Christians only or whether juries

are selected from a panel of Christians only—and Caucasian Christians at that—but we know that juries are sworn and evidence is taken upon oath. Whatever faith a person may be, he is able to take the appropriate oath or make an affirmation before giving evidence. I can remember as a child being very impressed by a Chinese witness blowing out a match before he gave evidence.

It is about time that we had a good look at allowing other forms of oaths and affirmations. It may be that an agnostic or a Moslem is a fine upstanding, honest, respectable citizen in our community. Should we debar him from participating in such a responsible duty in our society simply because he may not conform to our particular religion or philosophy? Is it only Christians who are to participate in this form of public office? It is a public office—and a very cheap form of public office. The duty performed by the State's justices of the peace is obtained at no fee, which is commendable; but I think we should take into consideration that it would be much more difficult for the ordinary citizen if a justice of the peace were not available. I am pleased that justices of the peace will be more readily available, and that a register will be compiled to allow them to be readily accessible.

I am wondering whether this could become an annoyance to some people who hold office. It is all very well for members of Parliament who play another role as justices of the peace. We know that under the Act the mayor of a city automatically becomes a justice of the peace. I am wondering whether some justices of the peace hold a commission only for their own convenience or for the convenience of their firms, rather than as a public office.

Perhaps it would be a worth-while exercise to examine the existing guide-lines laid down in our changing society in relation to the justice of the peace. It is also quite appropriate to look at the other side of the picture. There are those who, because of their religion, philosophy or faith cannot take the oath that we prescribe and are therefore debarred from becoming justices of the peace. We are setting ourselves up in judgment of them, but we might ourselves be judged by them one day. If we continue to seek only those of one particular faith, we will do an injustice to those of other faiths—unless they are hypocrites. The Minister should look into that matter.

As a result of the lowering of the age of majority from 21 to 18 years, it is only natural that we should be looking for 18-year-olds to become eligible for appointment as justices of the peace. In his wisdom the Minister has decided that the minimum age shall remain at 21 years. He should consider that an 18-year-old person can vote, and do many other things that we legislated for in the past 12 months. But he cannot become a justice of the peace.

We must look at the situation in the other States. I can understand the Minister's hesitation. I think that in Victoria a person has to be 35 years of age before he can be appointed as a justice of the peace. I was looking forward with confidence to the appointment in early 1975 of a person of 18, 19 or 20 years of age but, as the Minister said when outlining this matter to the Justices of the Peace Association, as reported in November 1974, no-one has been appointed.

I believe that this legislation is warranted at this time. The revision and substantial amendment of the system by which justices are appointed is certainly needed. I am amazed that provision is not made for the automatic cancellation of the commission of a person convicted of an indictable offence, either on indictment or summarily, or who becomes a bankrupt or is insolvent. A few people who have come to me have not been appointed because of their previous criminal records. The last case brought to my attention concerned a person who was refused appointment because he had been charged and convicted of a drink-driving offence.

I know there was quite a ritual that police officers went through about migrants, going back through their embassies checking up on their backgrounds, even checking in Europe, and the delay caused by those investigations was considerable. But to believe that somebody with a conviction for an indictable offence against his name could have slipped through that net and been appointed or not have his name crossed off the list when he is convicted is something that amazes me. As the Minister said, I believe it is necessary to strictly maintain a high standard of justices in this State. What we are doing in effect is saying that if after investigation a person is appointed as a justice of the peace that he is an A.1 citizen and that once he attests to the signature on a document as being that of the person who signed it that is accepted. That is putting in its simplest form the responsibility of a J.P. That is accepted because of the strict format we apply in relation to the appointment of justices of the peace. I support the measure that is before the Committee and I am sure my colleagues on this side of the House will also support it to the fullest.

Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumba) (10.47 p.m.): From what I have read about justices of the peace, it appears that the office originated somewhere back in the 13th century in the days of Edward III. The present day justice of the peace in Queensland certainly faces a multiplicity of duties. I have always felt that a justice of the peace plays a very important role in the community, but I do think that a person should be mature before he is appointed. Perhaps the Minister might consider making the age limit 25 years instead of 21. I certainly do not agree that 18-year-olds should be justices of the peace. I agree that an 18-year-old

should be allowed to vote—I do not argue with that—but I think the appointee to this office should be a mature person—one who has had a bit of experience in the world. I do not agree that an 18-year-old high school student would be able to carry out the duties of a justice of the peace successfully.

Mr. Wright: There are arguments on both sides. Don't you agree that if a person of 18 can sign a contract for, say, \$18,000 and be bound by law to comply with that contract, he should be able to witness a signature?

Mr. FRAWLEY: One would think so, but a justice of the peace in Queensland can be called upon to perform many more duties than merely witnessing a signature.

Mr. Jones: He is not going to do that.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It could happen out in the country. For a start, two justices of the peace sit on the bench at Woodford. Often in Redcliffe justices of the peace sit on the bench. I do not believe that an 18-year-old would have the knowledge; he just would not have it. Justices of the peace can be called upon to issue a search warrant. It could happen, especially in a country town. How many justices of the peace today would know how to issue a search warrant and how many could act as a coroner?

Mr. Wright: Do you agree there should be some type of training?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Let me finish.

Mr. Wright interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't read rubbish; I make my own speeches.

Mr. Wright: You are almost word for word so far.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Rot. I trust the Minister has something in mind to ensure that justices of the peace are appointed in areas where they can be of service to the public. I think we should be very wary of issuing justice of the peace commissions to a husband and wife living in the same house. I fail to see the need to have two J.P.s living in the same home or even two members of the one family. I know of four people in the one family who are all justices of the peace and I cannot see that that is providing any more of a public service. I think the commissions should be spread out.

Members of Parliament are limited as to the number of people they can nominate each year for appointment as justices of the peace.

Mr. Wright interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I have not seen the Bill, and I do not believe anything till I see it in writing.

Mr. Wright: Don't you believe the Minister?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I believe the Minister, but he does not print the Bill himself.

In my opinion, there should be an increase in the number of nominations for appointment as justices of the peace that members of Parliament can make. At present we are allowed to nominate 16 a year. That might be satisfactory in an electorate of, say, 10,000 or 12,000—one of the small electorates that one can walk around between morning tea and lunch-time. My electorate covers about 660 square miles and people are scattered through it in various small towns. Since I became a member of Parliament, I have received at least 200 applications from people seeking appointment as justices of the peace. Usually I ask why they want to be appointed. I do not say, "You can't be appointed." I send their name to the Justice Department for investigation, because I cannot investigate them myself. Of course, if I knew that someone was a disreputable character, I would not recommend him.

Mr. Wright: You don't make any judgments?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do not make any judgments.

Mr. Wright: The honourable member for Everton does.

Mr. FRAWLEY: The honourable member for Everton is running his electorate, and I am running mine. The beauty of this country is that we are not all stereotyped. The A.L.P. wants a society in which when button A is pressed everybody jumps, when button B is pressed everybody belches, and when button C is pressed everybody swears. Members of the Opposition want everyone to be alike. It is because of the differences between the honourable member for Everton, myself and other members that we are in the governing parties. We are individuals; we think as we wish. We do not all think in the same way. What a rotten place it would be if we did. If everybody on this side of the Chamber thought as I do, I would form another Opposition. I do not want to be a yes-man. I want to preserve my individuality and do what I want to do. I intend to stand up in this Chamber and have my say whenever I want to. No-one is going to gag me.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): Order!

Mr. FRAWLEY: Let me tell the Committee something about the A.L.P. when it was in government in this State. Members of the Labor Government used to charge £5 to nominate a person for appointment as a justice of the peace. I know what I am talking about because I worked in Parliament House when they were in all the rotten rackets round the place. I am

not accusing any of the members of the present Opposition of doing that, but members of the A.L.P. certainly did it before 1957.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: You would not nominate as a J.P. anybody in the Caboolture district, say, who had been convicted of stealing cattle?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I would first have to see the judgment and make myself aware of the circumstances under which he had been convicted. I simply send in the names of people who ask me to nominate them as justices of the peace. I let the police make the investigations. They are much more competent to do that than I am.

As I said before, I think it has been too easy to become a justice of the peace.

Mr. Wright: Do you think some people become justices of the peace just for prestige?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Some people want to become justices of the peace just so they can put the magic letters "J.P." after their name. While I am on that subject, I state that I do not think that chairmen of councils or mayors of cities should automatically become justices of the peace. Why should they be appointed without being investigated?

Mr. Wright: What about magistrates?

Mr. FRAWLEY: That is a different proposition altogether. Why should a mayor or a chairman of a shire council automatically become a justice of the peace?

Mr. Wright: They are responsible people.

Mr. FRAWLEY: Of course they are, but they should not become justices of the peace without being investigated.

Mr. Moore: What about members of Parliament?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do not believe that members of Parliament should be appointed automatically, either. They should be eligible to become justices of the peace, but their appointment should not be automatic.

Opposition Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): Order! The honourable member is not obliged to accept all interjections.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do not mind trying to help them, Mr. Miller. In this Parliament, I moved over to this seat because I realised that the A.L.P. was so weak. We have all heard of a picture called "The Magnificent Seven". Members of the Opposition are "The Stupid 11", and I moved over to this side of the Chamber to lend them a hand. I do not mind taking some of the interjections to help them. My mission in life is to help people. I came into this Parliament not only to help people in my electorate but also to try to make better politicians out of some of the idiots on the A.L.P. side.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the motion before the Committee.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am sorry, Mr. Miller. You realise, of course, that I was distracted by my enemies in the A.L.P. They are always trying to pull me down.

I was saying that it was much too easy for a person to become a J.P. Some form of instruction should be given. It is not enough for a person just to be nominated by a member of Parliament and then be investigated by the police to see whether he has a good character. I agree with that part of it. I suggest that persons wishing to become a J.P. should be given some kind of booklet setting out the duties of a J.P. They should be required to submit themselves to an elementary written test. I do not mean that they should have to go into all sorts of legal terms but they should be given something to read about the law so that the Justice Department could determine whether they were competent. Every justice of the peace should be issued with a plate bearing the words "Justice of the Peace". If a person wants to be a J.P., let him pay for that plate himself. That plate should be exhibited on the home of the J.P. A J.P. at Kippa-Ring in my electorate has such a plate on his house. As people drive past, they can see it and many go to his house because they realise he is there to do a public service. Many J.P.s do not want to bother signing anything. They just want to be called a J.P. and to wear a J.P. badge on their coat and get a certificate from the Justices Association. By the way, that is a good association. I am a member of it.

An Opposition Member: Do you pay your dues?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Of course I pay my dues. J.P.s should be given a certificate by the Justice Department. They should not have to rely on a certificate to show membership of the Justices Association. A charge could be made for it. I don't think certificates should be issued free. If people want the magic letters "J.P." after their name, they should be prepared to pay for them. Many J.P.s do not in fact want to render the public service attaching to the appointment. The Minister says he will have a list of justices of the peace exhibited in every court-house.

Mr. Moore: Show it in the roll. That is good enough.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is too much trouble to look through the roll. I am going to disagree with the honourable member for Windsor for the first time since I came here.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: How about shutting up? I am making this speech, not you blokes.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Miller): Order! I ask the Chamber to come to order.

Mr. Wright: Do you agree to a suitable entry in the telephone directory to indicate that a person is a J.P.?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I agree.

Mr. Wright: You will support me on that?

Mr. FRAWLEY: Of course I will support you on that.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to address the Chair.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I apologise, Mr. Miller.

When the Minister issues the list of justices of the peace to court-houses I ask that he issue copies of that list to each member of Parliament—A.L.P. members included—to display in his office so that when people come there they can see where the nearest J.P. can be located. It would be a service to all electors.

Mr. Burns: Would you agree that a new J.P. should serve a number of years before sitting on a bench, or that there should be two classes—those for witnessing and those with some training?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I think that is a very sensible suggestion. It is very rarely that I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, but this is one of the few times I do. I thank him for that sensible suggestion. My first suggestion was that people who have applied to become a J.P. should be given something to study so that it can be determined whether they are competent. If the Minister does not want to do that, they should be given a bit of practice for a certain time.

I commend the Minister for introducing the Bill. It is well overdue. I trust that he will weed out some of those justices. Some of them are just bludging around and putting "J.P." after their name. I hope he gets rid of a lot of the incompetents.

Mr. GREENWOOD (Ashgrove) (11 p.m.): I rise to deal with some of the problems raised by the honourable member for Cairns. As recently as 15 minutes ago, the honourable member for Cairns was having some difficulties. The difficulty to which he was directing his attention was the problem which might attend the appointment of various people who are not members of the Christian faith to the office of justice of the peace. Far from being deficient in this regard, the Queensland legislation provides a most commodious method of including all such people within the ranks of justices.

Section 15 of the Justices Act provides as follows—

"A justice other than a Judge of the Supreme Court or a District Court shall not exercise any of the functions of his office until he has taken or made an Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance and the Oath or Affirmation of Office prescribed by 'The Oaths Act of 1867,' or

any other Act in force for the time being amending or in substitution for that Act. Notwithstanding anything in that Act contained a justice may make an Affirmation of Allegiance instead of taking the Oath of Allegiance as therein provided."

In section 1 of the Oaths Act, 1867 to 1960 the notes set out the form of oaths of allegiance just as the following sections prescribe the various oaths of office. It will be seen that if people object to taking an oath or object to saying that they sincerely promise or swear something, they are entitled to make an affirmation.

The honourable member spoke of various religious faiths that might wish to achieve these offices.

Section 32 of the Oaths Act provides—

"Nothing herein contained shall invalidate any oath sworn or taken in a sufficient and lawful form and any oath of allegiance or office sworn before a judge of the Supreme Court may be certified or recorded by the associate or judge's clerk."

The question is: what is a sufficient and lawful form for an oath? How do we ask people with varying and different religious beliefs to take their oaths? If the honourable member for Cairns had bothered to acquaint himself with the details he would have found out that it did not matter very much and that whether the person concerned was a Scottish Covenanter, someone who wished to take a Jewish oath or a Chinese, there is a form provided for him. Similarly, a form is provided for a Buddhist.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. GREENWOOD: All the officer of the court has to do is say to the Chinese, "You swear you shall tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," and having shattered a saucer add, "If you do not tell the truth your soul shall be shattered like the saucer."

Mr. Burns: If he says "Hee-how", what do you do then?

Mr. GREENWOOD: Apparently the honourable member for Lytton has very little trust in his soul for the Chinese.

Although the concern expressed by the honourable member for Cairns is laudable, it is without foundation.

Members of the Opposition have contended time and time again that justices of the peace do nothing more than witness documents.

Mr. Wright: No.

Mr. GREENWOOD: Isn't that what they have said?

Mr. Wright: We said it was the main task performed by them.

Mr. GREENWOOD: Is that what they say?

Mr. Wright: Do you disagree?

Mr. GREENWOOD: I shall point out a few other functions of justices of the peace, that honourable members opposite have either not thought of, or, if they have managed to think of them, apparently do not regard as very important. One concerns a warrant of arrest. Perhaps honourable members opposite are not particularly concerned with civil liberties and the problem attendant upon justices of the peace being able to issue warrants of arrest. We on this side of the Chamber take a somewhat different view. I remind honourable members opposite of the right of justices to issue search warrants. Once again it seems that honourable members opposite are not particularly concerned about the rights of the citizens to have their homes inviolate and safe.

Mr. Frawley: When I said that they howled me down.

Mr. GREENWOOD: That does not surprise me in the least.

Civil liberties are one of the things that Opposition members do not really know much about. They are quite content to allow the State an almost unfettered role in its interference with the daily lives of citizens. That is what socialism is all about. They can be pardoned for not inquiring too closely into these problems which very much concern honourable members on this side of the Chamber.

In the last few months a number of statutes that have come before us require civil servants to search for termites, to do various things under the Marine Act and to enter dwelling-houses and other places such as boats that are occasionally occupied by families. Throughout the legislation that has come before us in recent months we have tried to insist that public servants, no matter how well meaning, should not be allowed to enter a man's home without a search warrant. In order to obtain a warrant he has to satisfy a justice of the peace that it is reasonable in the circumstances to obtain a warrant and to interfere with somebody's privacy.

Latham, C.J., in *McArthur v. Williams*, reported in 55 Commonwealth Law Reports, had quite a bit to say about the problems that confront justices and the importance of justices looking critically at what police and civil servants put before them. At page 334, he said—

“Blackstone, 21st ed. (1844), vol. IV., pp. 290, 291, after stating that a justice of the peace has power to issue a warrant to apprehend a person accused of felony, though not yet indicted, goes on to say that ‘he may also issue a warrant to apprehend a person suspected of felony, though the original suspicion be not in himself, but in the party that prays his warrant; because he is a competent judge of the probability offered to him of such suspicion.’”

Let us pause there for a moment to examine the assumption that the law was built on even in those times, namely, that a justice of the peace was a competent judge of the probability of the suspicion on which the warrant is based.

Blackstone goes on—

“But in both cases it is fitting to examine upon oath the party requiring a warrant, as well to ascertain that there is a felony or other crime actually committed, without which no warrant should be granted; as also to prove the cause and probability of suspecting the party against whom the warrant is prayed. ‘See Hale, Pleas of the Crown (1800), vol. 2, p. 109, to the same effect.’”

Chief Justice Latham goes on to say—

“It will be observed that the phrase used is ‘it is fitting’. I read these words as containing advice to the magistrate that he should satisfy himself that it is proper to issue a warrant in the particular case before him, and not as laying down a legal requirement that when he already has an information upon oath of one person deposing to that which is necessary to justify the issue of a warrant, he is bound to cross-examine that person or to examine other persons upon the matter.”

Summing up, the Chief Justice said—

“I desire to add . . . that a magistrate must not act lightly in issuing a warrant, and that if he is left in doubt as to the propriety of taking an information upon the oath of the informant only, he may refuse to act until further evidence is provided.”

That is one situation where the powers of a justice can impinge upon the fundamental rights of a citizen. What we have to ensure is a society in which people who are appointed to this office, an office which carries enormous powers in some respects, are people who are responsible, mature and unlikely to treat their duties lightly but likely to scrutinise carefully any request that is made to them to interfere with the fundamental rights of the citizen.

The Bill being introduced to the Committee is yet another attempt by the Minister to improve the existing state of affairs, and I support it.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.12 p.m.), in reply: A number of members have made useful contributions to this debate and suggestions which will be noted. There will be an opportunity for further debate after the Bill is printed, and perhaps it would be in the best interests of everybody if that were done and we were to debate these matters when the Bill is again before us.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

(Mr. Miller, Ithaca, in the chair)

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.15 p.m.): I move—

“That a Bill be introduced to amend the Small Claims Tribunals Act 1973-1974 in certain particulars.”

The Small Claims Tribunal which was established in Queensland in 1973 has been working successfully since its inception, and has enabled disputes between traders and consumers over goods and services to be settled quickly and cheaply. Since the Act was introduced in this State, it has been adopted by a number of other States and New Zealand. It is now proposed by this Bill to increase the jurisdiction of the tribunal from \$450 to \$700.

Originally the Act did not provide for a claim concerning the recovery of moneys lodged as a bond or security for tenancy. This was added by the Small Claims Tribunals Act Amendment Act 1974.

Arguments have been received by the tribunal that a landlord is not a trader merely because he has rented a house to a claimant. It is proposed to amend the definitions of “consumer”, “small claim” and “trader” so that where moneys have been paid as a bond or security for tenancy, the tenant is to be regarded as a consumer with the right to lodge a small claim against the landlord who is placed in the same category as a trader for the purpose.

Where a claim is referred to the tribunal, section 17 of the Act provides that the issue in dispute in that claim shall not be justiciable at any time by a court of any other kind save—

(a) Where the proceeding before the court was commenced before the claim was referred to a Small Claims Tribunal; or

(b) Where the claim before a Small Claims Tribunal has been withdrawn.

As there could be instances where a claim could be referred to a Small Claims Tribunal upon which the tribunal has no jurisdiction to act, it is proposed to provide that claims which have been struck out for want of jurisdiction be also included as an exception to section 17. Similarly it is proposed to amend section 20 to give the tribunal power to make an order that strikes out, for want of jurisdiction, the claim to which the proceeding relates.

Under section 25 the registrar is required to cause notice of the claim and its particulars to be given to the respondent, and to

every person who appears from the claim form to have a sufficient interest in a resolution of the dispute to which the claim relates. There are occasions where a claim is referred to the tribunal and it becomes apparent that some other person has a sufficient interest in a resolution of the dispute and should be notified of the claim and proceedings.

In these circumstances the referee adjourns the hearing and requests the registrar to notify that other person accordingly. It is proposed to formalise this procedure by providing that where a Small Claims Tribunal to which a claim has been referred is of the opinion that a person has a sufficient interest in a resolution of the dispute to which the claim relates but has not been given notice of the claim, the tribunal may direct the registrar to cause notice of the claim and its particulars to be given, as soon as practicable, to that person, and the registrar shall cause notice to be given in accordance with the direction.

It is also proposed to amend section 41 of the Act so that notices may be sent by ordinary mail in lieu of certified mail as at present.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (11.19 p.m.): I agree with the Minister. I think that the establishment of the Small Claims Tribunal in Queensland was a landmark in the legal history of this State. It has certainly proven its effectiveness since 1973. It is a court that brings swift justice. There is always room for compromise, not only when the matter is being heard by the registrar or referee but also well before that time.

I think that the honourable member for Rockhampton North would agree with me when I say that we have resolved many consumer complaints simply by suggesting to the manufacturers or retailers that the matter may have to go to the Small Claims Tribunal. They are very pleased then to settle. It is a compromise that is satisfactory to both parties.

I note some of the examples of compromise that took place in 1973-74. In one instance, an action against Renaware Pty. Ltd. for \$249 was settled for \$200. Metro Ford was sued for \$90.23 and settled for \$65.23. Another case against Queensland Sales Development Centre for \$450 was settled for \$200. There is another one here—Simpson and Robert Thorne, \$190 to \$120. A very important facet is that there is this room for compromise.

Another important point is the informality of proceedings and the personal approach. Those who have not had an opportunity to speak about it to people who have attended may have seen its procedure on television. An applicant presents his case to the referee, and he listens attentively. He hears both sides of the story, makes a number of suggestions, and finally brings down some type of judgment that can still be debated and discussed. I think it is ideal.

It is also extremely cheap. It costs only \$2 to lodge such a claim in the Small Claims Tribunal. This stresses the importance of the tribunal, as the low fee allows anybody to take up a matter if he feels aggrieved by a retailer or manufacturer. It is also an effective weapon to encourage settlement. The manufacturer knows that the matter can be taken to the Small Claims Tribunal, and that if it is, he has no redress in taking it to a Magistrates Court to try to obtain payment for the debt he believes is owing. So there is the incentive to settle. The retailers know about it and, thanks to the publicity given to the tribunal, the consumers generally know about it.

The Minister did a very good job with the booklet he put out. It was certainly informative. It was simple enough for everyone to understand, and I think it is one publication that certainly was of great value to the community generally. However, the success of a tribunal such as this creates new burdens because as it becomes successful, and as it is publicised that a certain consumer was successful in his claim, other people say, "I'll try it." They wait to see what happens. In February 1974, there were only 81 claims, but in February 1975 the number had risen to 150. There is therefore an increasing work load for the referee. Originally there were about 100 claims a month, but I notice from the figures I have here that from July 1974 to June 1975 there were 1,745 cases heard and dealt with by the Small Claims Tribunal. That stresses the huge work load the tribunal now has, and I think the point is made that it is now time to decentralise.

When the legislation was introduced it was suggested by members, "O.K., we like the idea of it being established in Brisbane because this is surely where the work load will commence." But the time has come when we must review the whole policy. Instead of having a referee travel to Rockhampton, Townsville and other centres, eventually we will have to establish tribunals in other places. I have seen reports not only from Brisbane and Southport but from Roma, the Central Highlands, Mt. Isa and the Far North, so I think it is time we considered the appointment of a full-time referee outside Brisbane. The ultimate, to my mind, would be the appointment of a referee in the Northern and Central court districts, but I am not sure that the work load is there at this point. Possibly we need one to carry both the Central and Northern work load.

Mr. McKechnie: Have you got nice people up there?

Mr. WRIGHT: No, it is just that I think we are going to save costs. There is no reason why a person cannot be appointed, and I would rather see one appointed up there than another one appointed in Brisbane. I suggest the Minister give some consideration to this. Statistics not only prove effectiveness; they also stress the need for

administrative and legislative action. The administrative action I am suggesting is the appointment of another referee outside Brisbane. From the legislative point of view, it stresses the need for better laws.

The statistics I have in front of me tell us that there were 382 claims concerning buildings, 140 about appliances, 118 about furniture and floor coverings, 616 involving motor vehicles, 255 involving services, and 141 involving "Miscellaneous", so we do not quite know what that is all about. But I think, when we come back to this, that it is obvious that there is something wrong with the motor vehicles being sold. Possibly it comes back to roadworthiness certificates. I have had plenty of complaints about these, and Government members have mentioned to me that they are constantly getting complaints about them. People are constantly complaining about electrical appliances. In fact, 141 such cases were heard by the tribunal last year. There were 255 cases involving television repair and other services. Perhaps the laws are effective but the application of them is at fault. The Government should be looking at the need to adopt a policy of prevention rather than cure. If the consumer laws in this State could be streamlined, I am sure that fewer cases would come before the Small Claims Tribunal. Roadworthiness certificates certainly should be cleaned up. The qualifications of some of the service firms advertising that they give first-class service should be investigated. The Government also needs to move against the house painters and the roof painters who have taken down hundreds of unsuspecting pensioners and other consumers. Standards certainly have a role to play in the consumer field, not only in relation to goods and services but also in relation to the things that people buy at book stalls in this State, for example.

In the amendments now proposed, the quantum of the maximum claim allowable will be increased from \$450 to \$700. That was requested previously both by members of the Opposition and by members of the Government. It was refused then because the Minister said it would conflict with bankruptcy law. Perhaps he will explain to the Committee how he now proposes to overcome the difficulty. The amount has certainly been increased in other States and no problems have arisen.

As the change is being made from \$450 to \$700, perhaps the Minister should go a little further. I spoke with my legal colleague the honourable member for Ashgrove about the maximum claim allowed to be dealt with in the Magistrates Court, and I think he said it was \$1,200. Perhaps the amount should be raised from \$700 to \$1,000.

I come back to the statement made by the Minister on 1 April 1975, when he spoke of the need to increase the maximum to ensure that almost all household appliances and services, including colour television sets,

would come within the jurisdiction of the tribunal. I completely agree with him. But surely \$700 is not the cut-off point. One can buy television sets for \$1,000 and \$1,100. Although I realise that not the whole of a television set may be in question, I am sure that many of the sophisticated appliances that one can purchase today—hi-fi sets, and so on—could cost well in excess of \$700. Why wait?

On 1 April this year the Minister said that it was necessary to increase the amount to at least \$700. Because of the inflationary spiral, I suggest to him that it should be increased to \$1,000 now. Politics is a game of numbers, and perhaps that is what Government members should be looking at. Why not move to amend it to \$1,000 now? If that is not done, the Act will have to be amended at a later date. That will waste money; it will also waste quite a lot of time. I am sure there are many other legislative measures that the Minister wishes to bring before the House without having to bring in a further amending Bill next February or next April to again increase the amount.

There seems to be some mix-up as to whether an increase took place once before. I remember seeing a "This Day Tonight" television programme that discussed what Queensland had in comparison with the other States, and it was then said that there was jurisdiction up to \$700. Obviously that was a mistake. On the following Monday, an article in "The Courier-Mail" indicated that the maximum claim that could be heard by the Small Claims Tribunal in Queensland was to be increased from \$450 to \$700. I have had nothing but trouble from people lodging claims with me because they believed that the amount had been increased.

Mr. Moore: We were worried about bankruptcy.

Mr. WRIGHT: Apparently that is no longer a problem.

Mr. Moore: It still could be.

Mr. WRIGHT: It has not been in the other States. I suggest that the amount could be increased still further.

Because of the noise when the Minister was speaking, I was not sure whether landlord and tenant actions may now be brought before the Small Claims Tribunal. Through you, Mr. Miller, I ask the Minister whether they may.

Mr. Knox: No.

Mr. WRIGHT: Then I will leave that till the second reading. It is obvious that the other proposed amendments are intended to fill in the various gaps. I agree that there is not much sense in having to have the notices sent by certified mail when ordinary mail would do.

Generally speaking we welcome the proposed amendments, particularly the increase in quantum. The Small Claims Tribunal is

a very important landmark in the legal history of the State. It has proved itself, although I do not think it is perfect.

I reiterate the point that now is the time to decentralise. While the burden of the referee is so great—we are talking about something like 2,000 cases a year—let us do away with the itinerant referee and set up someone outside the Brisbane area.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.31 p.m.), in reply: I thank the honourable member for his contribution. As to the decentralisation of the Small Claims Tribunal—the amount of work available for the referee in any one community or general area in the State would not warrant a permanent appointment.

Mr. Wright: Possibly one person could handle all the outside work.

Mr. KNOX: The referee has gone on circuit. He has adequately covered the cases raised in various parts of the State. The number varies. Twenty or 30 cases of a similar nature may come up in a particular locality because one trader has been doing something that has caused some problems. On the figures it looks as if there is a lot of work in that area, but in fact most of it is tidied up in one day by the visit of the referee. In some areas where previously work was available, none occurs for some time for one reason or another. The itinerant referee is producing the results that are desired. In fact it is now necessary to have a further referee appointed. But again he will be appointed in Brisbane because the work-load is so uneven throughout the State.

I would hope that we have reached the peak of this work. Now that the results of the Small Claims Tribunal have become widely known—decisions are published—people are gaining confidence in it and using it. Traders generally are understanding what their obligations are, and I hope more cases will be settled at the door of the court rather than before the tribunal.

Mr. Wright: There still seems to be some trouble in getting enforcement of judgments given by the referee.

Mr. KNOX: There will always be trouble in getting enforcement. I mentioned that on the day of the initiation of the original legislation. We have not yet devised legislation to get blood out of stone. With a person of straw, it does not matter how many claimants are successful against him: there is no satisfaction at the end of the road. This is something that has worried many people, and not only in this jurisdiction. Ultimately some claimants, even though they have all the right on their side, do not get satisfaction because of the inability or refusal of people to meet their commitments.

As to the increase in jurisdiction—I have been reserved about this by virtue of the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act. There has been no change in the Bankruptcy Act, but inflation has so distorted the picture for household goods in the last year or so that even to cover those matters which were originally in the jurisdiction it is necessary to increase the amount. Unless the amount is increased the effectiveness of the legislation is considerably reduced because items which originally would have come within the jurisdiction would cease to, because of changes in prices. I realise that sophisticated electronic equipment can exceed \$700 in value, but I point out that the amount within the jurisdiction is not necessarily the total sale value of the article. It might be for just one item of it. Honourable members should remember that the cost of motor vehicles is well in excess of \$700, but certain parts of a motor vehicle might be less than \$700 in value and be the subject of a claim.

Mr. Wright: Is there any reason why you have not taken it to \$1,000?

Mr. KNOX: It is very hard to justify any particular figure, whether it is \$600, \$800 or \$1,000. We have looked at the movement of prices of household goods over the last two years, and \$700 seems to cover the items that \$450 covered two years ago.

Mr. Frawley: It won't cover a colour TV set.

Mr. KNOX: I realise that; nor did \$450 cover a lot of black-and-white TV sets two years ago.

We have to be very careful as to where we are going here, because we are approaching the level of \$1,200, which is the jurisdiction of the Magistrate Court. Again I express some caution.

If the Small Claims Tribunal is to be effective, we must ensure that the procedures involved do not become too difficult. If the amounts get too high, people will avoid the Small Claims Tribunal and go to the higher jurisdiction, thereby defeating the whole purpose of the Small Claims Tribunal. There is some reason for caution in this matter. In the Australian Capital Territory the level has been raised to \$1,000, and in most of the States it is \$450. I have no doubt that they will increase the level as the result of the lead we are giving here.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that they must not move around the Chamber while I am on my feet. This has happened a considerable number of times this evening. In that respect I draw the attention of honourable members to Standing Orders.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 11.39 p.m.