

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 1975

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

Assent to the following Bills reported by Mr. Speaker:—

- Grammar Schools Bill;
- New Farm Library Validation Bill;
- Industrial Development Act Amendment Bill;
- Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill;
- Brands Act Amendment Bill;
- Police Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill;
- Diseases in Timber Bill;
- Queensland Marine Act Amendment Bill.

PAPERS

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

- Report of the Commissioner of Main Roads for the year 1974-75.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

- Orders in Council under—
 - River Improvement Trust Act 1940-1971.
 - Harbours Act 1955-1972.

By-law under the Harbours Act 1955-1972.

Reports—

- Totalisator Administration Board of Queensland, for the year 1974-75.
- Audit inspector's report on the books and accounts of the Queensland Coal Board, for the period 3 August 1974 to 7 August 1975.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND FLAMMABILITY OF CHILDREN'S NIGHTWEAR; COMMON-WEALTH-STATE RELATIONS

Hon. F. A. CAMPBELL (Aspley—Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs) (11.6 a.m.): I have taken this opportunity to inform the House of a very serious breach in rapport between the State and Federal Governments in two most important areas. One cannot conceive of anything more horrible than fatalities—factual and possible—caused through apparent unconcern. I refer to two areas specifically—apparel and construction.

The first deals with the fact that it has taken two years to convince the Commonwealth that the degree of flammability of imported children's nightwear should be marked similarly to that required of Australian manufacturers. I have never been able to understand this, except that some signatories to the now infamous "It's time" Labor catchcry of December 1972 could be still massive importers of all types of apparel.

The second has to do with construction—and, in this case, destruction—safety. I give two examples—construction of the Woolloongabba Telephone Exchange and death and injury during the demolition of a wartime building at Amberley R.A.A.F. base on Saturday. I stress the point first that State authorities have no automatic right of entry to Commonwealth property, nor do they have any control over regulations covering imports. Since construction of the telephone exchange got under way, there have been several "near misses" because the Commonwealth refused to construct, all round, platforms to catch falling materials as required under the Queensland Construction Safety Act. As it became more and more apparent that the Federal Government had no intention of accepting responsibility for the safety of workers or of complying with the State Act, the Premier made representations to the Prime Minister in June, 1974. The Prime Minister, last October—12 months ago—advised that the Australian Government, and I quote, "strongly supports State legislation related to the safety of persons and property". Nothing further at all has happened.

I mentioned before that it took two years to get any action as regards the labelling, in degree of flammability, of imported children's nightwear. Indeed, instead of co-operation, the Commonwealth is intent on duplication of services through its proposed Australian Consumer Protection Authority.

Now, I turn to safety in building demolition. Honourable members will acknowledge that I cannot go into detail on the manner of demolition of the structure at Amberley R.A.A.F. base, which is Commonwealth property. What I can say is that it is a requirement under State law that the Chief Safety Engineer of my Division of Occupational Safety be advised of intent to demolish. Unless he is assured that demolition shall be done by experienced people, my department may detail a project safety officer to ensure that proper practices

are employed. I mention, in passing, that my department has already trained three project safety officers for the Federal Department of Housing and Construction. I express my deepest sympathy to relatives of the person who lost his life at Amberley and to the injured. At the same time, I do have the feeling that had the stringent requirements of the State Construction Safety Act been applied, it could well be that the tragedy might not have occurred. I do not know how long it will be before the Prime Minister puts into effect his promise of co-operation in the field of occupational safety. In fact, it appears that he wants to take it over.

In June I commented on the proposed establishment of a national safety office concerning itself with three of my responsibilities—consumer affairs, standards and occupational safety. I stressed that the initial allocation of \$2,000,000 to set up such an office at the headquarters of the greatest of all socialist pipe dreams—Albury-Wodonga—would be mere duplication at taxpayers' expense. I was at pains to point out that all States already had efficient and successful structures operating in those fields and that, while I had no objection to and, indeed, welcomed small, expert, central authorities concentrating on collating and disseminating information and conducting research, I could see absolutely no need for huge bureaucracies superimposed purely in the name of socialism. I have heard nothing of substance on this pipe dream, either.

Then, in July, State Ministers for Labour discussed the allocation of industrial relations functions between State and Commonwealth Labour Departments. The agenda included papers on occupational safety on the national scene—and I stress this—uniform safety standards and safety, health and welfare under federal awards. Nothing has been heard from the Commonwealth on this, either.

I have brought to the attention of this House the obvious dereliction of duty and responsibility of the Federal Government in the fields of children's and occupational safety because it deserves to be condemned. It affords me no great pleasure, I assure you, Mr. Speaker.

ALLEGED REPORT ON DOWNGRADING OF CERTAIN QUEENSLAND PORTS

Hon. T. G. NEWBERY (Mirani—Minister for Tourism and Marine Services) (11.12 a.m.): I refer to a statement made by the

honourable member for Mackay in this House on 9 October, which received a good deal of unwarranted Press coverage throughout the State, to the effect that the Government is considering a secret report which is designed to downgrade certain ports in Queensland.

I do not know of any occasion where the Government has considered downgrading any of the ports of our State. In the past three years trade through our ports has risen from 42,000,000 tonnes to 53,000,000 tonnes and in that time of rapid trading growth the Government has been too deeply concerned in upgrading our ports to have time to give any thought to the downgrading fantasy suggested by the honourable member for Mackay.

I am aware that during those three years the Government has considered reports for upgrading the ports of Weipa, Thursday Island, Cairns, Townsville, Lucinda, Mourilyan, Hay Point, Gladstone, Bundaberg and Brisbane and none have been rejected.

Regarding the development projects at Lucinda and Bundaberg, I would stress for the information of all honourable members that these are to be funded with sugar industry money and that the projects were agreed to by growers and millers at their respective conferences.

The fact that no money is to be spent at Mackay at this time clearly indicates that that port has already reached a very high standard in sugar-storage facilities, which are considered to be among the best in the world.

The honourable member for Mackay has obviously set out to gain notoriety by advancing a suggestion that has no basis in fact. I find this regrettable because of the deep concern it has caused to responsible harbour authorities in the State; but, knowing as I do his personal policy of publicity at any cost, I am not surprised by his action.

I would also point out that this is not the first time the honourable member has attempted to deprecate the work of the sugar industry in Queensland. I feel he could make better use of his position by doing something constructive for a change instead of continually displaying a negative attitude.

I suggested that the honourable member's statements are a figment of his imagination and I repeat that I am not aware of any

reports suggesting downgrading of any of our ports prepared for or considered by my Government.

QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

1. MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS RESEARCH

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

(1) Has he seen the report of two Brisbane medical researchers, Dr. W. Layton, Chairman of the State Committee of the Australian Neurological Foundation, and Dr. John Sutherland, a neurologist, Royal Brisbane Hospital, in which they state that they believe there could be a link between the incidence of multiple sclerosis and the intake of certain soil trace elements?

(2) As their studies are reported to show that, in areas such as the so-called "Tingalpa formation" in Brisbane, multiple sclerosis risks can be as high as in the cool temperature countries, and as the newspaper report of this study has caused some concern to parents, will he clarify the situation in relation to this research?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The medical author of the paper has advised that the cause of multiple sclerosis is as yet unknown. It will probably be proved to be an infection with some contributing factor. The link between the disease and the intake of certain trace elements at this stage is purely a hypothesis. It is statistically unconfirmed and the Brisbane figures are far too small on which to base any conclusion. For the hypothesis to be correct it would be necessary for the trace elements to be taken in either by eating vegetables grown in particular soils or through the water supply. The present Brisbane water supply is not suspect and as the majority of vegetables eaten by the Brisbane population are from more than one area the significance of this link seems negligible. I can assure the public that there is no cause to worry regarding the sources of vegetables consumed in Brisbane.

2. COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF RAPE

Mr. Burns, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Has he seen a report that a 20-year-old victim of a bikie pack rape in Western Australia has been awarded \$5,000

under the provision of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, to compensate for injuries?

(2) Are victims of rape in Queensland entitled to compensation of this nature? If so, how many applications have been received and what has been the result? If not, what is the reason?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes. I am advised that in accordance with section 663B of the Criminal Code, three applications have been received in respect of rape or attempted rape, as follows:—(a) attempted rape—\$2,000 ordered by the court and \$2,000 paid. (b) rape—after the court made an order an application was made, but the applicant died before a decision was made. No payment was made to the estate of the applicant. (c) rape—\$2,000 ordered by the court. An application is under consideration.

3. COURT-HOUSE FOR MORANBAH

Mr. Lester, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

As the mining town of Moranbah has a population of over 4,000 and is a centre town of Dysart, will he expedite the provision of a court-house for this town?

Answer:—

This matter is under continuing consideration. Recent inquiries and past experience, however, indicate that there would be insufficient Magistrates Court work to justify the appointment of a public servant as clerk of the court full time, particularly as there are other towns with much greater claims.

4. HOUSING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES; CABOOLTURE, WOODFORD AND DECEPTION BAY

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

(1) From July 1972 to 30 September 1975 (a) how many applications were received for Housing Commission accommodation in Caboolture, Woodford and Deception Bay and (b) what was the number of houses built or for which contracts were signed in the same areas?

(2) In Caboolture, Woodford and Deception Bay, how many houses are at present under construction or are awaiting construction following the signing of contracts?

(3) Is it the practice of the Housing Commission to erect houses in an area and invite applications or to erect the houses where there is evidence of need backed up by applications?

Answers:—

(1) (a) For Caboolture, 94 applications were received for houses and 19 for pensioner units. Also 21 applications were received for loans for houses to be built on applicants' land. For Woodford, applications were not recorded prior to July 1975. Since then three applications have been received. Applications from persons prepared to live at Deception Bay are not dissected separately from the Redcliffe Peninsula. Five applications were received for loans for houses on applicants' land at Deception Bay. (b) Caboolture—27 (including 6 pensioner units). A further 19 vacancies occurred in existing houses. In addition, \$806,180 was allocated direct to the Caboolture Co-operative Housing Society; Woodford—2; Deception Bay—59. In addition, \$509,520 was allocated to the Bay Co-operative Housing Society which includes Deception Bay within its operations.

(2) Caboolture — 1; Woodford — Nil; Deception Bay—51.

(3) In allocating finance for house construction, the commission must have regard to all localities in the State. Funds are limited and the commission is guided by the need in each area as evidenced by applications held by its local representatives. The commission considers those figures as a guide to relativity rather than a precise measure of the need in a particular locality. The commission also gives very serious consideration to representations and evidence from persons or organisations familiar with the local scene. In this category I include the honourable member for Murrumba, other members of Parliament, clerks of the court, local authorities and other organisations with a knowledge of local requirements. Such local information is very helpful to the commission.

5. JULIA CREEK OIL SHALE DEPOSITS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Katter**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Mines and Energy—

(1) Is there any definite statement of intention by the Julia Creek oil-shale leaseholders as to whether they are proceeding to develop the deposits and, if so, when?

(2) If not, what are the reasons?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) The deposits are not held under mining lease but are being explored under authority to prospect by C.S.R. Limited and The Oil Shale Corporation (Australia). Feasibility studies are proceeding to determine the size, grade and minability of the deposits, the economics of the extraction of oil from the shale and the production and sale of vanadium pentoxide as a byproduct.

6. ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDERS
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE

Dr. Scott-Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware of a pamphlet distributed from the Aboriginal and Islanders Community Health Service?

(2) Is he aware that this circular is being given out in Townsville and, if so, will he ask the Commonwealth Minister for Health to provide finance to run a similar service for the pensioners and infirm in Townsville?

Answers:—

(1) As the honourable member is aware, the pamphlet does not refer to any health service under the jurisdiction of the State Health Department.

(2) I will pass on the honourable member's request to the Commonwealth Minister for Health.

7. FIRE BRIGADE LEVIES ON GRAZIERS

Dr. Scott-Young, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs—

(1) Is he aware that many farmers and graziers are being charged fire-brigade levies for fire protection which, because of the distance from town and in many

instances owing to the lack of water supply, is not available to them?

(2) As the charges are high in proportion to the total premium, will he remove the levy in certain areas?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Fire brigade levies are charged on all fire insurance policies issued in the State and have been approved by the Insurance Commissioner. The question of their continued application to properties which cannot be serviced by fire brigades is receiving the consideration of an inter-departmental committee.

8. ESTABLISHMENT OF RIFLE CLUBS

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

Because of the lack of interest in the defence of Australia by the Commonwealth Government, and with the recent abolition of the school cadets, will he offer maximum assistance both in finance and land to establish rifle clubs throughout the State?

Answer:—

The State already assists rifle clubs to the same extent as other sporting clubs and associations in that they can receive, through the Department of Sport, a 33½ per cent subsidy for the development of facilities, including the purchase of land. However, defence is constitutionally a responsibility of the Commonwealth Government and I would hesitate to set up a dual rifle club organisation. I am sure that when the new Commonwealth Government takes office we can expect to see realistic policies in defence matters, including the re-establishment of the school cadet system and encouragement and assistance to rifle clubs.

9. GENERAL PRACTITIONERS, SPECIALISTS
AND SURGEONS

Mr. Gunn, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) As the United States Department of Health has stated that there is a shortage of 30,000 doctors in that country and at the same time there is a surplus of specialists and surgeons, does a similar situation exist in Queensland?

(2) What is the Government doing to entice medical graduates to enter general practice?

Answers:—

(1) Compared with other countries the over-all doctor-population ratio in Queensland is quite favourable. Although, as in other States and countries, there has been a recent trend for medical graduates to specialise, the general practitioner to population ratio is still reasonable. The real difficulty arises from the fact that general practitioners in most cases are no longer willing to practise in remote areas of the State, thus making an imbalance in the distribution of general practitioners between country and city. Without the Government's Medical Scholarship Scheme many country hospitals would be without a doctor. I would point out that unfortunately the number of scholarship holders is not sufficient to place a doctor at every hospital which was previously manned.

(2) The State Health Department is co-operating in every way it can with the Family Medicine Programme, which is training medical practitioners to enter general practice. Approval has been given for State hospitals to co-operate with the Family Medicine Programme to allow resident medical officers to work both at the hospital and with general practice. In addition, special leave is given for medical superintendents of country hospitals to attend courses in general practice. One was held in Brisbane earlier in the year and another is to commence in Townsville on 19 October.

10. COMMONWEALTH PURCHASE OF LAND
NEAR NOOSA; LOW-COST LAND
FOR HOUSING

Mr. Lane, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) With reference to the Press reports which indicate that the Commonwealth Government recently purchased 10,000 hectares of land near Noosa costing \$240,000 from Aberdare Holdings Pty. Ltd., a subsidiary of Cambridge Credit Corporation, does he have any knowledge of this transaction and was it any way a joint Commonwealth-State venture?

(2) What is the latest position regarding discussions between the Commonwealth Department of Urban and Regional Development and the State Lands Department regarding the provision of cheaper land to the public for home siting?

Answers:—

(1) I am aware of the transaction referred to by the honourable member for Merthyr; however, the Press report is inaccurate as to area. In fact, the area covers something in excess of 1,000 hectares. The purchase price and the details of the vendor are correct. The purchase was certainly not a joint Commonwealth-State venture. The subject land was considered for national park purposes by officers of my National Parks and Wildlife Service when it was on offer. With limited funds available, and as about 90 per cent of the land has been cleared and improved, the area could not, as an entity, be considered to be of national park standing. It would, however, be acceptable as an addition to the proposed Cooloola National Park if the Commonwealth were to hand it over, because campsites, picnic areas and other park management facilities could be established on the cleared areas.

(2) Negotiations at officer level have progressed to the stage where satisfactory agreement in principle has been reached on the problems which have precluded finalisation of an agreement to this time. I have recently had discussions with the Commonwealth Minister for Urban and Regional Development and further action must now await the production by the Commonwealth authorities of an agreement document for final consideration and, if approved, signature by the honourable the Premier and, of course, the Prime Minister.

11. U.S. MARKET FOR COAL

Mr. Lane, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

(1) Is he aware of the massive advertising campaign being conducted in the United States of America by the General Electric Company and the American Electric Power Company, Inc. to encourage greater use of coal as a power source?

(2) As a result of his recent visit to the U.S.A., can he say whether the possibility of a new market there for Queensland coal is worth investigating?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Having regard to the present world oil situation, the sentiment of greater utilisation of coal as a power source is a good one but the North American continent has adequate coal reserves to

meet any increase in coal use in the U.S.A., and as I see the situation there would be little opportunity for Australia to break into this market.

12. DROP IN BREATHALYSER CONVICTIONS

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

Following a recent report from New South Wales indicating that that State's breath-analysis convictions fell in 1974 from 16,500 to 15,000, with a significant accompanying drop in motorists' intoxication levels, what is the corresponding trend in Queensland over the same period?

Answer:—

The only information readily available is in respect to breath analyses within the ranges set out in the table hereunder.

Calendar Year	Less than .08%	0.08% but less than .15%	.15% and above
1973	371	1,703	2,595
1974	495	2,055	3,080

13. DUST NUISANCE, HOLLYWELL DEVELOPMENT

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

(1) With reference to his answer to my question on 8 October regarding the dust menace existing at Hollywell and created by the development carried out by Lae Enterprises with disregard for the health of residents living nearby, what action are his officers taking under the Clean Air Act to make this company cease its stop-go action in completing the bund wall area?

(2) Have the departmental officers who administer the Clean Air Act called on the residents in the Hollywell area to see the damage caused to their homes and also to check on the serious health hazard created by the entry of the dust into their homes? If so, what was the result of their investigations and, if not, will they call upon the residents in question?

Answers:—

(1) The alleged dust problems mentioned by the honourable member do not come within the ambit of the Clean Air

Act 1963–1970, the Act being set up to deal principally with emissions of air impurities from industrial operations.

(2) See answer to (1).

14. BAN ON SWILL AS FEED FOR PIGS

Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Primary Industries—

(1) Did the Government agree, at a meeting of Ministers from all States and the Commonwealth, to introduce legislation banning the collection by piggeries of swill from cafes, hotels and other premises?

(2) If so, what were the reasons for the ban and what is the reason for the delay in its introduction?

(3) As other States will be introducing this ban, would the implementation of the suggestion of the member for Hinchinbrook that all international travellers be searched for imported meats mean that all along the Queensland border pig-swill inspectors would be stationed to search all persons travelling backwards and forwards between Tweed Heads and Coolangatta, Goondiwindi and Boggabilla, etc.?

(4) What would be the cost of providing such inspectors on a 24-hour basis?

(5) What is the estimated cost of a ban on the collection of swill and the feeding of it to pigs?

Answers:—

(1) The proposed ban on the feeding of garbage to pigs stems from a decision of the Australian Agricultural Council, but decisions of the council are not binding on Governments.

(2) The ban was proposed in view of the very serious consequences for the livestock industries that could follow the introduction of a disease such as foot and mouth disease. Implementation of the ban has been delayed while Governments follow normal democratic processes.

(3) No. The quarantine service cannot be expected to detect 100 per cent of illicit goods coming through the post or in passengers' luggage, and in the same way it would be futile to try to check every passenger and every parcel moving between the States.

(4) Not applicable.

(5) This could only be supplied by local authorities, but the cost in terms of pig production would be small as the majority of farmers feeding swill have indicated they will continue to keep pigs, using conventional foodstuffs. Only a relatively small proportion of total garbage is now fed to pigs. The great bulk of it is disposed of through land fill, incineration or in some cases through sewerage plants.

15. LAND FOR HOUSING IN MORETON REGION

Mr. Dean, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) What was the average price for a block of urban land in the Moreton Region over the last financial year?

(2) Is he aware of the preliminary report on growth strategy in the Moreton Region, which showed that 97,000 building blocks were subdivided and ready for use in the region?

(3) Will this available land cause an appreciable lowering of prices for land in the region? If not, what action is the Government taking to provide land for additional home seekers?

Answers:—

(1) The average price of a block of urban land in the Moreton Region over the last financial year is not readily available. Considerable research would be necessary to establish with any degree of accuracy such an average figure for the whole region, and I do not consider that the deduced price would be of any comparative or statistical value.

(2) Certain preliminary reports have been produced by the Moreton Region Growth Strategy Investigation and one such report does identify a figure of 97,018 as the number of presently vacant lots within the region, but this figure excludes vacant lots within the main urbanised areas. It is also clear from the report that a considerable proportion of these vacant lots would not be fully serviced. Based on the 1973-74 dwelling completion figures, the report sets the demand for blocks for actual house building at 18,878 per annum and suggests that to achieve a stable market it is necessary to have a stock of serviced land equal to between four and seven times the annual demand. The report adopts 100,000 lots as being necessary to have a satisfactory supply of subdivided and serviced blocks.

(3) I do not see the present stock of subdivided lots in the Moreton Region as being sufficient to cause any appreciable lowering of the prices of individual residential allotments in the region. The

information that is available to me regarding average land prices during the last two years would suggest that there has been some stabilisation of allotment prices due, no doubt, to the economic conditions which have prevailed. My department, through its Crown estate development projects, develops and makes available serviced lots throughout the State and a considerable proportion of such activity is within the Moreton Region. In addition, negotiations are still proceeding with the Commonwealth Government in the hope of arriving at reasonable terms and conditions for the establishment of a joint scheme for the acquisition and development of land for urban purposes. Every effort is being made to assist genuine home seekers to acquire fully serviced lots on reasonable terms.

16. RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS

Mr. Byrne, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) Is he aware of reports that the statutory times given to religious broadcasts on radio are to be abolished?

(2) What would be the effect of this on the financial position of religious organisations generally, and particularly on those registered under the Religious Educational and Charitable Institutions Act?

(3) What action may be taken by religious organisations or interested citizens to prevent this change from being made?

Answers:—

(1) Yes, I am aware that a report to the Federal Government has recommended that the statutory one per cent free time for religious radio and television broadcasts be abolished. As yet, the Federal Government has not announced a decision on the matter.

(2) Given the fact that religious and charitable organisations are already adversely affected by inflation, the effect of such a recommendation being implemented would be catastrophic.

(3) The aim of the report is to downgrade the position and status of the Christian religion in Australia. In that respect, it is completely in line with A.L.P. policy. If implemented, the recommendation would mean that the Christian religion would be regarded by the Federal Government as no more than a general-interest group in the community. Leading members of the A.L.P. are already using the contents of this report to attack religious programmes which have long been accepted as performing a useful community service. As the Federal Government alone will be responsible for the implementation or rejection of this report, the Christian

churches ought to be making the strongest possible representations to the ministers and members of the Whitlam Government.

17. LOSSES FROM SCHOOL FIRES

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

What was the estimated cost to the department, in each of the last five years, as a result of losses by fire in State schools, taking into account the replacement costs?

Answer:—

Financial Year	Cost \$
1970-71	184,762
1971-72	474,719
1972-73	7,610
1973-74	819,435
1974-75	42,587
1975-76 (to date)	400,000

18. VANDALISM AT CARINA

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

(1) Is he aware that the Girl Guides hut in Willard Street, Carina, was severely damaged by fire recently?

(2) Has this matter been investigated by police and, if so, what was the result of the investigation?

(3) Is he also aware that groups of vandalistic teenagers have taken to the increased practices of throwing rocks and eggs at the houses in the area, destroying street lights, damaging the very necessary service of public telephones and pulling up plants which local residents have planted in an endeavour to improve the appearance of the neighbourhood?

(4) As I have ascertained that these things are true, what action will he take to apprehend the offenders and so protect the lives and property of the law-abiding residents who are being intimidated?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes. Whilst arson was suspected, investigations which are continuing have to date failed to establish the identity of any person or persons who may have been responsible.

(3) Yes.

(4) One youth was convicted and fined \$15 for wilful damage to property. Inquiries are continuing. Patrols are made in the area consistent with availability of staff and other requirements of the

Police Department. However, as previously mentioned in this House, there is also an obligation on each and every member of the public to assist members of the Police Force by supplying information in their possession in relation to the unlawful activities of persons. If this co-operation is willingly given, there is no doubt that not only offences of this kind but offences generally would be greatly reduced.

19. UNDERPASS FOR COMPTON ROAD, WOODRIDGE

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

As the intolerable traffic congestion at Compton Road is a matter of great concern to Woodridge residents, what are the latest developments regarding the underpass?

Answer:—

Following the inspection I made with the honourable member earlier this year, a submission was made to Cabinet, which noted the content. As the member should be aware, this road is not declared under the Main Roads Acts. However, it is a declared urban arterial on which Commonwealth aid funds allocated to either the Brisbane City Council or the Albert Shire Council could be spent, or alternatively financing could be carried out from State loan or local authority revenue funds, or even a combination of all three. I will arrange to discuss the matter further with the local authorities concerned in the near future, and also with my colleague the honourable the Minister for Transport.

20. NAMBOUR PRE-SCHOOL

Mr. Simpson, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

When and where will the Nambour pre-school be built and how many children will be catered for?

Answer:—

An area of land on the school reserve in Puddles Road has been set aside for the siting of a three-unit pre-school centre. This facility will provide for an enrolment of 150 children, and it is anticipated that it will open in the second half of 1976.

21. BLINDNESS AMONG ABORIGINES

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

(1) Is the incidence of blindness amongst Aborigines the highest of any race in the world?

(2) What percentage of the Aboriginal population in Queensland is affected?

(3) What programmes has his department developed to combat this problem?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The disease trachoma is blamed for much of the blindness occurring among Aborigines. Other causes are injury and cataract. Whilst trachoma, with its resultant blindness, may be high in some Aborigines in Australia, this is not the case in Aborigines in Queensland. From the results of surveys carried out amongst Queensland Aboriginal settlements by an optometrist, which surveys are at present on a computer, it is learnt that the percentage of blindness among the Aboriginal population is quite low. The main incidence of blindness in Queensland Aborigines is in the over-60 age group. This is due to the incidence of cataract, as is the case in the European population. The State Health Department has mounted an over-all vigorous Aboriginal health programme, but in view of the low incidence of blindness no specific programme in that particular area is considered necessary.

22. SWALLOWING OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES BY CHILDREN

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

(1) Are figures available showing the numbers of children treated in our major hospitals, especially the Royal Brisbane Children's Hospital, as a result of accidental swallowing of A.P.C.s, pain-killers, antiseptics, soaps, deodorisers, chemicals, solvents and pesticides, etc.?

(2) Has any comparison been made between these figures and those from the Poison Information Centre of Sydney's Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children?

(3) As Dr. Kay Lane of the Mater Hospital has indicated that there has been a big upsurge in the burns section because of young children swallowing drain-cleaner preparations which are easily available on supermarket shelves, have any steps been taken to have these substances withdrawn from sale or their sales restricted, as suggested by Dr. Lane?

(4) Have doctors or staff made any other recommendations or suggestions on ways and means of overcoming the dangers to children resulting from these sources? If so, what are the recommendations and what are the results?

Answers:—

(1) Yes. From 1 January 1975 to date there have been 107 children observed at the Royal Children's Hospital for

ingestion of such substances. Of these 63 per cent were for drug ingestion of which sedatives, particularly valium, accounted for 12 per cent and antihistamines for 10 per cent. Household products accounted for 34 per cent and of these, petroleum distillate was 7 per cent, household cleaners 8 per cent, and detergents 3 per cent.

(2) The Poison Information Centre of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Sydney, had 6,387 calls for the year 1974 and the Poisons Information Centre at the Royal Children's Hospital, Brisbane, 738 for the same period, which was the first year that this centre was fully operational.

(3) Recommendations regarding the control of poisonous substances are made by the National Health and Medical Research Council and are constantly under review. For the information of the honourable member, since the beginning of 1975 four children have been admitted to the Royal Children's Hospital, Brisbane suffering from burns from these substances.

(4) Medical and pharmacy staff have lectured service and parents groups on this subject. They have been supported with material prepared by the Queensland Health Education Council and have made recommendations regarding child-proof containers for poisons and medicines. I am of the opinion that keeping poisons out of reach of children at all times is the best method of prevention.

23. SCHOOLYARD THUGGERY, BREMER STATE HIGH SCHOOL INCIDENT

Mr. Wright, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) With reference to the investigation which was ordered into schoolyard thuggerly, as reported in the "Telegraph" of 27 May, what were the findings of the specific investigation into the Bremer State High School bashing?

(2) What new measures have been adopted by his department to counter the increasing number of incidents involving violence at schools?

Answers:—

(1) A full departmental inquiry into the allegations that a student at Bremer High School had undergone a "bashing" was conducted at the time of the incident. Thorough investigations failed to produce any evidence that the student concerned was subjected to any bashing of the nature alleged at the school.

(2) A survey of a number of high-school principals at the time failed to substantiate the claim that there is an

increasing number of incidents involving violence at schools. No reports have been received at my department since the incident that would indicate any increase in violence at schools. I have complete confidence in the ability of high-school principals to cope with any situation that may arise in their schools.

24. AVAILABILITY AND COST OF SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Mr. Wright, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) With reference to statements made by him, as reported in "The Courier-Mail" on 25 May and 17 June, that Cabinet would soon be considering a report on the special investigation into school textbook problems, has the report been discussed yet by State Cabinet?

(2) If so, what action is planned to combat the situation which must arise in a few months' time and prior to the start of the 1976 academic year, when many textbooks prescribed by schools will just not be available and parents will again be faced with the task of paying sometimes exorbitant costs for books which are highly suspect as being necessary for their education?

Answers:—

I am rather disappointed that this matter has not received wider publicity than that given to it. I trust that the Press will now give it the publicity it deserves and also that honourable members will take note.

(1) Yes.

(2) A circular memorandum has been forwarded to all schools apprising principals of the Cabinet decision, and requesting them to take the necessary action to implement this decision. Cabinet decision is as follows:—That the responsibility for the selection of textbooks remain with the principal of each school; That the Department of Education issue well before the end of the year a clear guideline statement for principals relating to— (a) frequency of change of textbooks; (b) range of textbooks selected; (c) the need for economy; (d) the need for consultation with the parent body of the school prior to final decisions on lists; and (e) the means whereby appeals against proposals concerning the use of textbooks may be directed to the principals and, if necessary, to the Director-General of Education.

25. RELEASE-TO-WORK SCHEME FOR SECONDARY-SCHOOL STUDENTS

Mr. Wright, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) In view of his previous announcement that the State Government was working on a revolutionary release-to-work scheme for Queensland secondary-school students, when is it now anticipated that the scheme will be commenced?

(2) Has the idea of students working without pay in offices, on building sites and at other occupations been discussed recently with the trade unions and professional associations and, if so, what type of response was received?

(3) Will he give more definite details as to how he anticipates the scheme will work?

Answers:—

(1) Pilot schemes of work experience are operating in a small number of Queensland schools. All such schools have consulted with the appropriate personnel in my department in connection with the necessary conditions and safeguards for such programmes. Legislation to support more widespread programmes throughout the State is proposed.

(2) For the past two years, a tripartite subcommittee of the Industrial Affairs Advisory Committee has been considering implications of such programmes. This subcommittee, which prepared recommendations on which the work towards legislation is based, involved the trade unions and employer associations. There has been enthusiastic and willing response to the arrangements as envisaged for developing these programmes.

(3) A resource booklet for secondary schools will be available from my department in the near future.

26. BRAIN-DAMAGED CHILDREN

Mr. Jensen, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has he seen the report in the "Bundaberg News Mail" of 9 October on brain-damaged children, in which it was stated that Bundaberg would continue as the clinical centre for Queensland whilst it had the only auxiliary in the State?

(2) What is the Government doing to assist brain-damaged children?

(3) Has he investigated the work being carried out by the Institute for the Advancement of Human Potential?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) The programme of care for the intellectually handicapped in Queensland is quite well developed and embraces not only the services of the Central Assessment Clinic and residential institutions, but also subsidy and support of the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association. Queensland has been fortunate in that the care of the intellectually handicapped was stimulated by the late Sir Fred Schonell and the influence of those who worked with him. At the present time significant advances in the care of these handicapped are being implemented by the creation of a new caring profession and an expanded capital works programme.

(3) The work of the Institute for the Advancement of Human Potential has been thoroughly investigated over the many years that it has been operating and has been recently reviewed by both departmental officers and researchers at the University of Queensland and officers of the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association. There is total agreement that the institute does not offer programmes more effective than those being offered by other services in this State.

27. DELAYS IN READING OF X-RAYS,
MARYBOROUGH HOSPITAL

Mr. Jensen, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is the consultant radiologist at the Maryborough Hospital delaying the reading of X-rays from patients referred by private doctors and consequently seriously inconveniencing patients and causing them anxiety when they are forced to wait weeks for the results?

(2) If so, is this an attempt to direct private patients away from the general hospital and force them to private specialists' surgeries where charges are above the common fee paid by Medibank?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Prior to the advent of Medibank a fee was raised when a private patient underwent a radiological examination at a public hospital and the private radiologist received a proportion of the fee. Under the Medibank Agreement no fees are to be raised in respect of private or intermediate inpatients of public hospitals or referred private outpatients. I understand that the radiologist at Maryborough has asked practitioners to refer private patients direct to his practice. The medical superintendent at Maryborough Hospital has advised that radiology services for public patients have not suffered. At the present time the department is investigating the position generally.

28. POLICE STRENGTH, BUNDEBERG

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

Has he obtained the report on the matters referred to in my question of 17 September regarding the police strength at Bundaberg? If not, will he act to expedite it so that the question can be answered?

Answer:—

I have received the report and my answer has been sent to the honourable member in a letter that he should have received this morning.

29. CAR PARK, MITCHELTON RAILWAY
STATION

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

With regard to the recently improved and much appreciated and utilised parking facilities at stations throughout the Everton electorate, could consideration be given to a further improvement in the already excellent facilities at the Mitchelton Railway Station, by enlarging the car park through utilising the vacant and unused land on the south side of the track between the track and the security fences of the Mitchelton Pre-school and Opportunity School?

Answer:—

The comments of the honourable member concerning the newly constructed facilities are appreciated. Plans for further extensions to the parking facilities at Mitchelton are under consideration and involve areas on the northern side as well as the area between the railway and Mitchelton Pre-School on the south side. Development of the south-side area will be carried out if sufficient space can be acquired, by utilising a portion of railway property on that side. It is not possible to give a date for any south-side development at this stage, but it is anticipated that the Metropolitan Transit Project Board will be extending the existing facilities on the north side in the near future. The honourable member for Ashgrove has made representations for construction of car-parking facilities at Gaythorne Railway Station. Planning is well advanced and it is possible that upon completion of the facility, the situation at Mitchelton could be alleviated to some extent.

30. BALLOT FOR LAND NEAR GOONDIWINDI

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) In view of the Lands Department decision to defer the advertised land ballot near Goondiwindi, were the 14 people who had previously made applications all unsuitable?

(2) What guide-lines is his department putting forward which would make people interested in these properties qualified to acquire them?

(3) What is the closing date for people to make an application for the new ballot?

(4) What area of land and how much stock can existing graziers hold and still be eligible for the ballot?

Answers:—

(1) No.

(2) This additional area allocation is being conducted in accordance with the Land Act and Government policy.

(3) Applications for this land closed on 12 June 1975 and it is not proposed, nor is it necessary, to invite fresh applications.

(4) Eligibility of applicants is governed by the provisions of the Land Act and the Government-adopted living area standard for the locality.

31. ANNUAL REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Premier—

(1) Is he aware that the annual report of the Department of the Public Service Board has not yet been presented to Parliament?

(2) Is it usual to have the report tabled prior to the delivery of the annual State Budget?

Answers:—

(1) Yes.

(2) No. However, the annual report of the Public Service Board is generally presented before the debate on the Estimates-in-Chief takes place.

32. INSTRUCTION IN RAILWAY SAFETY

Mr. K. J. Hooper for **Mr. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Transport—

(1) Is he aware of the absence of safety training programmes or an elementary instruction course for lad porters on entering the railway service?

(2) In view of the high risk to safety involved, particularly within the traffic section of the department and as rule books, which include the safety regulations, are not issued until the six months' probation period has expired, will he undertake to have this matter remedied at the earliest possible date?

(3) As the first and most important duty is personal and public safety, will he take appropriate action to have the fundamentals of railway safety set out in pamphlet form for dissemination to new employees and the complex safety aspects of the service explained by instructional classes?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The supervising officers under whose authority newly appointed members of the railway staff work are responsible for the instruction of these employees in the requirements of their position, including the observance of prescribed safety provisions. In the case of a lad porter, the station master to whose staff the lad porter is allotted is the responsible officer, and the station master is specifically charged with ensuring the faithful and efficient discharge of the duties devolving upon all persons employed either permanently or temporarily at the station or within its limits, and with providing access to a copy of the book of rules for all employees at his station. The present basis of instructing newly appointed staff has, generally speaking, successfully prevailed over a period of many years. The inclusion in one publication of all instances which could lead to injury to an employee would be a task of considerable magnitude, and, because of the diversity and widely dispersed nature of the department's activities, the provision of classes of instruction for all newly appointed employees would raise considerable practical difficulties.

33. LOAN ALLOCATIONS TO PROVINCIAL CITY COUNCILS

Mr. K. J. Hooper for **Mr. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked the Deputy Premier and Treasurer—

What are the loan allocations for 1974-75 and 1975-76 to the provincial city councils of (a) Townsville, (b) Toowoomba, (c) Rockhampton, (d) Ipswich, (e) Gold Coast, (f) Cairns, (g) Mackay, (h) Bundaberg, (i) Maryborough, (j) Mount Isa, (k) Gladstone and (l) Gympie?

Answer:—

I table a statement setting out the information sought by the honourable member.

Whereupon the honourable gentleman laid the document on the table.

34. CAIRNS HOUSING

Mr. K. J. Hooper for **Mr. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Works and Housing—

(1) How many applicants for housing accommodation are at present registered as outstanding with the Queensland Housing Commission through the Clerk of the Court at Cairns for (a) rental and (b) home purchase?

(2) How many outstanding applicants, in their respective categories of priority, have applied for rental homes?

(3) How many applicants have been allotted (a) rental and (b) purchase homes for (i) the previous year to 30 June 1975 and (ii) from 1 July to date?

(4) How many new houses were erected for (a) rental and (b) home-ownership during the same periods?

(5) How many houses were provided by direct Government funding, allocated through the co-operative housing societies at Cairns and what was the total amount allocated during the same periods?

(6) How many building lots are presently held by the commission for housing requirements at Cairns (a) for which tenders are current or completed and (b) which remain vacant for future construction?

(7) How many applications for units are at present registered as outstanding and how many units have been allocated during the same periods for (a) single and (b) married pensioners, under the Dwellings for Aged Persons Scheme?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) A common list is maintained for rental and ownership. Applicants for houses comprise—100 points, 8; 80 points, 13; 60 points, 6; 40 points, 63; nil priority, 189.

(3) (i) For 1974-75—(a) 66 including 15 pensioners in units; (b) 2, (ii) From 1 July 1975 to date—(a) 19; (b) nil.

(4) (i) For 1974-75—(a) 65 including 15 pensioner units; (b) 2. (ii) From 1 July 1975 to date—(a) 6; (b) nil.

(5) For 1974-75 \$200,000 was allocated, which provides 11 houses. For 1975-76 \$410,000 has been allocated, which will provide 22 houses.

(6) (a) Sites absorbed by houses partly constructed or not commenced in current contracts—58; (b) 10.

(7) Applications on hand—(a) 19; (b) 8. Units allocated—(a) 11; (b) 4.

35. CHEQUERS NITE CLUB

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Lamont**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) With reference to the transfer of the licence for Chequers Nite Club to Gramons Pty. Ltd. on 22 August from Cabaret Holding Pty. Ltd., did the Licensing Commission cause 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?

(2) 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?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) I am informed that, in accordance with usual practice, the Licensing Commission carried out a complete investigation into all relevant matters relating to the application for the transfer of the licence referred to by the honourable member.

36. DELAYS IN PRINTING SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Mr. Ahern for **Mr. Lamont**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Education and Cultural Activities—

(1) Is he aware that the recent industrial unrest which caused the power crisis severely disrupted printing at publishing companies, thereby interrupting printing schedules?

(2) Will he assure the House that parents concerned with the potential textbook crisis will have these facts told to them so that teachers facing difficulties in getting textbooks will not be unfairly criticised by the parents but will have their sympathetic understanding?

Answers:—

(1) No approach has been made by either publishers or booksellers to my department that there will be any extra delay in the availability of school textbooks in 1976.

(2) If this information that the member for South Brisbane purports to have is conveyed to my department by publishers and/or booksellers, then steps will be taken to have parents and citizens' associations informed of the situation by principals of schools.

37. NATIONAL PARK PROPOSAL, SPRINGBROOK

Mr. K. J. Hooper, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Service—

(1) Does he have any plans to purchase Rural Zone C of Springbrook under the new Albert Shire Town Plan and dedicate the area as a national park?

(2) Is he aware that this zone comprises the last large, unspoilt areas of Springbrook Mountain?

(3) Is he aware that under the new Albert Shire Town Plan it is proposed to allow 40-acre subdivisions in the zone?

(4) What view does his department take on these proposals?

Answer:—

I ask the honourable member to repeat the question tomorrow.

38. SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT,
WOLSTON PARK HOSPITAL

Mr. K. J. Hooper, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport—

(1) Has a decision been made to close the social work department at the Wolston Park Hospital?

(2) What was the number of people in that department at the hospital in December 1972, 1973, 1974 and at 1 October 1975, and what were their classifications?

(3) If there has been a reduction in the staff, will he advise the reason for the reduction and what social work facilities are now available to residents of Wolston Park?

Answer:—

(1 to 3) The matter raised by the honourable member does not come within my area of administration.

39. NURSING STAFF

Mr. Yewdale, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is there any provision for a nurse to be struck off the roll or for her nursing certificate to be withdrawn or cancelled?

(2) Is any record kept of the number of nurses, sisters, etc., who have applied for positions in Government hospitals but have been refused without being given a reason?

Answers:—

(1) Section 22 of the Nurses Act of 1964 provides that the Nurses Board of Queensland may order the name of a nurse to be removed from the register of nurses in the following circumstances:—

(a) She has been convicted in Queensland of an indictable offence, or elsewhere than in Queensland of an offence which if committed in Queensland would be an indictable offence; or (b) She has had her qualification for registration or any part thereof withdrawn or cancelled by the institution or body at which it was acquired or by the institution or body at which it was awarded; or (c) She has been guilty of any conduct which is deemed by the board to be discreditable to a registered nurse. Before a name can be removed, the board must hold full inquiry into the matter, and the nurse may be represented at that inquiry by counsel or solicitor. The board in holding the inquiry has full power, with certain exceptions, under the Commissions of Inquiry Acts, 1950 to 1954. An appeal lies to a judge of the District Court against an order of the board under this section of the Act. A nurses certificate of registration would be automatically cancelled in the above circumstances. A certificate

would also be cancelled if obtained from the board by fraudulent means (section 33 (2)).

(2) No.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COAL-MINING LEASES AT NORWICH PARK
AND NEBO

Mr. HARTWIG: I ask the Minister for Mines and Energy: Can he inform the House of the effect of the recent announcement by Mr. Connor of revised policies of the Commonwealth Government in that new coal-mining leases at Norwich Park and Nebo would be opened up? To what extent would this decision benefit Queensland financially, and to what extent would it provide job opportunities for many unemployed Queenslanders? Does the Minister agree with the suggestion made by a union representative last evening that the Commonwealth Government should take over the Queensland coal-mining industry?

Mr. CAMM: Naturally I think all on this side of the House were rather pleased that the Commonwealth has at least come to the realisation that the mining of our coal resources in Queensland is going to bring many benefits to the State and also to the Commonwealth, and what makes it rather sad is that these benefits could have been coming to this State for quite a number of years. Because of the policy of the Federal Government these projects were unable to get going, and it is rather ironic that Mr. Hayden comes out now and says that the Government has forced Thiess Peabody Mitsui to accept 51 per cent Australian equity in the projects before it would let them start. At the same time, he says that Norwich Park can now go ahead and the Australian equity in that project is far, far less than 50 per cent.

The statements that we find now coming from the Federal Government do not ring true. The Hail Creek project, which for many years has been held in abeyance by the Federal Government, always has had more than 60 per cent Australian equity, and to my knowledge the offer of T.P.M. to increase the Australian equity to 51 per cent has not as yet been accepted by any Australian company. It is futile for Mr. Hayden to say that he has forced 51 per cent Australian equity onto this company when there is no such percentage at the present time. I think Mr. Connor's capitulation in this regard is only to bolster the rather fading stocks of the Federal Government for the forthcoming Federal election. At last he says that Utah can go ahead with Norwich Park, when, for the past two-and-a-half years, he has been saying they must go deeper before he will give them an export permit.

Here is a man holding a responsible position in the Federal Government who is going to push miners underground. He is determined to push miners underground when there are thousands of millions of tons of coal available in Queensland that can be mined by the open-cut method whereby we would retrieve 98 per cent of the coal available under far safer conditions for the men employed than they will experience if they are forced underground by this Federal Labor Minister.

ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR QUEENSLAND WELFARE HOUSING

Mr. HALES: I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Will he please inform the House whether the call by the Leader of the Opposition to the Federal Government for additional funds for Queensland welfare housing has been heeded and produced positive results? If so, what funds are forthcoming? Or was that request, as usual, just more hot air from the lightweight from Lytton?

Mr. LEE: The hot-air lightweight from Lytton, also known as the Leader of the Opposition, has so far obtained no additional funds for welfare housing. As I have stated to the House on several occasions already, Queensland had an allocation of \$43,800,000 in 1974-75, while its allocation this year is \$31,000,000, which is in fact \$12,800,000, or 29.5 per cent less. Therefore, although the Leader of the Opposition claims to represent working people and to be in favour of the provision of welfare housing, he has let these people down because his representations have been useless and, as the honourable member for Ipswich West said, a lot of hot air. The honourable member for Lytton should take his cricket team home and sack them.

COMMONWEALTH ALLOCATION TO STATE HOSPITAL BUILDING PROGRAMME

Mr. KAUS: I ask the Minister for Health: Has the Commonwealth Government recognised Queensland's progressive hospital-building programme and more than doubled the total funds that the State and Commonwealth were to spend this year, as indicated this morning by the Minister for Northern Australia (Dr. Patterson) on the A.B.C. news? Can his department make use of the extra \$63,000,000 this year promised by Dr. Patterson, who increased the estimate of the Treasurer (Sir Gordon Chalk) of \$45,000,000 in the Budget? Has Dr. Patterson jumped the gun and committed the Commonwealth to an increase of almost \$100,000,000 in hospital funds this year, and are we entitled to that extra money?

Dr. EDWARDS: I did hear the news broadcast at 6.45 this morning when it was stated by Dr. Patterson that the Queensland Government would receive \$108,000,000 for its hospital programme. I was very concerned about that Press release because Dr. Everingham had put an embargo on the announcement. The release was not to be made until 4 p.m. Not only was the embargo broken by the Minister for Northern Australia, but his statement is completely incorrect and does not accord with fact. The amount of money we will receive from the Federal Government for our hospital development programme at this stage is only \$10,000,000, not \$108,000,000. I will be writing to Dr. Everingham to complain that the Minister for Northern Australia has broken the embargo on the joint announcement to be made by Dr. Everingham and me this afternoon and that his statement is incorrect and does not accord with fact.

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

PRIVILEGE

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

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (12.15 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, further to the matter of privilege I raised last Wednesday, certain sections of the media have commented adversely on your ruling on my question concerning the A.B.C. denigration of Senator Field and based their rebuke on the point that Senator Field is outside your jurisdiction or protection. In view of the indubitable fact that the A.B.C. segment also attempted to denigrate and ridicule the Premier, will a request be made to these sections of the media to refrain from going off half cocked and, further, will they be assured that all members of this Parliament, from the Premier to the humblest backbencher, can carry out their duties under the full protection of your august authority and our Constitution Act?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! For the information of the House I point out that the Australian Journalists' Association has asked to see me this week at a time convenient to me concerning the matter. I gave a ruling on it. After my discussion with the A.J.A., the matter will be closed. For the information of this House—the decision I made still stands.

Mr. Aikens: You should tell them off, because the power of this Parliament is supreme.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 9 October (see p. 1031) 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. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (12.17 p.m.): Before I deal with the Budget in Queensland I shall—as I have done on many occasions in the past—draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that we are being asked to debate a Budget which does not make available to us information that should be available. No-one would deny that the Treasurer and his departmental officers have a very hard job in compiling a Budget. However, before compiling it they have for their information reports from various Government departments on expenditure in the last financial year and on proposed expenditure in the forthcoming year. The Treasurer and his officers therefore have much information available to them on which to assess budgetary expenditure. Honourable members are limited to the Financial Statement prepared by the Treasurer. No-one denies the accuracy of the statements therein but quite often we have no idea at all what is represented by items on which millions of dollars are to be spent in the forthcoming year.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am glad that the honourable member for Windsor interjected. I always give him credit for being one member who speaks his mind. I have no objection to that. He realises as well as I do that we do not debate every department's Estimate.

Mr. Moore: We should.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is all very well for the honourable member to say what we should do; the point is that we do not debate every Estimate. We do not debate even half of them.

My point is that, as we know which Estimates are coming up for debate, most of us select other areas of Government activity for the main emphasis in our speech in the debate on the Financial Statement. This would be a very boring debate if all of us made a complete analysis of the figures in the Budget. Some honourable members like to do that whereas others do not. Every honourable member who speaks to the Budget speaks on some matter of State finance that he believes he has a duty to bring to the Treasurer's attention.

Sir Gordon Chalk: So that all honourable members may know, I point out, that Mr. Connor (the Federal Minister for Minerals and Energy) has just resigned.

Mr. HOUSTON: I shall not be referring very much to Federal matters except as they relate to Queensland. I hope that the Treasurer gets this information as quickly as he got that snippet.

I believe the Auditor-General's final report should be in our hands by now. I realise that some years ago we did not get any such report, and I believe it was the present Treasurer who brought in the system under which we got the first report. As I said then, it was appreciated. However, now that departments have at their disposal computers and other modern aids for the compilation of information and the printing of reports, members of Parliament should be entitled to receive early in the financial year the full Auditor-General's Report as well as the reports of all other Government departments. It is now mid-October.

Sir Gordon Chalk: How do you get them?

Mr. HOUSTON: I don't know. That is the Treasurer's job. If we were in Government I believe we could ensure that they were available. Some departments put out their reports early. Some have already been tabled. They are quite good reports. I am not criticising them at this point. Later on we may have more to say when we go through them in detail. At least those departments have placed reports before Parliament; but the reports of many departments are not available, and they should be. My first point is that for the purpose of debating the Financial Statement, members should have as much information as possible to enable them to pass judgment on the State's operations for the year.

This is the Treasurer's tenth Budget. As he has done on previous occasions, he has given this one a name—the “Press Ahead” Budget. I do not know exactly what he means by “Press Ahead”. Years ago we had press-gangs. I think the Treasurer's philosophy might be a case of the old press-gang attitude—take it or leave it. He has pressed the Budget on us and, no matter what we do about it, we have to cop it sweet because he has the numbers and he is going ahead with it. I suppose it will be like most other Budgets. We will find at the end of the year that there will be plenty of excuses why certain things were not achieved.

I believe that this is more of a “contradiction” Budget than anything else, because it contradicts many statements made by Government Ministers from time to time about the economy. An analysis of the Budget document clearly shows that Queensland has received a good deal in Federal financial assistance. It shows, too, that the State Government has not been prepared to trim its own expenditure to the same extent as

the restriction on expenditure in certain fields by the Federal Government that it has been demanding over a long period. Later on I will show quite conclusively, I believe, that the State Government has not come to the party by trimming its expenditure as much as it has demanded restriction by others.

The Government has shown also that it is prepared to add to the financial burden of the average citizen. Its increases in taxation and charges will drastically add to inflation. The concessions that have been given are, in my view, far too restrictive. In fact, years ago the Labor Party advocated the abolition of certain forms of probate and succession duties.

Mr. Frawley: That's not true, and you know it.

Mr. HOUSTON: I know it's true because I had the privilege of delivering that policy. The honourable member for Murrumba was not even thought about as a candidate in those days. One thing he has repeatedly shown—and he has shown it again now—is the willingness of anti-Labor people in politics in Queensland to make any type of statement at all, whether it is true or not. In this instance the honourable member's statement is completely untrue. The Labor Party has advocated this, and over a period I announced it during the various election campaigns.

I turn now to concessions made in other fields. By raising the exemption level for the payment of pay-roll tax, all the Government is doing is catching up with the inflationary spiral and reflecting the increased wages paid by small business.

I return to the first point I made, which was that the Commonwealth Government has been very generous to Queensland. I refer to the Treasurer's tables, and compare the 1971-72 year, which was the last of a Liberal-Country Party Federal Government, with the year just completed, 1974-75. As honourable members will see if they look at the tables, the figures I am about to quote are completely accurate. They reveal a very interesting fact. In 1971-72 the total general revenue assistance given by the Commonwealth to New South Wales was \$498,017,000. That increased to \$756,163,000 in 1974-75—a rise of 52 per cent. The amount allocated to Victoria increased from \$362,000,000 to \$562,000,000—a rise of 55 per cent. Western Australia's allocation rose from \$176,000,000 to \$287,000,000—a rise of 62 per cent. Tasmania's allocation increased from \$79,000,000 to \$140,000,000—a rise of 76 per cent. Queensland's allocation increased from \$249,000,000 to \$449,000,000—a rise of 80 per cent. Certainly South Australia's allocation was increased from \$171,000,000 to \$318,000,000 or a rise of 85 per cent. Its increase was therefore slightly more than that of Queensland. The main point to be observed is that in the short period between the last Budget of an anti-Labor Government and the financial year just ended,

Commonwealth contributions to Queensland through general revenue assistance increased by 80 per cent—which is the second highest rate of increase among the States.

The estimated figures for this year show a picture that is even more favourable to Queensland. New South Wales is to receive 77 per cent more than the 1971-72 figure; Victoria, 102 per cent more; Tasmania, 104 per cent more; Western Australia, 112 per cent more; and South Australia, 121 per cent more. But Queensland is to receive 138 per cent more than it received in 1971-72, or a total of \$595,000,000 for consolidated revenue. How therefore can any members of the National and Liberal parties say with any honesty, in this Chamber or anywhere else, that the Federal Labor Government has not been good to Queensland in financial matters? The figures are there for all to see. The only trouble is that these undeniable facts do not suit the propaganda of the Government parties.

Mr. Moore: We will see about that on 6 December.

Mr. HOUSTON: Never mind about December. I am relating the facts. Government members like to propound half truths in the hope that they will carry them through. I warn them that eventually the citizens of Australia will wake up to their double-dealing and double talk and judge the Labor Party on its results.

Mr. Elliott: What about Connor's resignation?

Mr. HOUSTON: So what? The Federal Parliament is not the only one in which Ministers have resigned. I was here when Mr. Muller resigned. He was called all kinds of names by the then Treasurer.

A Government Member: Foley?

Mr. HOUSTON: I was not here when that gentleman resigned. But I was here when Mr. Muller resigned and also when Mr. Dewar resigned.

Mr. Aikens: And Jack Duggan resigned.

Mr. HOUSTON: Jack Duggan did not resign from the Ministry. The latest resignation is a matter for argument in other places.

I repeat that in general revenue assistance Queensland has been well treated compared to other States.

The Commonwealth Government also gives substantial sums to the States by way of trust and special funds. This year it is estimated that more than \$482,000,000 will be contributed to the trust and special funds. If one excludes the S.G.I.O. fund, superannuation funds, auctioneers trust funds, the Public Curator's trust funds, the nominal defendant fund and railway projects, the Commonwealth's contribution is 47 per cent of the moneys available for State use in the other various trust funds.

If we look at the percentage basis for Commonwealth general revenue assistance, we see that New South Wales received 32.4 per cent of the total allocation in 1971-72 and 30.08 per cent in 1974-75, a drop of 2.32 per cent. For the same years we find that Victoria dropped by 1.19 per cent, South Australia by 1.15 per cent, and Western Australia by .09 per cent, while Tasmania increased by .42 per cent and Queensland by 1.68 per cent, from 16.21 per cent to 17.89 per cent. The Estimates for this year show an even greater advantage to Queensland with an increase to 18.44 per cent of the total. Working on a percentage basis, we find that Queensland is well off.

I shall use yet another criterion—the Commonwealth general revenue assistance per head of population. People have argued many cases about total amounts of money and have said, "We'll get down to the amount per head of population". Taking 1971-72 as the base year (the last year of the Liberal-Country Party in Federal Government), New South Wales received \$107.17 per head of population and Queensland received \$134.63, which was 26 per cent more than New South Wales. In 1974-75 New South Wales rose from \$107 to \$158 and Queensland rose from \$134.63 to \$225.90, which means that Queensland received 42 per cent more than New South Wales in that year. In 1971-72 Queensland received 31 per cent more than Victoria; in 1974-75 it received 47 per cent more. In 1971-72 South Australia received 7.6 per cent more than Queensland; in 1974-75 that figure increased to 14.3 per cent. Using the estimates for 1975-76, however, we find that that figure drops to 4.3 per cent, with South Australia receiving \$304 per head of population as against \$293 for Queensland. In 1971-72 Tasmania received 50 per cent more than Queensland; in 1974-75 it received 53 per cent more. The estimate for 1975-76 is 35 per cent more compared with other States. Queensland is getting a far better deal from the present Federal Government than it received from a Liberal-Country Party Government.

Mr. Fraser's proposed tax scheme, keenly supported by the Premier of Queensland and, following his capitulation, by the Liberal Party Leader, the Treasurer of Queensland, would put Queensland back a generation. As a smaller-population State, Queensland would be adversely affected because of decentralisation and the extent of our communications system with all its facets. Our situation would become so desperate that we could become the most highly taxed State in the Commonwealth.

Consider for a moment the vastness of this State, the length of our road system, the problems with water supply distribution—problems caused by the situation of our mountain ranges and main river systems—and the necessity for sewerage caused by climatic conditions, flies and so forth. It is necessary for a State like Queensland to have

better hygiene than the southern States. Our hygiene problems have to be coped with and the solutions paid for. Electricity generation requires longer power lines and more diverse generating plants. Considering the situation very carefully, we find that Queensland faces far higher expenses than States such as New South Wales and Victoria. This places us in a very serious situation.

As I pointed out earlier when quoting some statistics, over the years Queensland has asked for and received a higher proportion of the national revenue than other States during the same period. That has happened because of a recognition of the problems within the State.

If the figure for this year is taken as a base, the figures that the States will receive next year and the following year will be exactly the same, because that is the basis of Mr. Fraser's proposal. There will be no pool of money for additional money to be made available to the States. So additional State taxation will be necessary. A good way to chase people and industry away from a State is to have a tax differential that does not favour that State. One reason why uniform taxation was agreed to happily by so many people when it was introduced was the belief that it would provide not only uniform taxation but also uniform opportunity.

Mr. Moore: They were short sighted.

Mr. HOUSTON: The honourable member had better begin convincing the Treasurer of that.

Mr. Moore: I have made that remark before, and I will do it again.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, I know that; but, as I said before, quite often statements made by the honourable member are unwisely made and based on wrong information.

The vastly increased Federal financial assistance to Queensland in recent years is reflected in the income of the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The figures show that, while revenue from the Commonwealth has increased at a rate much in excess of the rate of inflation, the State's own revenue has increased at a rate well below the rate of inflation.

Let us look at the figures, Mr. Hewitt, before I begin drawing conclusions, and compare the figures for 1973-74 with those for 1974-75. Commonwealth financial assistance increased from \$318,000,000 to \$414,000,000, or by 30 per cent. Other moneys made available by the Commonwealth increased from \$75,000,000 to \$116,000,000, or by 50 per cent. Over all, Commonwealth payments, excluding Trust and Special Funds and Loan Funds, increased from \$395,000,000 to \$530,000,000, or by 34 per cent. On the other hand, taking State taxation, income from licence and permit fees increased from \$19,300,000 to \$19,600,000, or by 1.6 per cent; pay-roll tax

increased from \$94,000,000 to \$140,000,000, or by 50 per cent, and stamp duty decreased from \$63,000,000 to \$49,000,000, or by 22 per cent. Over all, State taxation increased from \$217,000,000 to \$257,000,000, or by 18 per cent. Land revenue decreased by 12 per cent from \$14,900,000 to \$13,200,000, while receipts for services rendered—fees, and so on—decreased from \$12,200,000 to \$11,400,000. Surely these figures indicate clearly that the Commonwealth Government is playing its part in financing activities in this State.

It is true that mining revenue increased sixfold—from \$6,000,000 to \$37,000,000—in that period. However, I think even members of the Government parties will agree that for years mining companies had had a bonanza at the expense of the taxpayers of Queensland.

The principal problem is the Government's stop-go attitude to the State's finances, depending on whether it is an election year. The only major increase in taxation last year over 1973-74 was in mining royalties. There were two major reasons for that. First, the State Government required more money at that point of time; second, the Queensland public were well aware that the State's mineral resources were being given away for a mere pittance.

Mr. McKECHNIE: I rise to a point of order. I draw your attention, Mr. Hewitt, to what Mr. Speaker said on Friday about members reading their speeches.

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

Mr. Aikens: Lourigan went to a great deal of trouble to write this out for him. Let him read it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Bulimba is quoting figures very extensively. He would not be able to do that without reference to notes.

Mr. HOUSTON: Thank you, Mr. Hewitt, I regret that at least two members have not the ability to understand the meaning of these figures. I suggest that if they devoted their time to studying the tables relating to the Financial Statement, they would be better informed in the future.

As I was saying, the State required more money and the Queensland public were well aware that our natural resources were being given away for a mere pittance. Last year we received \$37,000,000 in royalties, but we had received only \$35,400,000 for the previous seven years. In one year we got \$37,000,000 following the increase in royalties but for the previous seven years all that the State received for its mineral wealth was \$35,400,000. The Queensland public were well aware of that. And the mining companies have not gone broke; they are still paying good dividends.

Mr. Katter: It was an establishing period.

Mr. HOUSTON: It is not a bad increase at the end of the establishing period to go overnight from 5c a ton to \$1 a tonne. The reason was that the public knew that the Queensland Government was allowing mining companies to fleece the State.

Let me refer to a statement that reportedly was made by the Premier this morning. A news item referred to the decision of the Commonwealth Government to assist in the mining of coal at additional projects in Queensland. The Premier said that the delay in allowing those new projects to proceed had cost the State over \$40,000,000 in royalties in two years. I know that the Treasurer could hardly agree with that. If that were so I would want to know what happened to all the other money we should have been getting over those two years from the projects already under way. Over those two years we would not have received \$40,000,000 in royalties from all the existing projects. I suggest that this is another case of the Premier's saying anything at all that he thinks might impress the public against the A.L.P. Federal Government.

I do not mind criticism. I suppose we have all offered and received criticism. I believe that members of Parliament should always endeavour to tell the whole truth. The suggestion that the failure of the proposed projects to get under way has cost the State Government \$40,000,000 in revenue over two years is absolute nonsense.

We had a change of Government policy before the State election. Having won that election—on false promises, false fears and viciously false propaganda—the Government is now going to impose massive increases in taxation in other fields of State responsibility. Auctioneers and agents' licences are estimated to increase revenue from that source by 118 per cent. Traffic licences and permits will return an increased income of 148 per cent—from \$1,700,000 to \$4,200,000. Liquor licence fees are to be increased by nearly 31 per cent, with revenue increasing from \$10,300,000 to \$13,500,000. Other permit fees will increase by up to 100 per cent. Pay-roll tax will increase by 22 per cent, from \$142,000,000 to \$173,000,000. That is despite an increase in the pay-roll tax exemption from \$20,800 to \$41,600.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You should not mislead the public by saying that pay-roll tax will increase. The volume will increase but we have reduced—

Mr. HOUSTON: The Treasurer has reduced the rate. I am giving the whole story.

Sir Gordon Chalk: As long as you make that clear.

Mr. HOUSTON: I will repeat it in case there is any misunderstanding. I said that in spite of an increase in the pay-roll tax exemption from \$20,800 to \$41,600, with a lesser rate between \$41,600 and \$72,800, the

Treasurer expects revenue from pay-roll tax to increase from \$142,000,000 to \$173,000,000.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I do not deny that; the wage structure will continue to rise.

Mr. HOUSTON: I am not arguing about the reasons for it. The fact is that, although the level of exemption has risen, as the result of inflation the Government will do very well from the amount of pay-roll tax collected. The impression that the Government will give large sums of money back to industry is quite wrong. I concede that the exemption will help certain companies, and I have no quarrel against that, because pay-roll tax is one form of taxation that has been seized upon by this Government as a means of obtaining revenue. In fact the rate of pay-roll tax has been increased over the years by the Government.

As to other forms of State taxation—stamp duty will increase by 42 per cent from \$48,700,000 to \$69,400,000; totalisator and betting tax will increase by 21 per cent; bookmakers' turnover tax will rise by 26 per cent; registration of titles will increase by 41 per cent; and fees generally will rise from last year's \$114,000,000 to an estimated \$160,000,000, or by approximately 40 per cent.

The increase in railway revenue is most interesting. The Treasurer is expecting that that obtained in the southern division will rise by 32 per cent and that revenue derived in the northern division will increase by 35 per cent. In contrast, in the central division and on the Mackay railway, which embrace the major coal-carrying lines, the increase is expected to be only 23 per cent. I wonder whether such a low increase is due to the concessions given by the Government to its foreign mining friends. Will the travelling public be asked to subsidise the rail transport of their coal?

Anyone who listened to the Treasurer could be excused for thinking that the increases in State taxation are the result of the actions of the Labor Government in Canberra. The facts are, however, that except for the Budgets brought down by the Treasurer in election years, his Budgets have provided for increases in State taxation. I remind honourable members of the contents of the Budgets brought down by him during the last two years of office of the Federal Liberal-Country Party Government, that is, the years between 1970 and 1972. The State Budgets in those years provided for an increase in private hospital fees of from \$10 to \$17 a day and in intermediate bed fees from \$8 to \$14 a day. As well, rail fares were increased by 25 per cent; pay-roll tax rose from 2½ per cent—the rate that prevailed when it was taken over by the State—firstly to 3½ per cent and later to 5 per cent; bookmakers' turnover tax in the metropolitan area rose from 1½ per cent to 2½ per cent; T.A.B. deductions at metropolitan meetings rose from 3¼ per cent to

15 per cent; stamp duty on cheques went up from 5c to 6c; and stamp duty on the transfer of marketable securities rose from 40c to 60c per \$100.

Turning now to employees in the Public Service—the Government constantly criticises the Federal Government on the allegedly high number of employees in the Federal Public Service. Perhaps some of the criticism is justified. However, before the Queensland Government criticises others, it should look at its own position. It is clearly evident that the State Government has no intention whatever of practising restraint in the growth of the Public Service. If we compare the number of public servants in 1972-73 with the estimated number for 1975-76, we will see that a substantial increase has occurred. I exclude for the moment employees in the Departments of Health, Police, Education and Railways, and I do so because they fall into a special category in that those departments have received substantial financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government and also because there is urgent need for an increase in the number of teachers, doctors, nurses, police officers and railway employees.

The increase that occurred in the remainder of the Public Service over that period was of the order of 1,900. In fact the number of public servants in departments other than those to which I have just referred rose by 14.7 per cent. The proposed increases are 25.8 per cent in the Education Department; 16.4 per cent in the Health Department; 12.5 per cent in the Police Department and 4.2 per cent in the Railway Department.

Mr. Moore: What are those figures you are quoting?

Mr. HOUSTON: Proposed increases in personnel compared with figures for two year ago.

The proposed increase in the Railway Department is only 4.2 per cent. The honourable member should note the great difference between the staff increases for departments associated with the Government's trading activities and the increases in departments concerned basically with administration. The figures I have given so far relate to the growth in personnel paid out of Consolidated Revenue. On looking at Government activities financed through loan, trust and special funds, such as the S.G.I.O. (which is a trading establishment run separately from the Government, but still under Government control), it is seen that the staff increase is kept down to 7.5 per cent, while the increase in staff in the Public Curator Office—another office that is virtually a trading office dealing direct with the public on many matters—is kept down to 5.2 per cent. Staff numbers in the Main Roads Department—a department that carries out development work and employs a large workforce—are down by one.

The growth in the Public Service has been accelerated by the increase in the number of Ministers. All the newly appointed Ministers are trying to justify their existence and the creation of their departments. As a result, the number of public servants over all has increased. I have no fight with public servants as such, and I certainly do not suggest that anyone should be sacked, but we should ensure that employment in the Public Service sector does not run contrary to the general trend in the present economic situation. In the light of the 14.7 per cent increase in the basically administrative establishments, compared with an increase of only 12.5 per cent in the Police Department (which definitely requires more staff) and an increase of only 4.2 per cent in railway staff and similar increases in other trading departments, the Treasurer should call on—

Mr. Moore: A 4 per cent increase on 20,000 is different from a 4 per cent increase on a smaller figure.

Mr. HOUSTON: We have to use a common base, and the numbers are relative. I could go through all the figures, but I do not have the time. If the honourable member is interested, I suggest that he study the Budget figures. He will have to carry out a good deal of research. With the change in ministerial portfolios he will have to go back quite some time. As I said at the outset, if all the reports were available we could see what was happening.

The Government as a whole—from the Premier down—must accept responsibility for the increased number of public servants. In 10 years the cost of running the Chief Office of the Premier's Department increased from \$363,000 in 1965-66 to \$1,704,747 last year. What a massive increase! The Estimate this year for the Premier's Chief Office is \$1,949,449—almost \$2,000,000. In 1965-66 the State Public Relations Bureau cost \$52,000. Last year is cost \$321,000. This year it is estimated to cost us \$403,000.

Mr. McKechnie: That's nothing compared with the Commonwealth.

Mr. HOUSTON: This is the State Public Relations Bureau, which only means the State propaganda bureau. Included in that is an amount of \$180,000 for "Publicity—State Affairs". The expenses of running the Premier's Chief Office include the maintenance and operation of his aircraft. Last year that was over \$59,000. This year it is estimated to be nearly \$100,000. It does not include \$111,600 last year towards the replacement of the aircraft and \$489,500 allocated for the same purpose this year.

I believe one of the departments of greatest financial significance, as revealed in the Budget, is the Queensland Railway Department.

Since 1969, when it made an operating profit of nearly \$2,000,000, it has incurred successive losses—

1970-71	\$6,400,000
1971-72	\$8,900,000
1972-73	\$13,900,000
1973-74	\$38,600,000
1974-75	\$64,800,000

In the last two years the losses of the Railway Department totalled \$102,400,000. Even with the massive increase in freight and other charges imposed in this Budget, the Treasurer still expects a loss of nearly \$40,000,000.

Mr. McKechnie: Would you give the railways to the Commonwealth?

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, I would. If the honourable member for Carnarvon comes back after lunch, I will explain in some detail why. The loss of \$102,400,000 exceeded the total cost of operating the Police Force in the same two years. In fact, the total ramifications of running the Police Force in those two years cost only \$97,000,000. So, even if the railways had been run on break-even basis, showing no profit at all, we could have doubled our Police Force at no extra cost to the community. Certainly, if the Railway Department were kept at break-even point, we would not have to add to the burdens of the average taxpayer by the imposts contained in the Budget, which give impetus to the present inflationary spiral.

This brings me to the question: Can this State really afford to continue running its own long-distance railway system? I believe it has been shown financially that it cannot. However, an even more important factor to be taken into account is the failure of this Government to convert our railway system to the national gauge of 4 ft. 8½ ins. The trouble started with the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa railway line. For the benefit of the new members I point out that at that time the Commonwealth coalition Governments offered the States financial assistance if they converted their systems to 4 ft. 8½ ins. Everyone in Australia thought that was a very good idea. As I saw it, the only problem in Queensland was that it would have involved tremendous cost. However, the Commonwealth Government—it was of the same political ilk as honourable members opposite, and I had no fight with its decision on this matter—went ahead with the States of Western Australia and South Australia in particular, and later with New South Wales, to construct a line across Central Australia. The Commonwealth with its own money built a 4 ft. 8½ ins. line right across Australia. So we have a direct 4 ft. 8½ ins. line through the southern part of Australia from Perth to Melbourne and up to Sydney. There is a continuous 4 ft. 8½ ins. line from Perth to Sydney and as far north as Brisbane. Unfortunately, it stops there. I repeat that

Queensland erred in not doing something about it when we engaged in rebuilding the Mt. Isa line.

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

Mr. HOUSTON: Before the luncheon recess I was referring to the failure of the State Government to bring the Queensland railway system into line with other systems in Australia. In modern times, the original error was made on the rehabilitation of the Mt. Isa railway line. That line should have been reconstructed with a gauge of 4 ft. 8½ ins. At that time stronger bridges had to be constructed; heavier lines and sleepers had to be used and a larger and stronger permanent way had to be provided. New rolling-stock was also required.

Mr. Moore: There should have been standardisation of gauge on electrification of suburban railways, too.

Mr. HOUSTON: That is right.

New wagons, too, were needed for use on the reconstructed Mt. Isa line. It was in fact a complete programme of rehabilitation, and there would have been no interference with any other railway operations if that line had been made a single line with a gauge of 4 ft. 8½ ins.

Mr. Moore: There would have had to be a third rail.

Mr. HOUSTON: There was no need for that then; it could have been 4 ft. 8½ ins. only from Townsville to Mt. Isa. There are not many lines running from that main line.

The next stage could have been the gradual electrification of the main North Coast railway line. We hear a great deal about defence from members of the National and Liberal Parties in the Federal Parliament, and also in this Assembly. The Premier in particular is constantly asking for greater defence preparation for this nation. But any arrangement for the defence of Australia would break down in Queensland because there are no direct lines of communication from southern munition factories to the vast areas of this State. There are many roads and bridges that are subject to flooding, and in any case the bridges are not sufficiently strong to support the weight of modern military weapons and equipment. The best means of transporting armaments is the railway system.

I believe that the Commonwealth Government could provide a railway system that would meet this need if it were given responsibility for conducting long-distance services. There would have to be certain conditions applying to such a transfer, one being conversion to the standard 4 ft. 8½ ins. gauge. It is a tragedy that the lines built to service coal-mining projects are not of standard gauge. Special rolling-stock had to be provided for those lines, and at this stage they are used almost exclusively for the haulage of coal. It would be much cheaper,

and certainly in the interests of Australia, if there were a 4 ft. 8½ ins. gauge line from Cairns to Perth and other lines of standard gauge from the Queensland coastal line to Western areas.

I believe that the transfer of railway responsibilities to the Commonwealth Government would allow the State Government to proceed with other major projects. If the Government had decided two years ago to hand the railways over to the Commonwealth, this State would not have suffered the \$100,000,000 loss sustained by the railways. That amount of money could have doubled the State's Police Force.

It would also have had a tremendous impact on electrification of the Brisbane railway system. This is something that must be done. Although many country people do not like to see money being spent in Brisbane, the fact is that the cheaper Brisbane suburban transport is made, the cheaper it will be for not only those who live here but those who have business dealings with people living in Brisbane.

Mr. Lowes: How do you suggest that railway running costs could be cheaper under a Federal Government than under the State?

Mr. HOUSTON: They would be cheaper in that if there were any losses the Federal Government would cover them out of its funds, not ours. The point is that we are talking about defence, and if the honourable member contends that it is wise for any national Government to have a complete break in our defence system then I think he is crazy. The point is that we have this complete break in our defence system in that the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge ends at Brisbane. As I said, there have been opportunities in the past—

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: I said that one of the things we should do is build a 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge line. It is quite true, as the honourable member for Windsor said, that it could be done more cheaply for a start by putting down a third line. Certainly some of our bridges would have to be widened. But from my point of view it is ridiculous to talk about buying F111s or some big battleship or aircraft carrier when the internal movement of Army equipment breaks down in the City of Brisbane.

Mr. Moore: We will confuse the enemy.

Mr. HOUSTON: That's about all it would do. If Brisbane is going to be the change-over point from one rail system to another, honourable members can imagine what a tremendously important target it would be in wartime.

Mr. Campbell interjected.

Mr. HOUSTON: I sincerely hope the Minister is right, but don't let him be a hypocrite like some of his colleagues and say that we have to build up our defence forces and

spend millions of dollars on defence when we have here in Brisbane the greatest weakness in the whole of our military set-up. That is my answer to the question posed by one of the honourable gentleman's colleagues when he asked me what my attitude was towards Queensland's major long-distance rail services. We have nothing to be proud of in our system, because of all the passenger services throughout this nation Queensland's long-distance passenger service is the worst. There is no doubt about it. Our carriages are out of date. In fact, I doubt whether there has been any improvement since the days when John Duggan was Minister for Transport, and that is going back some considerable time.

While on the subject of railways, I would ask the Government to speed up the establishment of an electrified rail system in Brisbane. After all, it has been an election policy of the Government for quite some time. We know that this Government scrapped the original plans that were well on the way to completion. Let us get on with the job. It is a few years ago now that the Government said it was going to get on with it, but the facts are that it is only playing with it. It is doing a little bit so it can say, "We are doing something." The point is that the introduction of an electrified rail system is well behind schedule, and not only Brisbane but Ipswich, Caloundra and the Gold Coast desperately need such a system. We are spending millions of dollars on freeways in trying to stop traffic congestion in our city, yet the answer is staring us in the face. An electrified rail system would not only cater for thousands more passengers but also take thousands of cars off the road.

Mr. Moore: It would not carry an extra passenger.

Mr. HOUSTON: Yes, it would. The trouble with many Brisbane people, and a lot of members of this House who make the decisions, is that they have never lived with an electrified rail system and enjoyed peaceful travel to and from work as have people in Sydney and Melbourne. Having lived in Sydney for some time, I can speak with some authority on this subject. I lived at Strathfield, which was then considered to be out of town. I travelled between my home and the city both morning and night in comfort. It was fast travel but one had time to read a newspaper or do whatever else one wanted to do. That is the type of comfortable travel we need in Queensland, and I am speaking of the position in Sydney nearly 30 years ago. That system has improved since and we could do exactly the same thing here.

Incidentally, while speaking of defence and the need for a uniform rail system, I recall that the Premier wanted to spend \$100,000,000 on defence preparation around our cities. I think he wanted to ring our cities with rocket sites or something else. I suggest to the Premier that if losses on the

Queensland Railways could be reduced by \$100,000,000 that amount could be used for other purposes.

Mr. McKechnie: How much would the freights go up if we handed the railways over to the Commonwealth?

Mr. HOUSTON: All the honourable member is doing is trying to create fear. I point out to him that people who freight their goods across the Nullabor Plain on the Commonwealth Railways are very happy with the service they receive.

There are one or two other points that I wish to deal with while the Treasurer is in the Chamber. One is workers' compensation. Unfortunately, the Treasury Estimates will not come before honourable members this year.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I am getting worried. Connor has gone. Only Chalk and Campbell are left.

Mr. HOUSTON: I assure the honourable gentleman that if the Premier gets his way with his National Party colleagues, both he and Campbell will go. The honourable gentleman has something to worry about.

I have been approached about workers' compensation premiums, and I have checked the information supplied to me. I shall refer now to the premiums paid by those associated with the building of small craft in this State, particularly the people in my own electorate, and I think that the figures I am about to give are quite enlightening. In 1971-72 the workers' compensation premium was \$2.55 per \$100 of wages paid. In 1972-73 it was \$3.20, in 1973-74 \$4.85, and in 1974-75 \$6.50. Incidentally, I have given the average rate paid over the three yards that I investigated.

There are, of course, many yards throughout the State, but I selected three. The total premiums paid by these three yards amounted to \$49,295, and the payout to employees was only \$16,598. The balance of \$32,697 went to the State Government Insurance Office. I am told that it now costs about \$9 a week to cover each employee at each yard.

Workers' compensation should be paid. I believe in workers' compensation, and I think that the principle is a good one. But I cannot see why premiums at these yards, which have a low accident rate, should increase in a three-year period from \$2.50 to about \$6. It is no use the Treasurer's saying that inflation has meant additional costs to the S.G.I.O. The premiums are calculated on the basis of each \$100 paid in wages. As inflation has increased, so has the amount that the yards are paying in wages. If the rate was the same, they would still be paying more money to cover the rate of inflation.

I should like the Treasurer to examine this matter. The people concerned are good employers and, because they use modern

machinery, and so on, their accident rate is low. It should not be difficult to remedy the situation.

In the couple of minutes still at my disposal, and while dealing with defence matters, I shall refer to the proposal by the Commonwealth Government to abolish school cadet units.

I was astonished to find that the Education Department of this State had no knowledge of how many schools or which schools maintained cadet units. It is unthinkable that that should be so when the Premier and other Cabinet Ministers have travelled throughout the State saying, "It is shocking that we are doing away with cadet training in our schools." Therefore, I thought I had better try to find out how bad the situation was and how many boys and girls were affected, and I asked the Minister for Education a question on the subject. Briefly, he told me that there were 118 State high schools and 65 primary schools with high tops, which meant that 183 State schools could have had cadet units. However, only 47 of them had Army cadet units. There were 118 independent schools—that is, church schools, grammar schools and the like—and only 27 of them had cadet units attached to them.

When I asked the Minister for Education about it, he told me to ask my Federal colleagues. When I did they were able to supply me with the information. Who knows what is going on at our schools? If cadet training is such a wonderful thing, surely the Minister should be able to tell us what schools have cadet corps. Information should be readily available as to the strength of those groups in the various schools. We talk about training for young boys. What about the girls? I suggest that the Education Department should place greater emphasis on the training of young people in ordinary, healthy sporting activities.

I find a lack of pride in schools. The reason is that too many students are not given an opportunity to show their skills in interschool competitions. When I and others of my generation went to high school, we could play in many competitive grades on behalf of our school. It is a matter of pride to play for one's high school against another high school. Certainly a few teams play interschool sport today, but most of the youngsters are required to compete one against the other on sports day. That is not good enough. One gets sick and tired of playing with the same crowd all the time.

Let us develop a school spirit. That can only be done when there is a genuine desire on the part of the students to be proud of their schools. The best way to have pride in one's school is to represent it. That applies equally to boys and girls. The youngsters of today are the ones that we should be taking care of. Let Government members

forget about the nonsense of criticising the decision of the Federal Government to abolish school cadets.

(Time expired.)

Mr. MOORE (Windsor) (2.32 p.m.): The speech of the honourable member for Bulimba is worthy of one or two comments. He spoke about the present Government abandoning electrification of the railways when it attained office. It did that temporarily because secondary education was so lacking in this State that it required a fillip of funds. Available funds were used for the building of high schools and getting secondary education on the way. The Australian Labor Party Government wanted to keep a poorly educated work-force, in the belief that that type of person voted for it. Of course, he didn't, anyway.

The honourable member spoke about the need for a 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge railway line. I agree that that would have been desirable, but it all goes back to funding. The A.L.P. missed out when it had the opportunity to do something at the end of the war. By the use of Commonwealth funds there could have been a standard 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge railway throughout Australia, but the State A.L.P. Government would not pay Queensland's contribution towards such a scheme. That is when something could have been done. The honourable member talked about our poor defence capacity because of the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. I point out that we did rather well with our railways during World War II, even though we had limited rolling-stock and locomotives. We imported Garratts, and over all managed very well. Since then any amount of sidings have been provided, so that would be no problem. If an invading force became established here, the best thing would be to have no communications so that it would not be provided with a facility. It makes me smile to hear honourable members opposite talk about defence when the Federal A.L.P. Government's policy is based on 15 years free from war. All the seers down there have been looking into their crystal balls, and that is the answer they have come up with.

I agree with the honourable member for Bulimba that it is somewhat difficult to debate the Budget fully. After all, whereas the Treasurer took almost two hours to present his Financial Statement, I am allowed only half an hour to make my speech.

Mr. Houston: You are given an hour.

Mr. MOORE: Standing Orders allow a member an hour to debate the Budget, but because so many members wish to participate in this debate we have voluntarily agreed to limit ourselves to half an hour.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The Treasurer did not want to inflict you on members for a full hour.

Mr. MOORE: That's not right. On the contrary, he thought that if I spoke for my full time I would show up Opposition members so badly that they would all walk out and not come back.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I told you not to spend an hour criticising them—that they condemned themselves.

Mr. MOORE: Exactly.

Mr. Hanson: Have you given a copy of your speech to Ian Miller?

Mr. MOORE: I don't have copies of my speeches. It will be obvious from my speech that I have not a written document in front of me.

In this debate, virtually all that a member can do is make comparisons. But how can a true comparison be made in the light of the present inflationary spiral? From time to time there is a change in priorities by the Treasurer and by the Government as a whole. What private member has access to the specialised knowledge available to the Treasurer and Cabinet? With the restricted information that a member has at his disposal, it is almost impossible for him to debate the Budget in a constructive manner.

The Government has been forced by the policies of the Federal Government and the inflationary spiral to increase State taxes. Furthermore, the Commonwealth tax reimbursements have been insufficient to allow Queensland to embark upon its normal works programme. Instead of giving the State its fair share, the Commonwealth Government, as the result of all its airy-fairy schemes and its socialist experiments, has relied upon the States to get it out of its dilemma.

The Treasurer has described his Budget as a "Press Ahead" Budget. I would ask: why hold Queensland back, particularly in view of the fact that the Federal A.L.P. Government will be out of office before Christmas? It will be history, and the Labor Party won't raise its head again for at least another 25 years.

Mr. Melloy: Do you want to bet?

Mr. MOORE: If I were a betting man I would be getting some money from members of the Opposition; that's for sure.

A problem is created by the Labor Party's excessive social reform. It suffers from the Robin Hood syndrome; it robs the rich to give to the poor. The trouble is, of course, that there are very few rich people left to rob and very few people in Queensland or in Australia could be described as being poor. In days gone by there may have been a large number of poor people, but today, although some people are on a low standard of living, they could not be termed poor. Quite often their plight is attributable to a social problem in the home, such as drink, bad management or mismanagement.

Not one person in my electorate has come to me in dire straits. If my electorate can be used as a guide—and I assume that it can—things are not so bad. One of the problems is that when the Federal Government attempts to introduce a social reform, it decides that the only way to do it is by deficit budgeting—by printing money. That is Government-induced inflation. Generally speaking, while inflation may be world wide, it has been caused by the shortage of petro-dollars—by Arab and other Middle East countries increasing oil prices. Australia does not suffer in this way because we are about 80 per cent self-sufficient in petroleum products. We are a little short of heavy crudes and lubricating oils, the cost of which is infinitesimal in the over-all Australian Budget.

Labor's policy is absolutely out of date and misguided. Its policy on a fairer distribution of wealth may have been desirable in the distant past when there were very wealthy and very poor people. If it is necessary to redistribute wealth, it should be done by wage adjustment, not by taxing people to such an extent that they lose incentive. The concept of attempting to bleed white every responsible, careful person who has worked hard and saved money and then allowing inflation to run wild is criminal, if nothing else. It is not only the honest, decent citizen who saves money who is being bled white but every responsible Australian firm and company. The multinational companies cannot be bled white. They have sufficient world-wide diversification to manage with or without our Federal Government. They know that, in the long term, this period shall pass. I suggest that it will pass about Christmas time.

As I have pointed out on other occasions, Abraham Lincoln said that we cannot lift little men up by putting big men down. There is no substitute for hard work and initiative. If the A.L.P. believes that Government enterprise can produce anything, I can only say that it has still to produce the first thing. This country needs more industry rather than less industry. The A.L.P.'s policy of across-the-board tariff cuts, with uninhibited imports from low-cost overseas countries, put our textile mills out of business. They were broken up and machinery that could be making garments for our people today was sold for scrap. The importation of refrigerators, washing machines and so on from cheap-labour countries means that when reasonable tariff protection is reimposed our light-manufacturing industries will be loth to start production. What industry will start production in an inflationary time if it can only show a profit overall? They used to show a profit of only 8 per cent. With the present runaway inflation of 17 per cent—some documents I have read claim that it is over 20 per cent—how can any firm make a profit? Who will invest in firms? Where will they get the money from? Who will invest for a return of 8 per cent?

Firms making crown wheels and pinions and various other bits and pieces for motor-cars are going out of business. Textile firms are going out of business. Something is wrong with a Government that not merely allows that to happen but deliberately brings it about.

Australian firms are attempting to compete with those in South-east Asia, where employees working a 44-hour week are paid 90 Malaysian dollars. That might sound all right, but when it is converted to Australian currency it is really \$30 a week. The Australian work-force cannot be expected to compete with a 44-hour week that pays \$30.

Inflation is today's greatest humbug. In ancient times the barter system was used and I suppose it was the fairer system. If anything, it was anti-inflationary. Goods were bartered for goods or for services, and services were bartered for goods. That worked reasonably well, but it was unwieldy. When perishable goods were bartered the effect would be deflationary rather than inflationary if the goods deteriorated. No banking system existed.

The first money had intrinsic value; the tokens had intrinsic value, as did the coins that were subsequently minted. A coin given in exchange for an article had the same value as the article. Valuable metals were used in the minting of coins. For international trade, jewels were used. Subsequently the nations adopted the gold standard. Any country without its own gold had to make its private arrangements. To some extent, international trade was based on a system of barter. Even today Russia operates a type of barter system. Scarcity of gold and its hoarding by some nations caused the abandonment of the gold standard. Even when we used the gold standard, we had promissory notes. With the gold standard, there was little or no inflation except when the price of gold rose.

Problems arise when Governments print note issues, as is happening in Canberra, to finance various social experiments. Inflation robs liquid assets of their real value. People with bank accounts, superannuation or other liquid assets suffer. The people who are least affected are those who own real estate—who have a home that is mortgaged—where the debt in effect decreases at the inflationary rate, less the rate of interest. Those who have borrowed money, perhaps on a home, find that their assets are increasing at the inflationary rate. If they sell the home, they can buy an equivalent article for the sale price. They have retained real value, and at any stage they can barter the home on the same basis as they could prior to inflation.

The person who suffers is the one who has money in the bank, or money that is not wisely invested. Of course, it is difficult to know how to invest wisely, without risk, for a return of 17 to 20 per cent. The Government has to make a stand somewhere. We cannot tolerate inflation at a rate of 20 per cent. If that continues, in a few

years stamps will cost \$1, rents will be about \$500 and cars will cost \$50,000. That is the direction in which this country is heading unless something is done about it.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: How are you going to stop it?

Mr. MOORE: Instead of budgeting for deficits, Governments should balance their budgets or budget for a surplus. It would not be necessary to spend the surplus, although it could be spent in paying off overseas loans. If it were used for that purpose, the money would not go into circulation, and it would not present any problems. Stopping inflation is therefore a simple exercise.

The A.L.P. has gone wrong by trying out all manner of socialist experiments. They speak of millions of dollars as if such sums were of no significance. They print fiduciary issues, and thus place more money on the market. Their whole idea is to socialise the nation, saying that capitalism has failed. They are running the country into the ground by printing more money and taking more and more in taxes. More and more industries are going out of business as a result of inflation, and even the ordinary working man is taxed to the point where he has no incentive to work harder. Who would want to work overtime today? After he has worked his 40 hours, who would want to work extra hours when he knows that 50 per cent of his extra payment will be filched in taxation? It is my view that overtime should be paid at ordinary rates, not penalty rates, and that it should not be taxed at all. Those who work overtime would then receive the benefit of full pay, and the firms for which they work would also benefit.

I am not sure of the details of Mr. Fraser's proposition for the return of State taxing powers. It is my view, however, that income tax should be a State tax. I should like to see the Federal Government vacate this field completely and give the States their own taxing powers. I know that there is some feeling that in the short term this might not be advantageous to Queensland, and that this State might, in comparison with other States, lose a little. But at least we in Queensland would stand on our own feet, and when a Government levies its own taxation, it is more responsible in spending the money.

Mr. Melloy: You should talk to the Treasurer. He will put you straight on taxation. Don't talk to Joh—he doesn't know.

Mr. MOORE: Both the Treasurer and the Premier are financial wizards, and there is no problem in talking to either. However, I have my doubts about the honourable member who interjects.

It is my view that if the federal system is to work, the States must have taxing powers, and they must stand on their own feet. If there is a genuine belief in the

federal system, the Commonwealth Government should leave the administration of roads, hospitals, education, transport, and all the other fields in which there is at present duplication, to the States, because they are State responsibilities. But what happens is that with uniform taxation the Commonwealth, being the collecting body, has the first bite at the cherry. One only has to look at any Commonwealth project to see the lavish spending on it. Compare it with something the State does and see how we have to prune our spending and do something that is not quite as good or as lavish, all because the Commonwealth Government has the first bite. One only has to go to Canberra and see the money that is being spent there. Money is the least consideration of the Commonwealth because it knows that it collects it and the States get what is left after it covers its own expenditure.

The economic situation in this country is getting worse and worse. With the average unionist wanting not a 20c rise, as was the norm just a few years ago, but a \$10, \$20 or \$30 a week rise, we are going to end up like South America, where at the present time inflation is running at 100 per cent. There was a similar situation in Germany between the wars which had to be dealt with.

In the brief time left to me I wish to leave the Budget.

Mr. Yewdale: When were you on it?

Mr. MOORE: If the honourable member cannot appreciate that that was a Budget speech, he is dumber than I thought he was.

The other subject I wish to raise is that of the road toll. When I entered this Chamber about seven years ago, there was hardly a member who spoke in the Supply debate who did not discuss the road toll and the effects it was having on the State's economy and on families—the devastation that is being brought to virtually every 50th family in the nation. There was hardly a member who did not rise and say that something should be done, but in the past 12 months the subject has not been mentioned. We have just become used to it. Because of the increased incidence of drink-driving, we have introduced breathalysers and increased the penalties—

Mr. Jensen: You know that those responsible haven't done anything constructive. You have asked for reduced speed limits and they haven't done anything.

Mr. MOORE: They run around in circles and produce nothing. I dare say the honourable member is right, but we have introduced breathalysers, radar traps, a points system and seat belts, and in turn, as these matters were raised, the Minister of the day would say, "Well, I'm bringing this in to reduce the road toll. This is the reason we are putting these imposts upon you. This is the reason we are placing another restriction upon you. This is the reason we are doing things virtually against our grain." The

standardisation of motor vehicles has been talked about, vehicles having bumper-bars at the same height, having a certain controlled crush rate or concertina rate for the front and rear sections of the car, having an engine that would slide under the passenger section when a crash occurs and having a lot of other things.

The Government has taken all these steps, but the number of accidents and the death rate have gone up and up. There is only one reason for it, and that is speed. There is no doubt in my mind that speed is the main cause of injury when a crash occurs. I have said before that impact is simply weight by velocity squared. That is all it is, and with all these airy-fairy theories we are simply fiddling around at the wrong end. We spend "X" number of dollars on a charity or some theatrical group. Instead, I would like to see Government cars fitted with a governor, just as an experiment to see whether it worked. Let us see if there is a Government department which has a particularly high accident rate and fit a governor to all the departmental vehicles. All we have to do is govern the top speed.

Mr. Miller: You must admit alcohol plays a large part.

Mr. MOORE: Alcohol plays a large part with the honourable member for Ithaca, but it does not play a large part with everyone else in this Committee. That will teach the honourable member to interject in that way in a serious debate. I know he was only joking, and so was I.

I seriously ask those in authority to think along the lines of governing the speed of vehicles. Certain people in the community will say, "If you govern the speed, you will make the car unsafe. You need the extra speed to accelerate out of trouble." I say to them, "At a lower speed you can put your foot on the brake and slow up." I cannot get out of my mind the fact that no-one has taken any action to bring about a reduction of speed. In America, statistics compiled during the fuel crisis showed clearly that fuel consumption is far higher at high speeds. A speed limit of 50 miles an hour was imposed on all vehicles, and there was a startling decrease in the accident rate. I assume that the same number of people were drinking, so obviously speed does play a large part in causing accidents.

In the first instance, I should like to see vehicles governed to a top speed of 60 miles an hour. That would prevent vehicles doing about 110 miles an hour, or perhaps even higher speeds, passing me on the roads.

Mr. POWELL (Isis) (3.3 p.m.): In addressing himself to a Budget, the ordinary person in the community would say, "Well, I have so much coming in and I need to spend so much. Therefore, I must be careful and make sure that I do not spend more than my income." When one looks at the

Budgets presented by various Governments, one finds that they are not always drawn up on a similar basis. At least, that is how it appears to the ordinary man in the street.

The Government of Queensland has budgeted in this instance for a deficit of over \$5,000,000, which, of course, is only peanuts when compared with the deficit of \$3,000 million for which the Federal Government has budgeted. That is a colossal sum. If one can believe all that one reads, perhaps the Federal Government intends to try to cover that gigantic deficit with a loan. As I understand the position, if one takes a loan, one has to pay it back.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It is not a loan unless you have to pay it back.

Mr. POWELL: If the Federal Government takes a loan to cover its deficit, somebody will have to pay it back. To me, the whole matter seems to be a complete shemuzzle.

It is obvious that the Treasurer had a very difficult job in preparing the Budget on this occasion. Honourable members are aware of the economic problems that have beset the nation, so they must also be aware of the problems facing the Treasurer in trying to be innovative and at the same time balance the Budget. I believe that in most respects he has done a very good job. There are a number of aspects on which many honourable members would criticise him, but I am sure that we could not have done any better if we had been in his place.

Looking through the Budget, I find that the size of the Public Service is to be increased. In certain areas that is not only desirable but also necessary, especially when one remembers that teachers and police are included in the Public Service. There is no doubt in my mind or in the minds of most Queenslanders that more teachers are needed and that a more powerful Police Force, with greater numbers, is needed.

Unfortunately, when one looks at the Estimates of the Education Department and the Police Department one sees that a large number of additional clerks are to be employed. The big increase in numbers is not only for professional teachers and policemen but also for a large number of clerks. I go along with the employment of more clerks in the Police Force if those clerks are going to take some of the onerous duties off individual policemen in small police stations in country areas. On the other hand, if they are only going to be added to the large number of clerks in the office of the Commissioner of Police, then it is an appalling situation.

The same goes for the Education Department. There is no argument against having more teachers in the State—we need them—but when we look at the Estimates we see that additional clerks are to be employed. If those clerks are going to take away from

the professional teachers some of the other onerous tasks they already perform, I am all for it. On the other hand, if it is merely empire-building—as I suspect it is in some cases—it should be stopped, and stopped very quickly.

Obviously the Treasurer would be able to save a considerable amount of money if he took a very close look at the Public Service. By "Public Service" I do not mean professional people but clerks and assistants within the offices. I believe that if he took a very close look at that part of the Public Service he would be able to trim back considerably.

Mr. Glasson: There are policemen doing the work of clerks.

Mr. POWELL: Yes, and there are teachers doing clerks' work. That should not occur. If we appoint more policemen, we should be able to see more policemen doing police work. I know from experience that teachers and policemen do not want to do clerks' work. They want to do the work they are trained for.

The Treasurer has introduced an extremely good measure in his Budget in the abolition of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. Much has been said on that issue during the debate, but there is just one point I want to bring up. If the State removes death duties on an estate passing from spouse to spouse, the estimating of death duties falls back on the Commonwealth Government. It will then levy its fees on the full estate without the deduction of the State tax. I might be wrong there, but that is the way I see it. That means that the Commonwealth will profit from the Treasurer's very sensible move of removing those death duties in Queensland. If the Commonwealth Government is going to profit in that way, might I suggest that we once again levy death duties in Queensland but then give a rebate as soon as the Commonwealth people get hold of the estate. The whole intention of my suggestion is that we stop Canberra from getting a little more money from us. As I see it, these estates will still be levied for tax by the Commonwealth authorities. Previously State duties were deducted from the Commonwealth levy. If in future the Commonwealth authorities take the full amount, people in Queensland will be dealt a deathly blow—if I might use that term—with death duties. The Queensland move is a desirable one. Obviously what we have to do now is get the Commonwealth Government to remove death duties similarly. Of course, the news today indicates that probably our parties will be back in office in the Commonwealth field before very long.

Education and Works and Housing are very important departments that I have had a good deal to do with, but I do not want to use any time in this debate speaking about them; I will deal with them when their Estimates are being discussed.

I turn now to rail freights. I do not think anybody in my electorate would doubt that rail freights have to be increased. I do not think anybody in the State would doubt that, in view of the large deficit in the last financial year, rail freights and fares have to be increased. Everybody realises that something had to be done to try to make ends meet.

I bring to the attention of the Committee a problem confronting one section of the community in my electorate. I see the Treasurer smiling. I suppose he is sick of hearing this.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Every member has told me the same thing. I'll bet you're going to tell me about pineapples.

Mr. POWELL: If all members have told the Treasurer the same thing, they are doing no more than the job they are paid to do. And I will mention pineapples, as the clairvoyant gentleman foreshadowed.

Sir Gordon Chalk: They're awfully rough, too.

Mr. POWELL: Smooth-leaves are grown in my area, and they are very sweet. There is a very large pineapple-growing area in the Isis electorate as well as in the Hervey Bay region and the area to the south of Bundaberg. If the freight rates on pineapples are to be increased by 40 per cent—and the operative word is "if"—the pineapple growers will suffer extreme hardship. I do not intend to argue the profitability to the Railway Department of transporting pineapples. I am unable to obtain detailed figures from the department; they are extremely difficult to get. However, if the freight rates are increased by 40 per cent, the pineapple growers will find it extremely difficult to make ends meet. I hope that when the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport are calculating their freight rates, they will give this matter very serious consideration.

Over the past few years, the increases in costs to primary producers have been massive. Whereas the wage-earner has in most instances been able to cope with the rising cost of living by obtaining wage increases from the Industrial Commission, the primary producer is forced to sell his produce on the open market. He has to contend with the vagaries of the market—of supply and demand. Those of us who have anything to do with buying and selling produce know that only those primary producers who have at their disposal an organised marketing system are able to remain economically stable. I have in mind particularly the cane-growers. With the present high price of sugar, the industry is viable.

The Government should look closely at rail freights and other taxes imposed on primary producers with a view to lessening the burden on them. They cannot apply to the Industrial Commission for higher wages as their workers can and as the other people who handle their produce can. So their

plight must be looked at sympathetically by the Government. In this instance, I hope that the Treasurer will do something for the pineapple growers.

It was pleasing to note that the Government intends to establish a Public Service housing authority. Those of us who have been employed in the teaching service, the Police Department or the Railway Department and have served in country areas know the nature of the problem confronting public servants who can be transferred to positions in the country. The setting up of a Public Service housing authority is a great step forward. I am concerned, however, at the prospect of the teaching service and the Police Force being swamped by the conglomerate of the Public Service. The members of the teaching service have suffered severe hardship in comparison with public servants generally. If a Public Service housing authority is to be set up, I see no reason why a teacher housing authority should not be created or, alternatively, why within the Public Service housing authority there should not be an autonomous section catering wholly and solely for teachers.

No-one understands the problems facing a teacher in the country better than a teacher. It is absolutely pointless to have a clerk in Brisbane trying to work out the type of house most suitable for a teacher at Boulia, Dajarra or any other place in the State. It is high time that we had experts in these housing authorities and not simply a group of clerks who do not understand the particular needs peculiar to the various professions that have transients within the State. I refer not only to teachers and police but also to members of other professions subject to transfer throughout the State.

It should be remembered that a person who is transferred loses financially. No argument can be advanced to convince me that a person transferred around the State gains financially. Over a period of 20 to 25 years he transfers himself, his family and goods until he reaches the place where he will ultimately retire. Throughout the years he spends money on rent, on transfers and on travel for holidays at the coast or perhaps more distant places.

When one examines the costs incurred by a teacher who becomes a principal of a class I primary school at the age of 45 or 50, it is seen that for 20 or 25 years he has transferred himself and his family throughout the State. When his financial position at age 45 or 50 as the principal of a class I school in a coastal area of Queensland is compared with that of a class teacher who has not moved from the coast except while single, has come to the place of his choice at the age of 22 or 23, married, and bought his own home, it is seen that the class teacher at 45 or 50 is established, usually with his home paid off, whereas the principal of the school has still to buy a

house. Anybody who has had to buy a house at age 45 or 50 knows the problems. That is why I believe there should be a teacher housing authority. Only teachers understand the problems of teachers, and only police know the problems faced by transient policeman. So I sincerely hope that when the housing authority is set up, provision will be made on it for professional experts rather than clerks.

No speech from an honourable member representing the delightful electorate of Isis would be complete without reference to water conservation. As most honourable members are aware, the Isis electorate covers mainly a very rich agricultural area. The Burnett-Kolan water scheme devised some years ago is basically at a standstill through lack of finance. I have said a lot and much has been said by others, about the way to get finance for this scheme. Perhaps when we are dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply I shall have time to say something about this vital area of my electorate. The cane-growing areas around Childers, rich though they are, need water. The underground basin is not suitable for large-scale irrigation. The problem is apparent at the moment, when we are experiencing an extremely dry period. Many farms are almost drought stricken, yet not far away is a dam full of water. What a terrible shame it is—it is almost criminal—that that water is not being channelled to the cane-growing and other agricultural areas. I will be doing all that is in my power to ensure that this will be proceeded with and that this area will not be neglected by either the State or the Federal Governments. I would dearly love to see enough money advanced by both the State and Federal Governments to allow us to continue with this very vital work.

Looking further through the Budget and coming to the Estimates for the Health Department, I think back to our policy speech last year when mention was made of increasing aid to intellectually handicapped children. That is being achieved through this Budget. One group I wish to talk about was mentioned this morning in an answer to a question asked by the honourable member for Bundaberg. I refer to the Philadelphia Institute for the Advancement of Human Potential. That institute, as its name suggests, is based in Philadelphia in the United States of America. Some families from the Bundaberg area, despairing—and that is the only word to use—at the lack of help they were receiving from the traditional areas of help in Queensland, namely the Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association, the Spastic Welfare League and to a lesser extent the Queensland Government, heard about the institute and took their children to Philadelphia. The cost is astronomical. The people who run the institute have to be paid. That is quite logical. I do not think anybody should argue against that. The annual budget of the Philadelphia Institute is \$1,400,000

and \$1,000,000 is collected from the patients. Therefore, a \$400,000 per annum shortfall has to be made up. It has been reported to me that that deficit is covered by contributions from American individuals, American foundations and American trade unions.

The Australian people who have been to Philadelphia are full of praise for the work of the institute. As a teacher, I have seen some of the children who have been treated there. I must confess that I, too, am impressed by the results of their methods. I do not know that anybody doubts their methods, although the answer that was given this morning by the Minister for Health to the member for Bundaberg stated in part that after a thorough investigation over many years "there is total agreement that the institute does not offer programmes more effective than those being offered by other services in this State."

I have spoken to the Minister for Health about this. I doubt very seriously that anybody has thoroughly investigated the institute. How can an institute 8,000 or 9,000 miles away be investigated? How can anyone from the University of Queensland, sitting in his ivory tower on the bank of the Brisbane River, investigate an institute 8,000 miles away without going there? That is the question I ask this afternoon. These so-called professionals in our State have denigrated the work of the institute, they have run down its members, they have called them all sorts of things from shysters to crooks; yet they have never been to Philadelphia, so I am assured, to look at the institute, to look at the training carried on there and to look at just what is being achieved. But they have the hide to sit here in Brisbane and say, "They are a mob of crooks. They are a mob of shysters." As far as I am concerned, Mr. Miller, since they have never been there to see it, they wouldn't know!

I agree that there is doubt about the social value of having the whole family life revolve around that of one brain-damaged child in the family. In a family with a brain-damaged child often the other children—and in some cases one of the two parents—shun that child, which is very hurtful. It is heartening to see the different attitude adopted by families that start on the programme given to them by the institute. They become so involved that they again come together as a family. To me, that is a real achievement. The improvement that I personally have seen in these children is great indeed. Speaking as a teacher, I have seen some of them left alone in our own institutions, with nothing real being done for them. I have seen them enter upon the programme, and I have seen them change.

No-one can convince me that Dr. Glen Doman, who is director of the institute, is anything but a dedicated man who is trying very hard to do a good job, and it ill behoves people in Australia, who have not met him and have not investigated the institute in Philadelphia, to criticise him. It

costs \$1,700 for the evaluation of each American child. That, I emphasise, is the cost in America. A team of six experts comes to Australia, and the Australian cost of evaluation per child is \$437. Six team members travel to Australia for a stay of three or four weeks. Their fares, accommodation costs and salaries have to be paid, yet it costs Australian children only \$437.

Those figures show that no charge of impropriety can be laid at the door of the institute. The members of this team are entitled to earn a living from their work, just as we are. They are people who dedicate their lives to helping others less fortunate than themselves. Should university academics, whose own propriety at times is in doubt, criticise people who come to Australia to assist these children? It must be remembered that they could stay in Philadelphia, in which case Australian families would have to go there and incur an all-up cost of about \$10,500.

I doubt seriously whether, in the words used by the Minister this morning, the Health Department, officers of the Queensland University and the Queensland Sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association have actually and properly carried out a survey of this institute. There is only one way to do that, and that is to go to Philadelphia and spend some time there. If people wish to criticise, let them go to Philadelphia and carry out their surveys and research in America. Then let them return and tell us what they think of the institute.

My other criticism of the Budget relates to licence fees. As honourable members know, if the State depended on the licence fees payable on the alcoholic liquor that I consume, it would get nowhere. But there are others perhaps more community minded than I who spend considerable amounts of time and money in the public houses of this State and contribute a significant sum of money to the coffers of the breweries and hotel-keepers and, as a result, to the licence fees collected by the State. I have no quarrel with the increase of hotel licence fees from 6 per cent to 7 per cent, but the increase from 7 per cent on sales, not costs, to 15 per cent in licence fees for what are commonly called 2-gallon shops is incredible.

Mr. Greenwood: From 6 per cent.

Mr. POWELL: I am sorry—from 6 per cent on sales, as the honourable member for Ashgrove reminds me. What are we trying to do? Are we trying to put them out of business?

Mr. Dean: Yes.

Mr. POWELL: The honourable member for Sandgate and I drink about the same amount, and perhaps we might agree on this matter. But there are others who do not share our views, and I think that we should be looking after them.

I believe that these two-gallon shops are keeping the other public houses and licensed places honest. They are keeping the price of these commodities down. If we look at the figures presented to all of us—I think most honourable members have received them—we find that hotels and clubs, even including the new licence fees, will have a margin on a dozen 26 oz. bottles of beer of \$1.31, whereas the spirit merchants and private traders will have a margin of only 60c. Why should the hotels and clubs have a profit margin of \$1.31 while the spirit merchants are left only 60c? It is going to mean the end of most of these shops.

There is much more I would like to say about the Budget. I am hoping that when the various Estimates are discussed I will have time to speak to them, especially the Department of Tourism, because tourism has a great effect on my electorate.

To conclude I would like to quote from an editorial that appeared in the Bundaberg "News-Mail" on 31 October 1974 because it is a budgetary matter and it concerns us greatly. The editor had this to say—

"Mr. Whitlam predicts that the ailing Australian economy will grow sicker for another three months" (this is 12 months ago) "and then begin its recovery. Mr. Hawke is less optimistic, his forecast of the upturn being six months. Both are guessing, and their views are influenced more by hope than knowledge. On the other side of the political fence, Opposition spokesmen have been adopting doomsday attitudes motivated by a desire to make the Federal Government look even more helpless, in the eyes of the people, than it really is. These politicians, too, are merely guessing."

In the light of the history of the past 12 months I think it is quite obvious that the Premier was right and Mr. Whitlam was wrong.

Mr. AIKENS (Townsville South) (3.32 p.m.): These indeed are stirring times, probably the most stirring in the history of our Commonwealth; and because they are stirring times we find in Governments, in private enterprise, in the media and in various other places a lot of people not very well balanced who are running around, or should I say, flying around like wasps from a recently disturbed nest, flying off at tangents, not going anywhere, not doing anything, just kicking up a lot of noise and fuss. Like most well-balanced people, I believe that in times like these we should go to some of the philosophers, even some of the poets, men like Kipling who said—

"If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you if you can hold your faith when all men doubt you and make allowance for their doubting too."

That is the attitude I am going to adopt in my speech on this Budget today, a very important Budget brought down under terrific

circumstances by our Treasurer, brought down at a time when this country is headed for ruin and disaster unless something drastic is done and done very quickly.

What has happened to this country of ours? We are getting quite a lot of conjecture on the possibility of a Federal election in the near future. The media are going absolutely berserk. They are indulging in all sorts of speculation without any examination at all, without any ratiocination. Anybody, even a nut, and there are quite a lot of nuts in the world today, can rush into the Press, get on the television, speak over the radio and give his or her version as to whether or not there should be a Federal election in the very near future. It is amazing that the media, which claim, of course, to be in a position to set a standard for other people, do not know where they are going. Full of lies, full of distortions, full of hyperbole, slander and scandal—anything will do the media today, whipping up the people in these troublous times.

I heard on a television programme recently that four eminent lawyers had expressed the opinion that it was unconstitutional, unethical, and so on, to hold a Federal election at present because, in their view, the Federal Government—the Whitlam Government—should be allowed, by some rule about which I do not know anything, to run its full term. I listened a little more avidly and found that these four eminent lawyers are professors of law at various universities. Good God! Who would take any notice of any professor at any university on any subject, particularly on the subject of law, and more particularly on the subject of elections as they affect the people?

Every time I hear of a professor being quoted as an expert to tell the ordinary intelligent people in the community what they should do, I remember the time that I went out to the University of Queensland—and I have been there many times—and I met a professor. We talked as we walked across the lawn on the campus and he said, "How are you going? I said, "I am going all right." We had a general conversation, mostly inanities—I had to get down to inanities to make him understand what I was talking about—and I said, "I suppose I had better let you go to have your lunch." Quite seriously he said, "Which way was I going when you stopped me to talk to me?" I said, "You were going that way." He said, "Well in that case I have had my lunch." We have these people—all sorts of queer characters—invited by the media to pontificate on whether or not there should be an almost immediate Federal election.

Who is to judge whether or not there should be a Federal election? What is to be taken into consideration in deciding whether an election should be held now or at the end of the Whitlam Government's three-year term? Let us not forget this fact, Mr. Miller: that when we are talking about the Government of Australia, if we

are honest, if we know anything about the Government and about the Constitution of Australia, we are not talking only about the House of Representatives. If one looks at the Constitution of Australia, one finds that the Parliament of Australia is the House of Representatives and the Senate. The two Houses are the Parliament of Australia, just as when this Parliament was a bicameral institution, both Houses of this Parliament were the Parliament of Queensland. Yet everything is being concentrated on the idea—it is, of course, being fed to the people of Australia by the media and A.L.P.-inclined professors—that only the House of Representatives is the Parliament of Australia.

An election is a contract similar to an ordinary business contract, a marriage contract, or any other contract. Consequently, it imposes certain obligations on those who are parties to the contract. If either of those parties breaks the contract or does anything that brings the contract into disrepute, the other side has the right to revoke the contract, and that is all there is to it. All this talk about an election at the present time being unethical, unconstitutional and unconventional is pure, unadulterated bunk. The only thing that matters today is that the Whitlam Government, in 1972 and again in 1974, by its avowed and expressed policy, by the promises and pledges it made to the people, entered into a contract, not with the brumby lawyers from the universities but with the people of Australia. Parsons were even brought onto television and asked whether there should be an election at the present time or whether the Whitlam Government should be allowed to run its full term. I do not know whether priests of the oldest-established church were brought in or whether muezzins from the Mohammedan faith were brought in; I do not know who was brought in. That does not matter. The only thing that matters is that a contract was entered into between the Whitlam Government and the great mass of the people of Australia.

Mr. Hanson: Did you know the Farmers Federation recommended against an election?

Mr. AIKENS: Never heard of them. If I had I certainly wouldn't be influenced by them.

I do not represent any particular section. I represent the great mass of useful people of Queensland and Australia—those who work for this country; those who are proud of it; those who are prepared to do anything to keep this country afloat and those who are prepared to fight all those who want to bring this country down into the depths of destitution and despair, as the Whitlam Government is doing.

Mr. Hanson: In all my life I have never seen so many blokes in the street with \$20 bills.

Mr. AIKENS: I don't know where they get them from, unless they are in the Khemlani graft or are members of the A.L.P. I would not be surprised at seeing prominent A.L.P. members with a pocketful of \$20 bills, because the graft is floating around like snow in the Northern Hemisphere in the winter.

The point is that the contract was between the Whitlam Government and the people. The people are the only ones who should decide whether or not there should be an election. On television last night I saw someone rushing about with a microphone and asking questions of people in the street. Most of them would have been people who do not want to answer the type of question that was being asked. They do not want to come out in the open in that way. The great mass of Australian people like to preserve in their own mind and heart the secrecy of their political convictions. People who would not lie about any other subject under the sun will glibly lie about how they are going to vote and what their political affiliations are. If you ask them their political affiliations, they think, or say quite frankly, "That's no business of yours."

What have we had from the Whitlam Government since it entered into a contract with the Australian people in 1972 and again in 1974? We have had lies, evasion, deceit, contempt for the people, corruption and graft. That is all it has given as a result of the confidence the Australian people showed in it. No Government in the history of the United States of America—and it has a record for rotten and corrupt government—has ever got down to the depths of the Whitlam Government, not even the infamous Grant Government. That was even more infamous than the Harding Government and the Nixon Government. Yet people will say that it is unconstitutional, unethical and a breach of convention if another election is held in order to ask the Australian people if they are satisfied with that particular form of government.

Whitlam is like an old harpy—I have seen a few of them in my day—leaving a trail of empty gin bottles as she staggers along from one flophouse to another. Everywhere Whitlam goes he drops an empty gin bottle in the form of a broken promise or a dumped colleague. How many colleagues has Whitlam dumped or stabbed in the back since he became Prime Minister? I know that there are certain ups and downs in the political game; I know that people must be sacrificed in all sorts of interest. Let us have a look at half a dozen of them. Crean was the man who was trained for and became the first A.L.P. Treasurer for the Commonwealth Government since the days of Chifley. He was doing a very good job, but he was unceremoniously and callously dumped from the Treasurership by Mr. Whitlam because he told the truth. He said to Whitlam, "You're spending too much. You're not getting enough in. The till is running dry.

Sooner or later disaster is going to hit this country." So Whitlam dumped him unceremoniously, brutally and callously, and then laughed at it.

Mr. Hanson: Menzies dumped Artie Fadden.

Mr. AIKENS: I am not talking about Menzies. I could tell this Committee about some of the men dumped by A.L.P. leaders in this State. I won't go back as far as Artie Fadden. I could tell the Committee about a man named Houston who was stabbed in the back.

Mr. Hanson: Joh is ready to dump three or four now.

Mr. AIKENS: The honourable member for Port Curtis is himself tottering on the brink. Any time now he will be pushed over the verge.

Mr. Hanson: Never fear, Marty's here.

Mr. AIKENS: "Marty" is here only because he is probably the wealthiest man ever to enter this Parliament. The Labor Party is not game to toss him, because it knows he could hold his seat by the power of his own wealth. And he knows it, too.

Next on the list was Crean's successor, Jim Cairns—Junie Morosi's employer. (Incidentally, I think he is still Junie's employer.) And now Rex Connor has been thrown to the wolves. Earlier, Cope, the Speaker in the Federal House, was stabbed in the back. These are all men whose names begin with the letter "C". I could go through almost the whole alphabet selecting names of men who were stabbed in the back and dumped by Whitlam.

Of all the brutally callous things that have been done by political leaders in the history of politics in the British Commonwealth of Nations, Whitlam's dumping of the former Federal Speaker, Mr. Cope, was perhaps the dirtiest and foulest of all. Cope was Whitlam's friend from way back. He stuck to Whitlam through thick and thin. He would have gladly given his life for Gough Whitlam. Yet, in spite of that, one night—no doubt under the influence of a couple of noggins—when things were going wrong for Gough Whitlam he, instead of saying one or two words to save Cope, put him in such a position as to give him no alternative to resigning. He was forced to resign because he had been denigrated, insulted and humiliated by the very man he venerated—Gough Whitlam. Nothing lower than that has happened in the Parliaments of Australia.

Look at what happened to Harradine. I know that the honourable member for Port Curtis will take a while to get his breath back after this one, because he is in the same corner as Harradine. When Harradine first ran into trouble, Gough Whitlam resigned from the position of leader of the A.L.P. and took his stand beside Harradine. Luckily he survived and by a vote of 38 to 25 was

re-elected as leader of the A.L.P. But the other day, when Harradine struck the same trouble, Gough threw him to the wolves.

Some of the dumpings by Gough have been absolutely putrid. No man in the history of politics in the British Commonwealth of Nations has acted in a more putrid, more foul and filthier manner than Whitlam in stabbing his mates in the back and dumping them.

We have heard of the thick hide of a pachyderm and the rhinoceros. Their hides are wafer thin compared with that of Gough Whitlam. Honourable members will recall that last December the Premier of Queensland, egged on by the Treasurer (I think he can take credit for that), decided to go to the polls. Saturday, 7 December, was a day of destiny for Queensland. Gough Whitlam said, "I will go up to Queensland and campaign for the Labor Party. I will convince the people of Queensland that the A.L.P. is their only hope of political salvation." At that time in this Chamber I said—it is recorded in "Hansard"—that if the Premier went to the polls then, the A.L.P. would be lucky to win 20 seats. However, the moment I heard that Gough Whitlam was coming up to fight the campaign for the A.L.P. I predicted that the A.L.P. would be lucky to win any seats at all. But no-one could tell Gough Whitlam that.

Have a look at this frayed and desiccated remnant of a once-great party in this House. I have been here long enough to remember that at one time the Labor Party was a party to be respected and to be proud of. In fact, for many years I was happy to belong to it. Look at the members of that party today! They are like a half dozen "Old Diggers" sitting on a form outside the Grand Hotel in Gladstone waiting for the honourable member for Port Curtis to open the front doors. There are five of them in the Chamber now. Politically, they look like five fly-blown old ewes. That is all that Gough Whitlam could do for the A.L.P. in Queensland.

And he did not learn his lesson even from that. He decided to go down and conduct the Bass campaign on behalf of the A.L.P. The Bass seat should never have been lost to the A.L.P. It was not an industrial seat like some of the seats in Queensland. It was a solid farming and business community. But Gough had to go down with his bluff, his bluster, his lies, his dissimulation, his evasion and his deceit. What happened in Bass? The result was even worse for the A.L.P. than what happened in Queensland! Yet he still has not learnt his lesson. He still thinks he is celestially begotten; he still thinks that he is the anointed of God as far as the A.L.P. is concerned.

I can understand the look of chagrin on the face of the Leader of the Opposition, who is looking at me and listening to me because, when all is said and done, politically speaking, he is no fool. If a Federal election were held, I guarantee that the Leader of

the Opposition would not campaign in Queensland. He would go for his life. He would probably announce that he had received a cablegram from Chou En-lai saying that the big grey Murray bull had Weil's disease or something like that and that he was needed back in China in his white coat to render what assistance he could. He certainly would not associate himself with Whitlam. He knows, as we all know, that electorally, at the present time, Whitlam is "the kiss of death". Anyone who relies on Whitlam is committing political suicide.

When we think, talk about or study a man, we cast our minds about to see if there is anyone else like him. There is another "Whitlam" who is, and has been for some time, in the spotlight. I refer to General Amin of Uganda. He and Gough Whitlam, were it not for the different pigmentation of their skins, could pass for twins. They are both big men physically and they are both rather handsome.

Mr. Casey: Would you say that Mr. Whitlam is not quite as colourful?

Mr. AIKENS: Not quite. I made a remark about the pigmentation of their skins. He is certainly not the showman that General Amin is; nevertheless, he tries his best.

Those two men are as alike as peas in a pod in their mentality and in their attitude to the ordinary, decent people. Both of them are obsessed with one idea—both of them hate white people. Whitlam has shown us in Australia how much he hates the white people. We know how much he hates them. Both Whitlam and General Amin are pledged to one object, that is, to get the people of their own country under arms to be sent into white-controlled nations such as South Africa and Rhodesia to slaughter the white women, men and children in the interests of the coloured people of those countries. They have both expressed that view. We are shocked to read or hear it; nevertheless, both of them are pledged to the extermination of the whites in South Africa and Rhodesia, and both of them are pledged to that extermination for one reason only, namely, that South Africa and Rhodesia are the two strongest anti-Communist countries in the world today.

Because they are strong anti-Communist countries they have earned the undying enmity of Gough Whitlam and his political blood brother, General Amin. They have another similarity. Both of them hate, with an undying hate, the man on the land, the man who earns his living from the land as a farmer, grazier, pastoralist or miner. These two men will not realise that all wealth comes from the soil. They won't study history. They won't talk to people who know anything about it. They believe that all they have to do is exploit and fleece the man on the land in the interests of the spongers and the loafers in the big cities in the hope that they will vote for them.

They have not learned the lesson of the Roman Empire, for instance. We are told that the Roman Empire fell before the invading forces of the Goths, the Huns and the Vandals because of the decline in the morals of that Empire. Doubtless that had something to do with it, but the Roman Empire really fell because for years and years the emperors of Rome, on a policy of what they called bread and circuses, got all the grain from the crops in North Africa, brought it across to Rome and fed the Roman populace so that the Romans would keep them in power. As it went on, the people in North Africa, who produced all the food, all the grain and all the material wealth, got tired of this—to use the vernacular, they got jack of it—and they went to Rome to live, too, to be in the cut-up. It was not long before everybody was taking out of the tin and nobody was putting anything into it. So the Roman Empire was a ripe plum to fall into the lap of the Goths and the Huns and the Vandals.

So it is in Australia today. Anyone who wants to earn anything, anyone who wants to do anything or anyone who wants to produce anything for the good and welfare of the country is regarded by the Whitlam A.L.P. Government as some sort of public enemy. Consequently, all people who earn a living from the land are hated, persecuted and sometimes reviled and defiled. Up in the North we have felt it very keenly indeed, because North Queensland probably produces, man for man, more wealth than any other part of Australia. Crops, grain, minerals and coal—everything is produced there. The rest of Australia benefits from the primary production in Northern Queensland.

The first thing that the Whitlam Government did to cripple the man on the land was to fiddle with the Australian currency. By fiddling with the Australian currency, of course, Whitlam made millions of dollars profit for the big financiers. I have no doubt that, in accordance with their policy of graft, graft and still more graft, quite a lot of A.L.P. politicians in Australia—and even the minor ones in Queensland—profited personally from the money that was circulated by the grafters and by the men who made money out of the fluctuations of the Australian currency engineered by Whitlam.

North Queensland has many industries, but our two biggest are Mount Isa Mines and the remarkable sugar industry. What sort of a state has this country come to when the general manager of MIM Holdings Ltd. (Sir James Foots) comes out openly—something that has never been done in all the years since Mt. Isa was first established—and launches a vicious philippic on the Whitlam Government. He said, "This Government is crippling Mount Isa Mines. This Government is stifling mineral exploitation.

It is doing everything it possibly can to crush the very fount of wealth in North Queensland." We know that to be true.

We in Townsville have a very big copper refinery run by MIM Holdings, employing hundreds of men and providing millions of dollars in wages for Townsville people and others in the North. MIM intended establishing a zinc refinery in North Queensland. Sir James Foots had to announce the other day that, because of the activities and the political philosophies of the Whitlam Government—because of the hatred of the Whitlam Government for anyone and everyone who earned a living from the land, even indirectly—the zinc refinery has to go down the drain. It has been brushed aside and will not be considered, I suppose, until things get a little better.

Last year MIM Holdings itself made a profit. It pays the best wages in Australia. It gives its workers the best conditions in Australia. It is one of the financial and economic bulwarks of North Queensland, yet it is being stifled and strangled by the policies of the Whitlam Government. Although Mount Isa Mines made an over-all profit—not anywhere near as much as it made previously; nowhere near as much as it should make on the capital it has invested—the juggling with the Australian currency last year cost Mount Isa Mines \$17,000,000. That is \$17,000,000 that Mount Isa Mines did not have last year to circulate in North Queensland among North Queensland businessmen and workers.

The great sugar industry, another of the economic and financial bulwarks of North Queensland, is just floating. As a matter of fact, it is profiting because there has been a shortfall of sugar overseas and there is a high overseas price for sugar. Yet this great industry, whilst it made a profit last year and paid increased wages to all its workers, has, by reason of the Whitlam Government's juggling with the currency, lost \$13,000,000. Adding the two losses together that meant \$30,000,000 less for circulation among the people of North Queensland because the Whitlam Government juggled the currency of Australia in the interests of big financiers overseas, who make sure that they repay the Whitlam Government in a tangible way for what has been done for them.

The fate of the phosphate deposits will be just the same. With the Whitlam Government in power, it is merely conjecture how long the development of the phosphate deposit will continue to grow—or, should I say, go.

I have another note in my hand and, seeing that it is before me, I shall develop it. Have honourable members heard of Fabian Sweeney? By the grace of Whitlam and God, Fabian Sweeney was the A.L.P.'s Messiah in North Queensland in 1972. He was going to win the seat of Herbert for the A.L.P. from Duke Bonnett. He campaigned

for 12 months and, because he is a wealthy man, as many A.L.P. members are (he would be only a pauper, of course, compared with the honourable member for Port Curtis), he spent thousands of dollars from his own pocket on his campaign. The A.L.P. spent even more. Gough Whitlam made several trips to North Queensland and to Townsville, which is the centre of the Herbert electorate, to ensure Fabian Sweeney's return. Consequently I had to come into the issue. I could not see a man such as Fabian Sweeney being elected to represent the Herbert electorate, so I made another of my famous telecasts. This one was entitled, "Cobwebs over the North." I made a very sound political prognostication of what would happen to North Queensland if the Whitlam Government was returned. It was in fact returned in 1972, and we have had, and still have, cobwebs over the North.

Would honourable members like to know where Fabian Sweeney is today? I know the honourable member for Port Curtis is anxious to hear where he is. Today he is one of the leading officials in the Australian Embassy in Bangkok. Do not ask me what he is doing there, but he is on about \$27,000 a year and is living in a palace, with all the lurks and perks attached to such offices. He made a statement to the northern Press the other day when he was asked how he was going to educate his children in Bangkok. He said, "Don't worry about that. The Whitlam Government flies the children of all members of its embassy staff back to Australia each year. It even brings them home for holidays, too. It pays all their education expenses at any high-ranking college that their parents select." All of that is paid out of the pockets of the Australian taxpayers. That explains where our old mate Fabian Sweeney is at the moment. I could tell the Committee where some of the others are, but I do not have time. No mention will be made of these things by all the A.L.P. toadies, stooges and heelers in Queensland.

There is a particularly unpleasant and odious person in Townsville named John Rockett. He is an organiser, or some such officer, of the Queensland Teachers' Union. In today's "Townsville Daily Bulletin" he advocates the right of the Teachers' Union to demand that some teachers lose \$9.75 a fortnight from their pay. Sure enough, they are losing it. John Rockett is the A.L.P. candidate for the Herbert electorate at the next election. But one will not hear John Rockett mention anything about the things that I have said. One will not hear the "bearded lady", Alderman Reynolds, saying anything about them. One will not hear old "Sweatrag" Wilson, my perennial opponent in State elections, mentioning anything about them. One will not hear Margaret Reynolds—no relation to Alderman Mike Reynolds but a good old A.L.P.

stooge and a member of the Women's Electoral Lobby—mentioning anything about these things. They are all abysmally silent because they know that the moment they open their mouth someone will put a foot in it for them, and we have seen all of these dumpings and other things.

Just consider for a moment the \$20,000,000 or so that the Whitlam Government has made available for art grants. Good God! Have honourable members seen some of the pictures? There was a picture hanging in the City Hall near the Anzac Memorial in Townsville which won \$1,400 first prize. I do not want to be vulgar—I am never vulgar—and I do not want to be coarse, but when I looked at it I thought it was a door from a back-yard la-la that had been brought in and put on the wall. It was covered with sort of, shall we say, reddish wall paint with a diagonal thin green line across it. What it was supposed to represent I would not know, but, as I say, it looked like a la-la door from an old thunderbox in the back yard.

Mr. Casey: It is probably your sense of smell that made you think that.

Mr. AIKENS: If it was painted by an A.L.P. man there would be a smell; that's for sure. That is the sort of thing that is going on. Whitlam can find all the money in the world for that but he cannot find money for any useful project.

We have the biggest scandal of all, the Khemlani scandal. Khemlani, of course, is one of the shadiest characters in the financial world today but he was persona grata with Mr. Connor, with Dr. Cairns, with Whitlam—with them all. He was going to raise \$4,000 million. Over the radio at lunch-time today, I heard Mr. Cameron pay high compliments to Mr. Khemlani for trying to raise this \$4,000 million and saying it would have been a great thing for Australia if he could have raised it. But what no-one mentioned—and I don't know why Fraser and some of these fellows did not get hold of this—was that of this \$4,000 million an amount of \$160,000,000 was to be paid in commission, to Khemlani in the first instance no doubt; but what was going to be the cut-up after Khemlani got his \$160,000,000?

I know what the A.L.P. do. I know they are running true to form. I remember my early days in this Parliament. I will admit that our pay was very miserly; it was hard to exist on it. But when I was elected in 1944, the A.L.P. fellows came up to me and they gave me a list of what I had to charge for services rendered. I had to charge 50 quid—and quids were quids in those days—for obtaining a Golden Casket licence for someone, 10 quid for getting a telephone, 25 quid for getting a fellow made a justice of the peace, two guineas for witnessing an application for an old-age pension as a justice of the peace and so on. Believe you me, I was so poor in those days that my

fingers itched to take it, but I did not because I thought, "Well, if ever you take a present or money from somebody, then of course that fellow ties a knot in your tongue". I knew that one day I might want to say something about somebody and if I had accepted money, a present or any consideration from him or her, then I would not be able to do it.

The people today are eager for an election. I don't care what the professors or the prelates or anybody else says; I know what the people are saying because, unlike members of the A.L.P., I mix with them. I talk to them and they talk to me, and they want an opportunity to say, "Well, Whitlam, we've given you a go since 1972. You've sold us down the river. We want an opportunity to express our opinion of you and, if we feel like it, to elect another Government in your place." I think that is the only thing the Federal Opposition should consider. That is the only thing Mr. Fraser should consider. And let me say this—and I think I can claim to have some eminence as a political prognosticator, as a man who knows the political game—if Fraser does not move shortly, he will miss the bus. The people of Australia are getting sick and tired of his vacillation. They are saying to him, "Look, give us a break; give us a go. Let us tell Whitlam what we think of him at the ballot-boxes."

Fraser is ducking and diving. I suppose he has to, because when all is said and done, when we talk about the treachery that exists within the A.L.P.—and it reeks of treachery, just as it reeks of corruption; the Whitlam Government was conceived in corruption, was born in corruption, lives in corruption, and will die awfully and horribly in corruption—there is also a fair amount of treachery in the Liberal Party. The moment that Fraser says anything about an election, you can bet your bottom dollar, Mr. Miller, that very shortly after that, Jim Killen will come out and make a statement that will blow Fraser to the four winds of heaven and make all the A.L.P. leaders puff out their chests and grin from ear to ear. It will not be long before he is followed by Don Chipp, who will also make a statement giving the A.L.P. heart. Yet these two men are supposed to be top-rankers in the Liberal Party today. There are other weaklings who are just as job-conscious as they are.

I do not want to misjudge the man, but I think I read in today's "Telegraph" that Senator Bonner, of all people, is a little bit dicky about whether an election should be forced. He does not think it is constitutional; he does not think it is ethical. Good God! What about the people of Australia? They want it.

I say to members of the Liberal Party that I am very disappointed in them. When all is said and done, the A.L.P. is beating them to the punch every day. Pick up the newspapers, Mr. Miller, and you will read

letters in the correspondence columns. The ordinary people read those letters, you know. One does not see any letters from Liberal politicians or from Liberal supporters. One sees plenty from A.L.P. members and from A.L.P. toadies and supporters and stooges. Even though they are writing under an assumed name—as the late Nugget Jessen said, even if they use a "unanimous" name—they are in the columns of the newspapers. Every Sunday one sees columns of letters in the newspapers in which Labor supporters criticise Fraser, criticise "Old Joh", as they call him, criticise Chalkie, criticise the other side, give a puff for Whitlam and give a puff for Tommy Burns. They hop in.

These things are organised. I was in the A.L.P. I know it; I used to help to do it. When an election comes along, two Committees are elected. First a Press committee is elected, and then a radio open-line committee is elected. Quite a lot of people are prepared to write letters to the Press. The letters are just given to them and they add their name to them and send them in. Pure propaganda piffle, but nevertheless it goes over.

Anyone who hears one of the open-line programmes during an election campaign must vomit at the same old nasal whinge and tone. The same old Australian Labor Partyites have been selected in every town in which there is a radio station, and they go onto open-line programmes and "paddle the canoe" for the A.L.P. Do the Liberals do it? Oh, no! When all is said and done, the Liberals won't get down to that level. Fair go! It isn't cricket! While they are worrying about the ethics, while it isn't cricket for them, the A.L.P. is leaving them for dead.

I say to some of the new Liberals who seem to be eager—they may be only eager with their tongues; I don't know—"If you don't get going and fight the A.L.P. with the same weapons it is fighting you with, they will do you like a dinner." The A.L.P. doesn't get away with it up in Townsville. No siree! We don't give the A.L.P. an inch to move in. The moment they move, we slap them down. Whether they are W.E.L., A.L.P., Communists, university students or any other group of A.L.P. stooges and toadies, we slap them down as soon as they move, and more often than not we beat them to the punch.

But is that done in the other provincial cities? I don't know what is done in Ipswich, Rockhampton or Cairns, but I know that it is not done in Brisbane. The Liberals are too dignified to do it. They are in a political game, but they are too dignified to fight according to the rules. I say to them, "Come up to Townsville and we will show you how to fight the A.L.P." We have them there, metaphorically speaking, with the soles off their boots.

Mr. Frawley: I thought you'd got rid of most of them.

Mr. AIKENS: We have got rid of most of them. We have quietened all of them. Have the Liberals got rid of them in Brisbane? Have they quietened them all here? Not on your life! Take the appointment of Senator Field and all the filth, smut, scandal and slander with which A.L.P. stooges filled the correspondents' column of "The Courier-Mail" every day. Did any Government members reply to them? Not on your life! "It would be too undignified, old boy. We couldn't do that, old boy, could we? Oh, no, no, no!" I hopped in. I said something about my attitude to Field. It was very well received and "The Courier-Mail" headlined my letter. I did not read any letter from any Liberal supporter. I mentioned it to some of the Young Liberals and said, "Don't you think you had better buy into this fight?" I was told, "Dear, oh dear, old fellow! Look here, old fellow, we can't do that. The old school tie, you know." That's it!

The A.L.P. stooges are doing the Liberals like a dinner because the Liberals will not realise that the people who win or lose elections, the people who elect or reject Governments, are not their committee supporters, not their ticket-holders, not the nice people with top hats and cravats, but the ordinary people who go to work every day in an office, shop or somewhere else. And they are the people who really matter. The average Liberal politician—down here, anyway—regards them as less than the dust.

The Whitlam Government knows that it has a pretty sound electoral base. It has been buying votes for quite some time. It bought the votes of the Commonwealth civil servants; it has the votes, of course, of the fanatical A.L.P. supporters; it bought the votes of the Aborigines; it bought the votes of the university academics and university students; it bought the votes of certain pensioners, particularly T.P.I. pensioners—not that there are many of those.

I am going to say something that no other honourable member would have the guts to say. I have said it on the public platform many times. If the Press are going to report me, I ask that in all decency they report all I say and not just a bit of it. There are many T.P.I. pensioners who deserve every cent that they get—perhaps more. At the other end of the scale there are more bludgers on the T.P.I. pension that on all other forms of pension combined. I know T.P.I. pensioners who are alcoholics. Alcoholism is a war wound according to the Whitlam Government. According to the Whitlam Government, if a person is an alcoholic he is suffering from a war wound. If he has acute neurosis, he is suffering from a war wound.

I know a man who murdered his father many years ago near the Boggo Road gaol. Later, that started to worry him—a guilty conscience, or delayed action. He made a pest of himself to everyone else and then he came to see me. I even got his depositions

from the Crown Law Office so that he could see them. After he had put on an awful turn, I said, "What are you doing for a living?" He said, "I T.P.I., T.P.I., T.P.I." I said, "How did you get a T.P.I. pension? Did you go to the war?" He said, "No, I never went to war; I never went to war; I never went to war. Walked round the oil tanks, oil tanks, oil tanks, oil tanks with wooden gun, wooden gun, round the oil tanks." I said, "And you're on a T.P.I. pension?" He said, "Yes." I said, "You're on a T.P.I. pension for what?" He said, "Neurosis." I said, "Neurosis because you murdered your father 25 or 30 years ago."

That is only one case, but there are many others I could cite. I could refer to one member of the Committee who was a member of a T.P.I. tribunal. One fellow was granted a T.P.I. pension and it was later discovered that he was a deserter. He deserted years before the war ended and stayed as a deserter for years afterwards. Despite the fact that he was a deserter, when he finally came out of the scrub he was granted a T.P.I. pension.

Those are only two instances. Some T.P.I. pensioners are genuine cases that deserve every cent they are getting. It is getting a bigger racket in Australia than the deserted-wife racket. Many deserted wives are genuine and deserve every cent they are getting. If honourable members get around their electorates and talk to the people, I challenge them to deny the existence of cases similar to the one I am about to mention. I refer to a deserted wife with three or four kiddies in the front room. She is getting a deserted wife's pension and an allowance for the kiddies. Her boyfriend in a good job and earning a big wage is sleeping in the back room and maintaining the woman in the front room. When belated action was taken against the woman in those circumstances, what happened? There was a demonstration by 20 or 30 scruffy university students. The then Minister for Social Security, Mr. Hayden—now the Federal Treasurer—said, "Oh, we don't want any demonstrations. We don't want to lose any votes, so we will give her back her full pension."

I revert to the slogan of the A.L.P. in 1972—"It's time." It's time the people of Australia were given an opportunity to pass judgment at the polls on the shocking things that have been done by the Whitlam Government; it's time they were given an opportunity to express an opinion at the polls on all the lies, deceit, crookedness and corruption of the Whitlam Government; and it's time they were given an opportunity to tell the Whitlam Government what they think of the road this nation is taking towards disaster, destruction and bankruptcy.

It is all very well for the pedants, the university professors, the starry-eyed men wearing the cloth of God and the theorists to tell us it is unethical and unconstitutional

to force a Federal election. I am not interested in any opinions other than those expressed by what I would term the useful people. The workers and the farmers—the useful people—are the ones who made this nation as great as it is today; they are the ones who went overseas and defended this nation against oppression; they are the ones who shed their blood and poured out their sweat in unending torrents to make this country what it is; and they are the ones who fought to rear their families and educate them. They are the very bed-rock of civilisation in Australia. They are the people I am concerned about, and they are the ones who are demanding that they be given an opportunity to vote at an election to determine whether or not Whitlam should go back or be thrown out where he belongs, on the electoral scrap-heap, dust heap or garbage dump—call it what you like. Like me, the dinky-die people of Australia are sick and tired of the vacillation, the squeamishness and cowardice of those who will not force the Whitlam Government to the people.

Mr. HARTWIG (Callide) (4.24 p.m.): Having heard the remarks of the member who has just resumed his seat, I wonder who members will be able to get into when the Whitlam Government is thrown out of power in a couple of months' time. The member for Townsville South quite rightly drew attention to certain actions of the Federal Government that indirectly forced our Treasurer to bring down certain nasty measures in his Budget.

The Budget reflects the current sound economy of the State, which is due largely to the fact that over the past 19 years it has been governed by a National-Liberal Government, one that has rejected many of the socialist schemes that the Labor Government in Canberra has endeavoured to thrust upon it.

The Budget provides for receipts estimated at \$1,394,422,000 and for expenditure estimated to be \$1,399,973,000, or a deficit of \$5,500,000. When we consider what is happening in other places, we realise how sound our economy is. In the Federal sphere, after only two months of the financial year, 40 per cent of the estimated deficit has been reached. The Federal Budget was presented by the third Treasurer in three years—Crean, Cairns and now Hayden.

The rate of increase in Queensland's population has been encouraged by the Government's decentralisation policies, and is almost double that of Australia as a whole. In 1974-75 our Treasurer budgeted for a 15 per cent increase in costs, and one would think that normally that provision would be adequate. However, despite the fact that he set aside \$93,418,000 to meet increased wages and salaries, there was a shortfall of about \$13,377,000. The position was aggravated by events in Canberra, with the Labor Party in the national sphere maintaining inflation at 22 per cent. We now have a pool or army of unemployed of 300,000.

Queenslanders, naturally, have been hit to leg (to use a cricket term) by Hayden's Budget, or perhaps I should call it "The Cairns Crucifixion". The Canberra Budget had a distinct impact on Queensland's finances. The so-called working man's party taxed non-essential items such as beer, spirits, cigarettes and tobacco. It increased postal charges and the tax on fuel. In fact fuel costs have increased by about 50 per cent in the last three years. It also imposed an export tax of \$6 a tonne on high quality coal exported from Queensland. Thus the Queensland Government was not in a position to gain further revenue from Queensland's own resources.

Estimated coal royalties for 1975-76 amount to \$43,750,000. The \$6 a tonne export levy imposed by Mr. Connor—the late Mr. Connor, so far as his political history goes—has so far cost the State of Queensland \$3,000,000, and next year it will cost \$5,000,000 for the full year.

The good budgetary news for the Callide electorate is that construction of a 36-bed hospital at Yeppoon will commence this financial year. The over-all cost of this long-awaited facility (for which I have fought hard since entering Parliament) will be well in excess of \$1,000,000.

The Budget contains another good provision that many graziers' associations and other organisations have striven for, namely, the exemption from death duty on estates passing from husband to wife and from wife to husband. That surely must be welcomed by all Queenslanders. Over many years death duty has led to the disposal of property, after a spouse, perhaps the second or third generation of a family, has worked all of his life-time to build up the asset. With this reform, Queensland has given a great lead to other States in the Commonwealth. The decision will cost the State some \$5,000,000 annually in lost revenue.

The reduction of road transport fees by one-third this year, with complete elimination after three years, will eventually cost the State Government \$8,000,000 per annum. That, too, is something that the National Party has fought for. We have fought very hard to obtain some relief from road tax, and I am pleased to see that it is to be eliminated altogether over a three-year period.

The raised level for exemption from payroll tax will be of great assistance to the small businessman. The exemption figure has been doubled from \$20,800 to \$41,600 per annum, and there will be a tapering off for pay-rolls of between \$41,600 and \$72,800.

Once again—and I suppose rightly so—education has taken the largest slice of the cake. The department's spending will increase by 42.8 per cent from \$230,000,000 to some \$329,000,000. Country people will welcome the 50 per cent increase in the remote area allowance for children in isolated areas as from the beginning of the 1976

school year. The 33½ per cent increase in the rates paid to school transport operators is very good news. That is a vital and necessary step if we are to retain the services of the bus operators and thus have our country children transported to schools.

Other than that, how does the Budget affect my own electorate in Central Queensland? The worst aspect of the Budget is the proposed average increase of 40 per cent in rail freights. First, I point out that I sympathise with the Treasurer, since Mr. Hayden so harshly blocked many avenues from which the State could have obtained increased revenue. Had those avenues been open to him, he would not have been compelled to impose a vicious increase in rail freights on the rural sector and business people in outlying areas. Unfortunately, as Queensland is such a vast State, we depend greatly upon transport, whether it be road, rail or air. It would just not be possible to live were it not for adequate communication and transport. I do not and cannot agree that at the present time the argument can be used that, because rail freights have not been increased for eight or nine years, that is sufficient excuse or justification for increasing them by 40 per cent now.

The Commonwealth Government has given people in the rural areas a terrible hammering over the last three years. It has denied them practically every type of tax incentive. It has eliminated subsidies for superphosphate and butter. It has crucified country people by reducing mail services and by increasing postal and telegraphic charges. As a member representing a country electorate, I am worried that I have to come here and defend the people whom I represent. I have been a "little" man all my life, and I know what it is to struggle. The primary producers of this State just cannot take any more, particularly at the present time.

I now wish to deal with the position of pineapple growers at Yeppoon. The pineapple industry is not particularly viable even when compared with the grain industry, in which prices over recent years have shown some increases. On pineapples sent to the Northgate cannery over the last two years, there has been an increase in returns to the growers of only 13 per cent. At present the grower is paying approximately \$17.24 a ton to send his pineapples to the Northgate cannery. It should be remembered that the pineapple industry is wholly dependent upon rail transport for delivery of the product. Although grain and cattle can be moved by alternative means of transport, the pineapple grower can avail himself of other means of transport only when there is a railway strike. His product must be marketed almost exclusively by rail. In addition, the pineapple grower has to pay for the return of his empty crates. As well as having to pay increased freight on the downward passage of his product, he is committed to meet an increase on the return of his crates.

I have had a meeting with the registered pineapple growers of Yeppoon who, I might mention, number only 89, and I should like to present a few figures to the Committee. In 1974-75, Yeppoon pineapple growers, on pines forwarded to the factory, paid \$220,000 in freight on 18,264 bins. On market pines, in 12,000 cartons, \$90,000 freight was paid. To grow a crop of pineapples, growers are heavily dependent upon the inward freighting of such items as superphosphate, fertilisers and other chemicals, and this cost is estimated at another \$26,000. It is thus seen that 89 growers have committed themselves to freight costs amounting to \$336,000 over the last 12 months.

I shall mention some of the other costs associated with this industry. Thanks to the Whitlam Government, the cost of superphosphate increased by 108 per cent in the last two years. The cost of potash increased by 103 per cent, and the cost of sulphate of ammonia increased by 100 per cent.

Mr. Jensen: Why don't you tell the truth?

Mr. HARTWIG: Wages increased by 77 per cent, and bulk pineapple bins by 133½ per cent. Lindane chemicals increased in price by 250 per cent.

Mr. Jensen: Who wrote that for you?

Mr. HARTWIG: For the benefit of the honourable member for Bundaberg, I say that I come into this Chamber with my own information, which is authentic. The honourable member could well take a leaf out of my book and do the same.

Mr. Jensen: I do and the Treasurer takes notice of me, too.

Mr. HARTWIG: If we look at the replacement costs of machinery, we find that a Fiat tractor costing \$5,700 in 1972 sells today at \$8,654, an increase of 51 per cent. Commer trucks cost \$11,072 in 1972; today they cost \$14,000, an increase of 27 per cent.

The Australian domestic consumption of pineapple products has not increased; in fact it is declining.

Mr. Jensen interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dean): Order! There is too much cross-fire in the Chamber.

Mr. HARTWIG: Thank you, Mr. Dean. I am quite adamant that any increase in freight rates could easily sound the death-knell of many of these smaller pineapple growers.

I would like to comment briefly on the matter of rail freights. Quite a number of stock are purchased by southern operators at the Gracemere sale yards and they have to be transported by rail. This increase will impose an extra cost burden which will mean some reduction in the price per hundred head of cattle purchased at Gracemere. I would also like to say, and I know this to be true, that unless the price of cattle continues to rise,

and I hope it does—I am not going to be pessimistic—there will be thousands of cattle which cannot be profitably marketed at meat-works throughout Queensland. If this proposed increase in rail freights of 40 per cent is pursued the position will be even worse. I must say that because it is true, and it is something I am sure the Treasurer will have to do battle with somehow.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You haven't said a word about the reduction we have given in road freight rates.

Mr. HARTWIG: I have. I mentioned the wiping-out of road permit fees.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Everybody else can have an increase in costs; you have admitted that, but from a Government point of view we cannot increase our own freights.

Mr. HARTWIG: I have said that Hayden has blocked the avenues through which the Treasurer would have been able to recoup millions of dollars in revenue and thus not be forced to impose such an increase. I am not blaming the Treasurer. He is the victim of circumstances; I have made that quite clear.

Sir Gordon Chalk: You have made it quite clear that everybody else should have an increase in the cost of production but in respect of the State you are decrying the fact that after nine years there is to be an increase in rail freights.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! If the Treasurer wants to have a conversation with the honourable member, he should take him outside.

Mr. HARTWIG: I have to say this because I know the state of primary industries today. They cannot absorb a 40 per cent increase in rail freights or anything like it. The primary producers cannot pass the costs on.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I can't pass the costs on, either. That's your argument.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not want an argument across the Chamber between the Treasurer and the honourable member for Callide.

Mr. HARTWIG: This is true. I have said, and I repeat it, that the Hayden Budget made inroads into the revenue of the State and denied the Treasurer access to other avenues of finance. Because of that, the Treasurer has to increase rail freights. I believe that a 40 per cent increase is just too high to absorb. I have to say that because I know the situation—

Sir Gordon Chalk: Do you know what the increases in the other States have been over the period?

Mr. HARTWIG: I am not worried about that. I know that there has not been an increase in nine years and we appreciate that fact, but one can only talk of an industry as one finds it today, and primary producers

are on their knees. They have no way of passing on increases in costs through inflation, what they have to pay for education, what they have to pay for the registration of their motor trucks, the increased postal charges and the increases in prices for everything else they have to buy. I repeat that their lot has been made ever more difficult by the Hayden Budget. They have been caught up in a situation—I stated this quite adamantly and clearly—not of their own making and we should have been able to come up with some other way of alleviating the State's burden.

Mr. Hanson: How?

Mr. HARTWIG: The State Government provided \$10,000,000 to the beef cattle industry.

Mr. Hanson: And spent only \$900,000.

Mr. HARTWIG: Never mind what was spent. The State Government took the lead once again

Bear in mind, Mr. Dean, that the Whitlam Government has been in power since 1972. After a great many representations had been made to the Industries Assistance Commission by a committee set up by the State Government, by the Australian Cattlemen's Council, and by the United Graziers' Association, the commission recommended to the Australian Government that beef producers should be given extended carry-on loans of up to \$15,000 a year at a minimum interest rate of 4 per cent. What worries me is that the State is expected to assist in meeting that recommendation on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Sir Gordon Chalk: We offered \$10,000,000 at 2½ per cent.

Mr. HARTWIG: I am aware of that.

The commission also recommended that for up to one year non-viable producers receive household support equal to the amount paid as unemployment relief. That recommendation, apart from being supported by the various organisations to which I referred earlier, was pressed home very strongly by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Beef Cattlemen's Council and the Beef Stabilisation Committee in Queensland.

The commission also recommended suspension of the very vicious and unjust tax on the export of beef. You can imagine, Mr. Dean, the feelings of the producers when beef was down to \$6 and \$8 a hundred, or 6c or 8c a lb., and one-sixth of that—almost 20 per cent of what the product was worth—was being ripped off by the export tax levied by the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Hanson: Don't you think there are some good signs now? I heard last week that the price was up to 22c a lb.

Mr. HARTWIG: I hope that continues. However, there is still a very big gap between the cost of production and what is being received.

Having said that, I point out to the Committee that the Commonwealth Minister for Health (Dr. Everingham), who is quite knowledgeable on many matters, has said that he will support the Industries Assistance Commission's recommendation for beef aid, with three modifications. The report of the commission has to go before an interdepartmental committee, which will have a good look at it. I hope that the committee will recommend to Senator Wriedt that the report be adopted in full, and that Senator Wriedt will—if he is still there—take it to Cabinet for approval.

Sir Gordon Chalk: He is now Minister for Mines and Energy.

Mr. HARTWIG: Whoever the Minister for Agriculture may be, I hope he will take it to Cabinet for approval.

As I said earlier, the primary industries are on their knees. What did Dr. Everingham say? He said he would support the recommendation with three modifications, and they all related to the payment of household support. A newspaper article read—

“He said support roughly equivalent to unemployment benefits should be granted only where the applicant agreed to accept available work.

“In the case of a family bread-winner this should be within a reasonable distance of his home under the guidelines now applied by the Department of Social Security.”

I was born in the country and have been associated with pastoral holdings all my life. I know that on many properties today old people are hanging on, trying to manage the properties while the son and daughter are out working. In other instances husbands have gone out working. Thank goodness that owing to this Government's decentralisation policy they have had somewhere to go. They have obtained work in my area and others such as those represented by the honourable members for Port Curtis and Belyando. Imagine anybody being so naive as to suggest that the caretaker left on the property, to become eligible for social security benefits, has to be prepared to go out and accept a job! Honourable members can imagine what would happen if he or she said, “No, I can't go. I can't leave my stock.”! He or she would be automatically denied unemployment benefits. What a shocking state of affairs!

Dr. Everingham went even further and said that employees of the station owner should have lived on the property for at least the previous 12 or 18 months. Holy smoke! Other people do not have to justify their position. If they are sacked on Friday, they can line up on Monday and register

for unemployment benefits. It is time that Dr. Everingham said which side he is on. He also said—

“Support should also be granted only where the combined family income for the previous financial year was within the bounds which would retain the applicant's eligibility for benefits, and where current nett income appeared to be of the same order.

“Support would be subject to recoupment when next year's tax return or other evidence showed that income had increased beyond the level at which benefits could be paid.”

Goodness me! That man represents a rural electorate. I say “rural” because the Capricornia electorate covers a huge part of Queensland with probably a greater number of beef producers than any other electorate. As a representative of a rural electorate, he is advocating that the money should be recouped. Would he suggest that to unemployed people in any other industry or union in this State or nation? Not on your life! He knows full well that the voting power and organised resistance are not with the people who have to carve out a living by working around the clock in country areas.

Mr. N. T. E. Hewitt: We might have a new member for Capricornia after the next election.

Mr. HARTWIG: I would say so.

Honourable Members interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dean): Order! There are too many interjections.

Mr. HARTWIG: It would be a good bet that he will go. I predict at this stage that soon there will be no Labor M.P.'s representing Queensland.

Recently a statement was made about the super power-house at Gladstone and the cost of electricity production. The output will be increased by two 275 MW generating sets to 1600 MW. I have heard that it could even become a 2 000 MW generating station. I doubt the advisability of what is proposed, and here I offer constructive criticism because I feel that no State should place itself in the position of being at the mercy of one generating station. The State should not be dependent upon one power station for the generation of almost 90 per cent of its electricity requirements. There are many undesirable factors in placing all our eggs in one basket. Queensland is a vast State with enormous coal and water resources. Callide has a known reserve of 200 000 000 tonnes of coal. Blair Athol has known reserves of more than 600 000 000 tonnes, with an overburden of only 4 or 5 ft. I am told by a manager of a mine in Central Queensland that Blair Athol coal could be delivered to a nearby power station at a cost of less than \$2 a tonne. Furthermore, the capacity of the Fairbairn Dam, which was built by this Government

with assistance from the Federal Government, is greater than that of all the other dams in Queensland put together.

Generating costs are rising sharply with the result that the price to the consumer is also increasing. Surely the location of our vast coal resources demands that the power stations be placed on the coal-fields. It is practical to do that. In my opinion the Railways Department does not have sufficient rolling-stock to maintain a continuous supply to the power station in Gladstone. Delays occur on the line; in fact, with the present volume of coal traffic on it, the "Sunlander" takes 2½ hours to cover the 70 miles between Gladstone and Rockhampton.

The installation of a further two 275 MW generating sets at Gladstone will necessitate an increase of 50 per cent in coal deliveries. Four tonnes of coal could be delivered to Callide Power Station at a cost equal to that of delivery of 1 tonne of coal to Swanbank. The cost of generation of electricity at Callide is the cheapest in Queensland, so I urge the Minister to give earnest consideration to enlarging the Callide Power Station to augment the Gladstone Power Station.

I refer now to the Iwasaki project at Yeppoon, which is a hot potato in my electorate. It seems to have become bogged down in spite of the fact that three years ago it was heralded by the then Minister for Tourism, Mr. Herbert, as one of the greatest fillips to the tourist industry in Queensland.

Mr. Frawley: Who is holding it up?

Mr. HARTWIG: I don't know. Perhaps it is Mr. Iwasaki himself. The people of Yeppoon are entitled to know whether the project is to proceed. I am repeatedly told by various departments that the implementation of the project will mean more schools and better roads. The Livingstone Shire Council has plans for expanding its water-reticulation scheme, but it is in the dark as to the future of the project.

Finally, I comment on the road between Mt. Morgan and Dululu. It is nothing more than a traffic hazard and should be closed. I travel over the road three or four times a week and am shocked at its condition. One of these days a terrible tragedy will occur on it. Over the past 15 years not one single job has been carried out on it. I do not know whether the blame for that lies with the honourable member for Port Curtis, as the road is in his electorate.

We have a problem with the missing bitumen link between Gladstone and Biloela. Fuel for inland areas comes from Gladstone over this road, while all Amagrazed meat for export is sent over it to Gladstone. This section is badly pot-holed and very stony. I wonder how much longer people will have to subject their vehicles to damage on this road. It costs a lot of money to keep the trucks which use this road in good order.

Mr. ROW (Hinchinbrook) (5.1 p.m.): I enter this debate with a good deal of admiration for the practical approach that the Treasurer adopted in framing his Budget in what is probably one of the most difficult financial climates that he has had to contend with in the 10 years that we have been privileged to have him as Treasurer of this State. While there are some grounds for trepidation in this Budget, I do not believe that the reasons lie entirely within the Treasurer's control. As has been pointed out by many earlier speakers—and I know we do not want any needless repetition—the failure of the Federal Government to recognise certain factors that go beyond the norm in creating financial difficulties is more manifest now than at the time of presentation of the previous State Budget, which was no less masterfully handled than the present one.

We have seen what can happen in a short time. One of the most notable examples on this occasion is the steep rise in rail freights. I have no doubt that the honourable member for Callide has some justification for expressing concern about the effect this increase will have on certain industries in some parts of Queensland. The effect is undeniable. However, we must remember that over a long period one of the Railway Department's business principles—and it has come under a great deal of criticism, particularly from Opposition members—has been the right to negotiate with its customers. On this occasion I hope that in the application of the average freight increase the Railway Department will be able to make suitable arrangements to meet the needs of various sectors in the community. Certain industries are more subject than others to fluctuating markets and greater pressures of inflation.

In the more remote areas of Queensland some primary producers depend on perishable products. My electorate contains probably the biggest banana-growing area in the State. The growers are marketing a perishable product that is subject to climatic and seasonal variations. It is subject also to inconsistency in domestic consumer demand. Industries such as that and the small steel fabricator who is endeavouring to establish a sound business under the State's policy of decentralisation might find it necessary to appeal to the railway commercial management for some adjustments. I have no doubt that the situation will not prove to be as serious as it might presently appear to be.

Another part of the Budget certainly caused a rapid reaction from a section of the community that could be considered to be different from other commercial enterprises. Small licence holders within the liquor trade will suffer some disability as a result of the steeply increased fees that have been applied to liquor marketing outside the larger channels such as hotels and the merchants who enjoy a large turnover. I believe there is room for some adjustment

in that area. I think we all understand the situation quite well. Hotel managements are subject to regulation by the Licensing Commission and they must comply also with health regulations. They employ highly paid people to sell liquor over the bar in the traditional manner. However, there is also room for liquor to be retailed to people who choose not to buy from hotels. The domestic situation of many people is such that they would not visit hotels. I believe that there is scope within the liquor trade for an alternative avenue of sale. I hope that, without having to make any undue incursions into his budgeted receipts, the Treasurer will consider providing some relaxation in this direction.

Any impositions that may appear to have been made by the State Budget could not be compared with those suffered as a result of the last Federal Budget and the one preceding it. Previous speakers in this debate have pointed to the concessions that have been removed, particularly from the rural areas, and the help that has been denied them. I do not wish to labour the point, but it is a well-known fact. Those moves by the Commonwealth have been greatly reflected in the affairs of our State, and doubtless the State's budgeting programme has suffered considerably as a result.

I believe that the concessions Sir Gordon Chalk has endeavoured to provide in the Budget are substantial. I think that the pay-roll tax exemption offsets the added freight costs to small industries. I can readily call to mind one comparatively small industry in the main centre of my electorate. It is a steel-fabricating workshop, and it employs a considerable number of people. I know that pay-roll tax has been one of its major problems and I feel that the concessions offered in the Budget will go a long way towards offsetting the increased rail freights that that industry will have to bear.

I know that it suffers a disability by reason of transport costs, because it has to pay freight on the unprocessed steel obtained from ports situated to the south and also on the fabricated products when they are sent to the main markets, some of which are to the south, and to the mining areas to the southwest where contracts have been obtained. There is therefore a balance in the Budget which I think is very creditable.

One of the Budget's main benefits is the abolition of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. It is a pity that this had to come so late in the history of the Government. I feel concerned also for those people who have been unfortunate in missing out on this benefit by only a day or two. We all encounter such cases in the course of our electoral duties. Naturally we sympathise with those people who find themselves in this position. It may be some consolation to them to know that at some future time someone close to them will probably receive the benefit that they were unfortunate enough to miss.

I am pleased to see that education has again been recognised as the major consideration in the budgetary provisions. It is rather amazing, for want of a better word, to realise how much lip-service is given in certain areas to the need for education, and more advanced and technical education. Seldom do we see a more practical approach to this problem than what has been provided in this Budget. I believe that improving the student to teacher ratio is a very practical means of assisting in the education of our young people.

One thing that concerns me is the obvious need in some areas for better school facilities to complement the improved attitude to education. Some country schools have many technical facilities and dedicated people willing to use them, but a lack of accommodation. I hope that the Queensland taxpayers will soon be receiving more of their money through the traditional channels of the taxing authority in Canberra so that the State will have the necessary means to include the improvement of these facilities in its works programme.

It was rather ludicrous that towards the end of the financial year the State's works programme had to be curtailed in certain areas because of the failure of the Federal Government to recognise the full impact of inflation and rising costs on the works programme, people were displaced from employment but they went round the corner, so to speak, to the Commonwealth employment agency, especially in the provincial towns and cities, and obtained employment under the R.E.D. scheme, going out into fringe areas of the provincial towns and cities, and installing kerbing and channelling and the like in relatively undeveloped areas when they could well have remained in their jobs and continued our works programme with the very same funds. I think it is almost getting to the stage of political gimmickry when the Federal Government engages in this sort of thing. No-one can tell me that the R.E.D. scheme was anything more than a suddenly devised means of endeavouring to boost the political image of the Australian Government and at the same time embarrass the States in many areas.

I appreciate certain facets of the education Budget, particularly the increased subsidies on primary school activities buildings from \$25,000 to \$35,000 and on high school assembly halls from \$60,000 to \$84,000. This must mean a marked improvement in the ability of parents and citizens' associations to continue their very creditable contribution to education facilities. I would like to expand on this point a little because I have direct knowledge of the activities of such associations in my electorate. I am amazed at the virility, willingness and devotion of parents who go out and raise money to supplement the education system of this State. I know there are people who would criticise this activity and say that it is the duty of the Government to provide these things, that people should not have to do it,

but I think that it is also a very valid argument to say that if people are not allowed to participate in their own affairs and improve their own standards, and if they have to become entirely dependent on legislation and money handed out by Governments, there will be a degeneration in the national outlook.

I am pleased to see that people's efforts are recognised in the increased subsidies in these areas and also the increased grants to non-State schools. The non-State schools have played a vital role in the education of many of Queensland's most illustrious sons going back over many generations. If these educational institutions were suddenly deprived of their means of existence, State schools could never cope with the increased demand made on them.

I believe that Queensland is behind many other developed nations in this field. In some countries not very far from here, even the salaries of teachers at denominational schools are paid, and the Government of this State must at least contribute something towards keeping Queensland's status in the world of education by continuing its support for non-State schools.

Another sphere of education that has been of considerable concern to me in my electorate is the transportation of children to school and school bus allowances. I am very pleased to see that in the Budget the Treasurer has made very generous increases and concessions in that sphere. I hope to see the day when all children are transported to school free of charge. Some non-State schools still have to subsidise supplementary transportation. The community owes a debt to these people for continuing to do that for so long, and I hope that in the not too far distant future all children will receive similar benefits.

Of course, a 50 per cent increase in remote-area allowances will be of great significance in the rural areas of the State, so many of which are in a depressed condition. The 500 scholarships that will be awarded come into a similar category. Although these may now be looked upon as concessions to people in unfortunate circumstances, increased remote-area allowances and scholarships will eventually become the norm and will continue to be a feature of the Government's contribution to education.

Another example of assistance to youth is to be found in the almost twofold increase in the allocation provided for sporting bodies and youth organisations. The only difficulty that I would like to see removed is the requirement that the applicant bodies confine their annual request to one year's operations. In existing circumstances, many institutions and clubs are forced to delay construction of their buildings or facilities because of circumstances outside their control, and I believe that far too many of them are missing out on subsidies because of that. I should like to see a little more

elasticity in the time in which they are allowed to apply for and receive their subsidies.

Increases in the provision for State hospitals were also very necessary and will be welcomed. Although there has been a great deal of criticism of Queensland hospitals in certain areas, particularly in densely populated areas where their use by the public is intense, Queensland is still the only State in Australia that for years has offered any satisfactory hospital service. The increase in hospital allowances will keep that service in front, where it has always been.

The decision to meet the full salary costs for domiciliary nursing services is a very welcome one. It has been remarkable to witness the growth of this phase of social service in this State over a very few years. It started in a very small way not very long ago, and now we have the Blue Nurses and others paying regular visits to homes and providing a visiting service to supplement domiciliary nursing care to a degree which has undoubtedly relieved the pressure on geriatric wards in public hospitals.

Likewise the increased subsidy to old people's homes and institutions is very welcome. The growth of homes for the aged in this State in the past decade has been remarkable. The domestic harmony of families in present-day circumstances, with the busy lives that people lead in this century, has been greatly augmented by the provision of those homes. Government support for them is absolutely essential. It will be self-rewarding.

Mr. Hanson interjected.

Mr. ROW: I will get on to the honourable member soon.

Fostering allowances are very important, and I am pleased to see that they have been taken care of.

When summing up at the end of his Financial Statement, the Treasurer spoke about the State not losing momentum and his desire to keep it viable and dynamic. Queensland is a dynamic State. If we compare its small population with its size, and the per-capita effort by way of export earnings and contribution to the nation's welfare, it is obvious that Queensland is a dynamic State. It needs to press on with extension services and infrastructure, particularly with industrial development.

The swing back to provincial and rural areas is inevitable. We have almost ceased to hear the old cliché about the drift to the cities. I certainly hope so. Cities are very desirable and, although I am a country resident and a country member, I am very proud of the State's capital city. It is a beautiful city and I am proud to come here. But I believe we have to redevelop and repopulate our provincial and rural areas. The population of country areas has dwindled alarmingly, but there are indications that the situation will reverse itself. Unless we are

ready for that by having infrastructure development we will have people seeking facilities that are not available. It is essential that ample funds be provided for the rehabilitation of marginal rural areas and for drainage schemes, particularly in the wet belt of the State, so I feel somewhat disappointed at the provision made in the Budget for the activities of the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission and for the Farm Water Supplies Assistance Scheme, which, as a result of amendments made to the appropriate Act, now embraces drainage. Although some consideration has been given to an extension of these activities, I should like to see the programme expanded wherever possible.

The Treasurer has said that the Government will institute a special inquiry into its capital subsidy scheme to local authorities and that he will concentrate on making loans available to them. This is a move in the right direction and one that I would advocate.

In recent times, criticism has been levelled at the Police Force and its administration. I have gained the impression that in these modern times the Police Force has become something of a technical instrument. Police officers seem to spend far too much time in court defending their actions. Their time could be better spent in the prevention of crime and in the protection of the public against the cause of litigation in court. I suggest with respect that the legal profession shows too great an inclination to testing the application of the law. I hope that the increase in police strength as envisaged in the Budget will do a great deal towards restoring the former image of the policeman—that of one who enforces the law and not one who contests it.

It is pleasing to note that the grant made to the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations has been increased by \$100,000 to \$400,000. Members of the Opposition have chided me about my interests in the sugar industry. I must admit that I have had a long association with it and have vested interests in it, so it is appropriate that I should speak on its behalf. I wonder whether the public fully realise the extent to which the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations contributes to the good management of the State. When we consider the regulatory functions in which this institution is involved under the auspices of the Department of Primary Industries, we must surely realise that the \$400,000 granted to it in the Budget barely equals its contribution to the functions of the Department of Primary Industries. I hope that, eventually, the budgetary provision for this institution will become a subsidy according to a certain percentage of its own budget. It should not be left in a cliff-hanging situation where each year it has to anticipate or hope for a grant from the Treasury.

Mr. Hanson: As shadow Minister for Primary Industries, you have to get me on side, too, you know.

Mr. ROW: I accept the honourable member's interjection, but I reserve comment on it.

Mr. Hanson: I only offered a little advice.

Mr. ROW: The honourable member for Port Curtis sits in this Chamber as a champion of the working man. I do not like using that term. I like to consider Queenslanders as equals. They are all working people. I do not think there are any genuine Queenslanders who do not contribute to the public benefit. I am amazed that a person with his umbilical cord attached to the capitalist system through a pipeline to the brewery and his puppetry mechanism firmly attached to the Q.C.E. of the Australian Labor Party can sit in this Chamber as a champion of the Labor movement. Is it any wonder that strange and sometimes incomprehensible things emanate from his fundamental orifice! I have a great deal of admiration for the honourable member for Port Curtis. He is hail-fellow-well-met. I believe that he looks after the hotel widows when they run a bit short of cash. No doubt that is quite a profitable investment for him. He also wraps his bottled beer in a well-known church paper when it is to be taken from his hotel. He is not a bad fellow after all, but he has some strange political bedfellows.

The honourable member for Mackay who, regrettably, is not in the Chamber, quite impressed me with his opening remarks on the Budget. In his position in this Chamber I thought he was doing a pretty good job, bearing in mind that he does not have any particular allegiance to the Government parties. But when he got a little further into his speech and started talking about the sugar industry, I was rather amazed at his parochialism. He spoke about the disadvantages that his district has suffered under the present Government and about being robbed by the railways and all that sort of thing. Anyone studying the history of his area will find that in the sugar industry generally his area has not done too badly. I understand that Mackay has the biggest bulk sugar terminal in the world.

Mr. Hanson: All paid for by the industry.

Mr. ROW: I repeat the words of the honourable member for Port Curtis: "All paid for by the industry". Yet the honourable member for Mackay criticised the proposal to develop a facility in another area. "All paid for by the industry"! His area has had the benefit of its terminal since 1957. He does his electorate an injustice in taking such a parochial attitude.

He spoke about the Government supporting C.S.R. Ltd. C.S.R. pays its share towards the affairs of the sugar industry. I do not think he should single it out in any way as gaining any undue benefit.

The honourable member for Mackay spoke about the amount of money to be spent at Lucinda. The Sugar Board has allocated

\$50,000,000 from industry funds for the expansion of sugar ports in Queensland. One of the southern ports in Queensland has already been allocated a considerable amount of that money. The amount that he claimed as having been allocated for the development of Lucinda has not been firmly committed, so I do not know what he is talking about when he speaks in such terms.

I feel that the honourable member for Mackay is a disgruntled man. He is an outcast from the Labor Party. In some respects he is more or less a political waif. I can understand his desire to gain publicity at any cost and for that reason I can forgive him his attitude, but I cannot see that he can thus expect to enhance his credibility. All he is doing is backing a faction of disgruntled people—and disgruntled people exist in every area. I think he could very well talk himself out of Parliament if he continues to follow that line.

In conclusion, I repeat that I can find areas of concern in the circumstances surrounding the framing of the Budget. I hope that in the very near future the State will benefit from a change of Government in Canberra and that the circumstances that surround the next Budget, which I sincerely hope Sir Gordon Chalk presents for us, will make his task much easier than it has been on this occasion.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG (Townsville) (5.44 p.m.): This Budget has been framed in rather difficult financial and ideological times. There is presently a change of thought in State and Federal relations and that has been reflected in the Budget. When one reads sections of the Financial Statement relating to education, one notices that universities are no longer the financial responsibility of the State. They have now become States within a State, and I am afraid that the authorities of this State will eventually have to pay for their lack of foresight and the weakness of their Ministers who came to a behind-the-door agreement with the Federal Government to accept no responsibility for financial control. They handed over the universities, and the same thing happened with institutes of tertiary education, such as technical colleges and teacher colleges. We hand over our responsibilities to the Federal Government and at the same time we scream in the newspapers about the great inroads made by the Federal Labor Government into State responsibilities. The fault in fact lies with our own State Ministers.

The same trend is apparent in the medical sphere. A national health Bill was put through the Federal House. Whether it proves a success for the patient has yet to be seen. Financially, it is becoming a complete and utter mess.

On studying the documents presented by the Treasurer, I see, as the one ray of sunshine on the medical side, that the Queensland Institute of Medical Research has not been treated too badly. This is particularly apparent when one sees comparable figures in the Federal sphere. I shall quote some of our own figures. The appropriation in 1974-75 was \$586,611, and the amount actually spent was \$682,000. For 1975-76 the estimated expenditure is \$765,520. This sum goes to the research council, which also receives suggestions from various research groups and channels money their way.

I find the position in the Federal sphere rather disquieting. The estimated requirement this year for the National Health and Medical Research Council was \$47,000,000. It was given \$24,000,000. That is rather a staggering decrease. The \$24,000,000 is \$6,700,000 more than the previous year's allocation. The Federal Government therefore says, "Boys, you are doing pretty well out of this. We are giving you \$6,000,000 more than you had last year. You get on with it." But the Federal Government forgets that the type of budgeting carried out in research institutes and in the university does not relate to financial years. The university works on the calendar year and the financial wizards of the Government work on the financial year, which leaves a complete break in financial cover in the middle of the year.

Many hundreds of millions of dollars are to be spent on health programmes in this country. The State health programme has escalated considerably and has now reached astronomical figures for hospital and other paramedical work.

Mr. Hanson: What do you think of Medibank?

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: It has yet to prove itself. It will be all very well if it improves the health of the people, but I cannot see it improving the finances of this country. Australia cannot stand the cost of it.

What will happen to medical research throughout this nation? What will happen to the projects that are already in hand? Research workers cannot merely sit down and twiddle their fingers. They have to do something. They must have a project to work on. The Federal Government has allocated less than 1 per cent of the total health bill for medical research. In other words, the Federal Government considers that medical research is not worth worrying about. At the same time it allocates almost \$8,000,000 for the purchase of pharmaceutical businesses. In other words, the Federal Government is now entering the field of private enterprise. If the health services provided under Medibank do not work out as the Government expected, it will manufacture the pills to cure the patients. Whilst allocating almost \$8,000,000 for the

purchase of pharmaceutical houses, the Government has at the same time reduced the allocation for medical research to \$24,000,000.

It is interesting to see what Australia thinks about medical research. In the United States, \$7.7 per annum per capita is spent in this way. This represents .246 per cent of the gross national income. The United Kingdom spends 78c per annum per capita in this way, or .059 per cent of the gross national income. Canada is even better. It spends \$1.16 per capita or .052 per cent of the gross national income. Now comes little healthy Australia. The Australian Government thinks individuals are so worth while preserving that it delves into medical research in a big way. It spends a paltry 29c per capita. That is all the Commonwealth Government will spend this year on medical research—29c per capita, or .019 per cent of the gross national income. So honourable members can see from this that, despite the fact that the Federal Government has not kept its tail up, this Government has in allocating sufficient money to carry on the research projects that are probably in hand and also to maintain and retain, if possible, our skilled research workers and technicians.

For the life of me I cannot follow the reasoning of the Treasurer's statement about police figures. He said that there will be an increase of 75 in the civilian strength of the Police Department. The honourable member for Hinchinbrook mentioned the work of civilians in the Police Department. I cannot see any place for a civilian in a Police Force. We have a big problem at the present moment with civilians in the defence forces. They will end up running the soldiers. The same thing will happen in Queensland's Police Force. The civilians should be enrolled as police officers, male or female. We will have a dichotomy of control, direction and authority if we have civilians versus uniformed officers. I think it is definitely a retrograde step.

Mr. Hanson: What about police stenographers? Do you think they should be police officers?

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: Police photographers? I do not agree with that, either. A police photographer is a man who has an insight into crime and studies all aspects of crime whereas the ordinary photographer just takes a flick of anything; it does not make any difference. He may be as good a photographer as the policeman—

Mr. Hanson: Stenographers.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: Never heard of the word. There has been a lot of talk recently about certain gentlemen who came out here from Scotland Yard, had a good time at the taxpayers' expense and went home to England. We have not heard anything from them since and I do not suppose we will

hear anything from them. I think that the Police Force in this State is being run by one man. The Minister has no control over the Police Force and it appears to be running into chaos. The idea of a good Police Force is to make the officers responsible for those under them. In no other service do we find what we found here recently, where a senior sergeant in charge of an area did not know who did something and would not take responsibility for it. That was absolutely farcical, and if that is the type of police force we are going to cultivate, we might as well get rid of the lot of them.

But I offer the Government a solution. I think most of the police are underpaid. They should be in a salary bracket higher than they are at present to remove all thoughts of corruption. The Government should make the senior officers responsible for the actions of their subordinates so that if anything questionable is done, they will be the first ones to report it; it will not be found out by the Press or reported by some snide method through police pimps and various other people. It just should not happen.

On the matter of police training I agree that the cadet system is an excellent idea. When a man joins the Police Force, it should be with the idea that it is a lifetime job, the same as a soldier. A recruit conditions himself mentally, physically and financially to service as a policeman. Policemen should be given more respect. I consider that the Press do not play the game by the Police Force at all. They are forever rushing in and idly criticising, without justification in lots of cases.

While I am speaking about the Police Force—I think that the strength of the Drug Squad could be increased. For a number of years we have shut our eyes to the fact that drugs are being peddled in this country. They are being peddled in my city in what is a rather profitable business. With your permission, Mr. Hewitt, I would like to quote from the American "Congressional Record", Proceedings and Debates of the 93rd Congress, Second Session, of 24 July 1974. It says—

"In the words of Timothy Leary, guru of the leftist drug cultists:

"Drugs are the most efficient way to revolution.

"Or, quoting Jerry Rubin:

"Pot is central to the revolution. It weakens social conditioning and helps create a whole new state of mind. The slogans of the revolution are going to be pot, freedom, license. The Bolsheviks of the revolution will be long-haired pot smokers."

In Australia, people such as these may have been called crackpots, rat-bags, or what-have-you, Mr. Hewitt. The honourable member for Townsville South probably would have a much more colourful description of

them. However, the fact is that there is a tendency to dismiss people such as Leary and Rubin and push them aside as if they are nothing; but they have an effect on our impressionable youth, and we in this State are shutting our eyes to that. The Minister for Police and the Commissioner of Police are shutting their eyes to it, and I demand that some attempt be made to eradicate the problem or reduce the potential danger in Queensland.

Anyone wanting to find out about marijuana sees the Minister for Health in this State on a television programme saying that the problems facing us are not so much the pot and heavy-drug users as the people who imbibe analgesics and tranquilisers. What utter tripe! He forgot to tell the people who were listening and the mugs like me that pot is not administered by a doctor, is not supervised by a doctor and is not controlled by an Act relating to dangerous drugs, whereas tranquilisers are. They are issued on a special certificate—in most cases an S.P.—by a qualified medical practitioner and are usually prescribed for a person with a problem that can be solved. When the Minister spoke in that way on television, in effect he sided with people such as Leary and Rubin. By doing that, he will do more damage to our youth than all the revolutions in the world.

As the honourable member for Townsville South said, it is about time we stood up and were counted on this matter. Action is needed, Mr. Hewitt; we do not want trendiness anywhere.

Mr. Murray: It is almost criminal.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: It is. I should like to tell honourable members quickly what marijuana can do to a person. I have some very short notes here—I could talk for two hours on this subject, but I have condensed my notes to a brief summary—and members will not find the information in any textbooks. It is in scattered, fragmentary descriptions, often full of trendiness that whitewashes the whole problem.

Hashish, or marijuana, is derived from a plant called *cannabis sativa*, *cannabis indica* or *cannabis americana*, depending upon where it is grown. Varying concentrations of psychoactive material may be found in the flowers and the leaves of these plants. The dried leaves of marijuana—*bhang*—contain 1 per cent of the active principle. *Ganga* is the dried flowering tops, and it contains a resinous exudate with 3 per cent of the active principle. *Charas*, which is the most powerful, is often smoked in the hookah. It is a resinous exudate of the plant and contains 5 per cent. So when a person has 4 lb. of resin, he is really loaded. Yet magistrates deal with him in the same way as they deal with a kid who buys a cigarette at a party. They impose similar penalties. A person with that quantity in his possession ought to be taken out and horse-whipped.

The preparation of cannabis is included in all the aphrodisiacs such as cantharides, datura and yohimbine that once were sold. As a matter of fact, in many pharmaceutical houses one can still buy aphrodisiacs that are prescribed and ordered containing testosterone and yohimbine. They are still allowed to be sold on the market. They would make a stallion jump a 12 ft. paling fence.

The active principle of the drug is tetrahydrocannabinol—a very powerful and dangerous drug. I will tell honourable members some of the symptoms that are exhibited. Fifty micrograms per kilogram of body weight leads to giddiness and confusion, and later sleepiness will supervene. Two hundred to 250 micrograms per kilogram causes distortion of sensory perception. One sees this in musicians. The honourable member for Gladstone might have been aware of it in his hotel. Users sit there with dreamy eyes and produce the peculiar musical distortion that they think is good.

So that the honourable member can recognise the symptoms when somebody walks into his bar and asks for a middy, I point out that the signs are injected conjunctiva, or bloodshot eyes, and a decrease in muscle tone; they are not muscle boys; they do not wear a big T-shirt.

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

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: It is obvious that I upset the honourable member for Port Curtis when I talked about people walking into his bar with bleary eyes, shaky hands, weak muscle tone and the other obvious signs of something that may not be alcohol but the deadly drug tetrahydrocannabinol. As I said earlier, the signs are injected conjunctiva, decrease in muscle tone and rapid pulse rate. On examination there is no change in blood pressure, respiratory rate or temperature. The EEG, which is an interesting examination of the cerebral function, can only be done in certain centres such as psychiatric centres. It shows only mild changes. Patients have a tremor, just like an alcoholic. They have impaired psychomotor performances. That is indicated by a lack of interest in surroundings, poor ability or inability to perform simple manual and dextrous acts usually required of children in intelligence tests. There is no increase in auditory acuity, which is in contrast to the fact that they say they like music and that it helps them to appreciate the so-called modern music.

A very interesting fact about the effects of the drug is that some people say it gives them a lift. Actually it doesn't. The complex problem of performing arithmetical calculations, or simple arithmetic for the school child, is definitely impaired. When the Department of Education had such a problem on its hands because of drugs in schools, some people said, "Oh, that's nothing. They're only getting a kick out of it." They forgot that that kick also interferes with the ability to memorise. The recall phase of the memory

processes is interfered with, and there is obviously a lack of ability to do simple arithmetical problems. There is a decrease in cohesion, clarity and time orientation. There is difficulty with speech and patients may appear dreamy, remote and removed from the present association or conversation they are having with an interviewer. This is the way they would behave normally among their friends. They wander around in a dreamy, trance-like state.

The historical background of marijuana, pot or hashish—whatever it may be called—goes back into antiquity. We seem to think that it was something that happened after the Vietnamese war. Its use became much more prevalent after the Vietnamese war. It did not come into our Western civilisation in any great degree till about 1960. It was known in India long before the Christian era. It was used in the traditional Hindu system of medicine, and is even mentioned in medical writings in the 8th century A.D. It was used in India at festivals and worship of the God Shiva. I gather that they did all sorts of funny things at those religious festivals.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Tell us how the practices differed.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: The practice of what?

Mr. K. J. Hooper: The practices in worshipping the God Shiva and—

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: Oh, Lord! If the honourable member wants to learn about the God Shiva, I will tell him about it later on.

It was not until 1960 that the use of that drug spread to Western communities. In India and Africa it is usually used by males of the lower socioeconomic groups. In the Western civilisation, mainly its use is by middle-class adolescents and upper middle-class adolescents of secondary-school and college age. That is exactly the group that the Left-wing revolutionaries want to get hold of. They are the youngsters who have the potential to run our country and make something of themselves and our nation. They have a certain amount of intelligence and a considerable degree of ability to seek and explore. Once they start seeking and exploring to endeavour to find out what else lies behind the hidden curtain of life, they get on pot. Subsequently they get on the heavier drugs, life becomes a pestilence and scourge to themselves and to their families and they become a problem to society.

In the Western civilisation the chief intoxicant is alcohol. Often the argument is put forward that drugs are no worse than alcohol. Those who advance it forget that alcohol has been part of the way of life in our Western civilisation since long before the Christian era. It goes back to the days of antiquity. We don't know where it started, but we do know that we have come to live with it. Certain people, of course, break

down and fall by the wayside, and usually they are people in certain economic groups. Our education system has not completely eradicated the abuse of alcohol; nevertheless it is an educational system. Aid is given to alcoholics on a much wider scale than it is to those who become the victims of drugs. For those people this State has provided absolutely nothing.

To support that contention I refer to "Hansard" of 17 October 1973 at page 1020, where, in Questions Upon Notice, there appear two questions (one asked by the honourable member for Wavell and the other by the former honourable member for Everton) and the answers thereto. I ask leave of the Committee to have these questions and answers taken as read and included in "Hansard".

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Row): Is it the wish of the Committee that the questions and answers referred to by the honourable member be taken as read and included in "Hansard"?

Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: The questions and answers are as follows:—

"FACILITIES FOR TREATMENT OF DRUG ADDICTS"

(a) **Mr. Ahern** for **Dr. Crawford**, pursuant to notice, asked The Minister for Health,—

(1) Apart from institutions treating alcoholism under the auspices of the State Health Department, what in-patient facilities exist for the treatment of drug addiction?

(2) Has Anderson House at Wolston Park, which did have facilities for treating drug addicts, been closed and, if so, why was this action taken?

(3) Do courts currently refer young people directly to gaol after conviction for drug addiction?

(4) In the case of drug pedlars, where are they currently sent after conviction if (a) they are addicted themselves and (b) if they are not addicted?

(5) What are the current figures of addicts and pedlars who have been dealt with by the courts over the last six months and have they all needed medical treatment?

(6) What liaison is there between the Health Department and such institutions as Teen Challenge and does the Health Department actively encourage the work of Teen Challenge and similar agencies?

Answers:—

(1) "Inpatient facilities exist at Wacol Rehabilitation Clinics; Lowson House; Royal Brisbane Hospital; Wolston Park Hospital, Wacol; Townsville Base Hospital; Neuropsychiatric Unit, Chermiside Hospital. Any State hospital has facilities for

the treatment of drug dependent persons. Patients requiring specialised facilities are referred to the above centres."

(2) "Anderson House, Wolston Park Hospital, is no longer used for treatment of drug dependent persons. Numbers of drug dependent patients no longer warranted use of this ward for the purpose. I am further informed that at the time of transfer the seven remaining patients were removed to a convalescent ward where they were provided with separate staff and a special rehabilitation programme. The number has now decreased to six patients who are treated in a group with other young patients."

(3 to 5) "These matters do not come within the jurisdiction of my Department."

(6) "The Department of Health, through the Drug Education Section of the Queensland Health Education Council maintains liaison and close contact with various treatment and rehabilitation agencies, both government and private, including Teen Challenge, the Haven and the House of Freedom."

(b) **Mr. N. F. Jones**, pursuant to notice, asked The Premier,—

(1) What facilities are available for the rehabilitation of young drug offenders or addicts in (a) the city area, (b) provincial cities and (c) country centres?

(2) What are the locations of the facilities at each centre?

(3) What are the staff details at the centres?

(4) If no centre is available in any of the places listed, has any centre, either Government or voluntary, been closed in the last five years? If so, on what date did the centre close and at what address?

(5) At which places were no offenders referred to the centre by (a) courts, (b) the Police Department, (c) voluntary organisations and (d) parents or any other person or organisation?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) "State facilities for the rehabilitation of young drug addicts are available in (a) Brisbane as follows:— The Wacol Rehabilitation Clinics, The Psychiatric Clinic, Mary Street, Lawson House, Royal Brisbane Hospital, The Neuropsychiatric Unit at Chermiside Hospital; (b) The Townsville Hospital; (c) None. However, any State hospital has facilities for the treatment of drug addicts. Patients requiring specialised facilities are referred to the centres already mentioned."

(3) "No specific staff are wholly allocated to the treatment of drug addicts at these centres."

(4) "No Government centre treating drug addicts has closed in the last five years, although some reorganisation has been made of the facilities available at

Wolston Park Hospital. I am unaware of changes which may have occurred with voluntary groups."

(5) "If the Honourable Member cares to rephrase this portion of his Question so as to give a clearer understanding of the details he is seeking I will endeavour to assist him."

I draw the attention of honourable members to that portion of the question asked by Mr. N. F. Jones, who is to be congratulated on the interest shown by him in the drug problem, in which he asks what facilities are available for the rehabilitation of young drug offenders and what staff are employed at any such centres. As can be seen, the Premier replied that no specific staff are wholly allocated to the treatment of drug addicts at the centres. That is an admission by the Premier that we have no such facilities and no trained staff. That underlines my contention that no comparison can be drawn between the treatment of alcoholics and the treatment of drug addicts. An amazing set-up is provided by the State for the treatment of alcoholics—and throughout the world many millions of dollars are poured into the treatment of alcoholism—whereas no facilities are available for the treatment of drug addicts. That is a condemnation of Queensland.

As to the relation of marijuana to other drugs, a large proportion of people who take marijuana or cannabis—commonly called pot—also take other drugs. They have a psychoactive dependence on other drugs, such as alcohol, amphetamine, barbiturates, hallucinogens, or LSD, and morphine. Multiple-drug takers are much more common in Europe and the United States of America than in the East. This is interesting, because the use of marijuana and hashish originated in the East.

I often wonder why in our Western civilisation, with all its refinements and the good things given to people, who are looked after by socialist and conservative Governments from cradle to death, the initiative of people is broken and they are not allowed to do their own thing. They are told, "Take this and take that," and before we know where we are people are taking every damned thing around the place, including drugs on which they become hooked. This is because people become so fed up with life, believing it offers them nothing, and they wonder what is behind the curtain. They search for thrills and find them in the form of LSD, heroin and other hard drugs and then they are on the down grade.

Many people believe that the use of marijuana leads to addiction to heroin and morphine. Pharmacologically there is no connection between the two. However, because of the habit of taking drugs a large proportion of persons who take marijuana later take heroin, but, as I say, pharmacologically marijuana does not push people towards hard drugs.

People who are addicted to marijuana limit their social circle to a certain group—usually of the drug-imbibing type—with the result that the temptation is ever present and the drug is easier to obtain. It is only a short step to taking something stronger to get a greater thrill.

Chronic intoxication by marijuana or pot—the chronic use of it—gives people a weakened mental outlook on life and a poor orientation to facts; and they just don't care. They are out of step with their families and have to mix with a closed-circuit group, or a group of druggies, as they are called. They are virtually social outcasts. They need not be economic outcasts; quite often they get money and are not necessarily in the lower socio-economic group.

The manner of using marijuana is very important. Smoking is the most common way of imbibing it. If it is smoked, the effects take place in one to two minutes, with peak effect being reached in 20 to 30 minutes. Cannabis is probably more powerful when smoked. In this way, the smoke is inhaled directly into the lungs and the drug is absorbed rapidly into the bloodstream. The effects fade in three to four hours. It can be taken also with food or a beverage. In this way it takes effect in 30 minutes. The effects fade in eight hours. Taken in this way, the effects are slower to begin and last longer. People can be given pot in a supposedly innocent cigarette or in a beverage.

As I said earlier, one of the most powerful forms of the drug is the resin which contains about 5 per cent of the active principal. In this form it can be taken pure or with alcohol and other drinks. A cigarette impregnated with it can be smoked. The old Arabs used to smoke resin neat, piped through scented water, and then lie back and watch the girls run by.

How much of this drug is dangerous, and how much of it is not dangerous? A heavy smoker uses one to two grams of leaves a day, which would give him 30 to 60 milligrams of THC—tetrahydrocannabinol. A moderate smoker uses one to two cigarettes a day, which is equivalent to five to 10 milligrams of weed. Smoking two cigarettes virtually sends him round the world several times.

It is very interesting to point out that once the habit is formed it is almost impossible to break. It continues throughout life; the tendency is to come back to it. I have had patients who have started on pot, got onto heroin, were cured of heroin addiction, and then reverted to smoking pot, believing that it was all right. There seems to be considerably difficulty in breaking the habit of using this so-called innocent drug. These people, I believe, will eventually break down again and take to harder drugs.

The user's characteristics are rather interesting. Use of the drug is related to age. In Australia it is popular amongst adolescents and young adults. In India the drug has an even distribution. In Thailand and in Vietnam, where many of our soldiers picked up the habit, it is used mainly by the older people. This is one problem that is less habit-forming in women. In the East, fewer women than men use pot.

Another interesting point is that those who use marijuana have an unstructured existence. They have a strange life style. They mix in groups and do not conform with the usual procedures of social economics. They tend to gather in colonies or communes, show instability at school or in residence and at work. A big proportion of people in gaol have had the habit of smoking marijuana.

Heavy users show a failure to assume responsibility; they have a low frustration tolerance and they are emotionally immature. They become violent, although not as violent as the alcoholic. An alcoholic can be spontaneously violent. Drug users go through a sort of dreary phase before they become violent.

A big problem with children taking this drug is that, because of the effect upon their brains and their general outlook in life, they will, in a very passive manner, drift with the pushes and pulls of fate. As a result, usually they are poor students, have little ambition and do not make very good citizens. It is found that they start to delve into the mysteries and fantasies of life. They are inclined to become interested in occult worship and magic. Recently there was a great upsurge in devil adoration and the un-Christian and irreligious way of life. They join the spirit cult, believe in spirits and practise voodooism and various other things.

Why do people take drugs?

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Tell us about the aphrodisiacs.

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: The first reason people take drugs is curiosity—particularly group curiosity. The next is the desire to relax and enjoy a pleasant feeling. The third is that it becomes an aphrodisiac. For the sake of the honourable member for Archerfield and as it may be of great interest to him, I will discuss that in a moment. Another reason is the increased enjoyment of food and music. That can be a falsity, because often it does not increase oral acuity or appreciation of the finer tonal quality of music. Rather, the response is in the deeper sensorial areas in the brain.

Boredom, frustration and depression constitute other categories in the reasons for which drugs are taken. Instances are to be found in war, when troops have nothing to do but fight. This has happened in Vietnam, yet a lot of the troops in Vietnam had precious little fighting to do. Some people use drugs to increase endurance or to allay

fatigue. That was a practice with professional murderers before they did a job. They would fill themselves up on pot and then do the deed for their employers.

Drug-taking is to be found in religious rituals. The old Indian mendicant priest who used to wander round and who died at about the age of 32, usually of chronic bronchitis or pneumonia, was constantly under the influence of marijuana. Lastly, many of the African tribes used to take it before they went into battle. It was like, "Before the battle, mother, I had a big dose of rum and was sick before I got there."

The problems in our social system that tend to cause drug addiction are interesting. Many kids who take drugs out of curiosity think of it as a social lubricant. They say, "I will have one of these and I will ease up and be able to talk to so-and-so." It has been found that the heavier use of drugs is associated with more than the desire to be socially affable. It is related to the increase in industrialisation, urbanisation, social conflicts such as the Vietnamese war and boredom—sitting around for hours or many days doing nothing. There is nothing as effective in getting a soldier interested as saying to him, "Brother, there is going to be a bit of shooting." Suddenly his boredom disappears. The same applies in places where there is a considerable amount of unemployment or in migrant camps, where people are sitting about contemplating the problems of their future. They say, "What is going to happen to us? How are we going?" I think that probably the refugees from Vietnam and Portuguese Timor are thinking the same about our Federal Government because, if the Federal Government acts as quickly towards their plight as it did in relation to the Darwin catastrophe, these poor devils will be in refugee camps when I am an old man and my kids are involved in the next war. I cannot see the Federal Government getting off its tail to do anything constructive.

Mr. Jensen: Send them all back to Timor. What do we want them here for?

Dr. SCOTT-YOUNG: This is the land of freedom, as preached and practised by Gough Whitlam. We have no alliances; we don't believe in war; we want to help our fellow man. He has not practised it in those cases, has he?

It is not necessarily poverty that causes a predisposition to drug addiction and the inhalation of marijuana. It is rather interesting that those who are addicted to these drugs are in the middle-class groups, not the poor groups. The effects of drugs on the family are similar to those of alcohol; they cause disruption, disharmony and other forms of trouble. They also lead to the taking of harder drugs.

I now wish to deal with the relationship of cannabis and crime. In that regard, it should be noted that loss of control during intoxication may result in violence or other

forms of impulsive behaviour. Cannabis-induced lethargy may lead to loss of legitimate earnings and hence to petty thieving. Cannabis may provide people predisposed to criminality with the courage to commit anti-social acts. In juvenile groups, it appears, the cannabis users are less likely to show aggression than those who take alcohol. Alcohol is associated with more crime and violence. Reactions to alcohol plus cannabis are not well documented.

What is urgently needed in this country is a national programme of education on drugs of addiction. What is needed next, and what is needed most in this State, is a State education programme. And it is needed now. No young man wants to run the risk of the permanent brain damage that can be caused by these drugs. No young man wants to see his male hormones reduced to 50 per cent, and his sperm count to nil. No young person wants to see his cellular processes, his chromosomes and his DNA disrupted, with the result that he produces abnormal children.

I give a final warning to all young males. It is no good their thinking that they will be able to crawl into bed with a blonde when they are in their late thirties if they are addicted to drugs, because by that age they will be fat and impotent. That will happen to them if they continue to use pot. It is a dangerous drug, and no-one should listen to the silly talk that there are greater problems to worry about. There are in fact none greater. In one way therefore I cannot say one good word for the Budget because I find no allocation to help prevent drug addiction. It is said, "We have allocated money for Wolston Park and various other similar places." But the Premier said on 17 October, "No specific staff are wholly allocated to the treatment of drug addicts at these centres."

Mr. LAMOND (Wynnum) (7.37 p.m.): The Treasurer has been called upon to bring down a Budget at a time in the history of Queensland which has seen but few parallels. Over the past 10 years there has been a period of unparalleled prosperity; a period of runaway spending; a period of buoyant investment; a period of top world investment, both inside and outside Australia; a period in which, whilst some inflation was present, it was kept to a workable level; and a period of buoyant and full employment. This was followed by a period in 1973 of unparalleled spending by the Federal Government. It was only in the first stage of the unfortunate creation of a welfare state that the people of Australia began to think that contributions to society and hard work were part of an outdated system.

A rapid loss of confidence in the private sector and an unworkable restriction on world investment in Australia resulted in removal from the private sector of many companies and employers who found it impossible to produce and compete in this

newly created climate of socialism. It was wisely said by a well-known statesman in 1974 that the Government in Canberra had brought inflation and unemployment within the reach of everyone. These unwise policies and changes in Australia's economy had in a short time virtually brought Australia to her knees.

Mr. Jensen: Tell us about the fishing industry.

Mr. LAMOND: I will in a moment. It is against a back-drop of unemployment and record inflation that the Treasurer had to formulate a Budget that would work and, at the same time, do the least damage to all sectors of the Queensland community. In preparing the Budget, he had to bear in mind that a budget, like a balance sheet, has a debit and a credit side. In facing this problem he had to realise that many of the avenues of finance had already been tapped by the Australian Government.

In the time permitted to me it is my intention to speak on matters which I feel more directly affect the electorate of Wynnum. I know that the Treasurer will accept comment and constructive criticism of the various aspects of this Budget, and I am also aware that, in his deliberations on the preparations of this Budget, the Treasurer, with his long experience in this portfolio, will have considered most of the aspects which I hope to bring forward.

The total funding for housing, including the \$31,000,000 made available by the Australian Government, is \$61,000,000. There is a drop of some 30 per cent in the Commonwealth allocation to Queensland, but taking into consideration the effect of inflation we are looking at an effective drop of some 45 per cent.

Our first reaction to such a reduced figure is to consider the very drastic effect that this will have on those needing accommodation in this State. This is a very vital point. We must look further at the over-all effects that this downward trend in home-building has on employment, building and commerce and on those trades associated with the building industry. The effects are far reaching and are causing hardship in many sections of the community. In Queensland alone the private sector has been greatly affected and figures reveal that the number of buildings commenced in 1973-74 was some 29,000 while those commenced in 1974-75 totalled only 17,000, or a drop of some 12,000 building jobs started in this State.

An Honourable Member: They have dropped 50 per cent in the last month.

Mr. LAMOND: That would be right, too. In the field of the funding by the Commonwealth to the various States I am advised that as at 31 December Queensland, with some 15 per cent of the population of Australia, had received only 8.5 per cent of the Commonwealth housing budget while South

Australia, with 9 per cent of the population, had received some 15.5 per cent of the total allocation.

Mr. Jensen: South Australia put in for more money than Queensland did and got it.

Mr. LAMOND: I do not agree. On the argument put forward by a member of the Opposition, the more one puts in for, the more one will get. That is a ridiculous argument. To pursue my point, Tasmania, with 3 per cent of the population, had received some 6 per cent of the Commonwealth housing grant.

An Honourable Member: They've got a Labor Government.

Mr. LAMOND: That is the point I was trying to make.

Many other honourable members have expressed their feelings about the undoubted effect that the policies of the Australian Government have had on the economy and I must point out that the Australian Government stands condemned for its over-all approach to housing, particularly its percentage allocation to Queensland. It would appear that the Federal Government has also been hell-bent on taking away from Australians and Australia the distinction of being the country with the greatest percentage of home owners in the world. It is inconceivable that such action should be taken by any Government in the early stages of a country's growth.

The next point upon which I would like to comment is pensioner concessions. The concession of 50 per cent of the normal adult fare on urban private buses will do much to give relief and freedom of movement and travel to pensioners and others in the community who are on a fixed income.

In the Railway Estimates there is an allocation of about \$6,300,000 for additional services, and I hope these will include additional services on suburban railway lines. If commuters could be attracted to rail services, I think it would have a very definite effect in helping to control the ever-increasing number of motor vehicles on the road.

I note with interest that the Department of Harbours and Marine will receive about \$4,500,000, and I hope that much of that money will be spent in the ports along the Queensland coast. There is no doubt that over a period sections of the coast have been neglected in many ways because insufficient finance has been available. It is to be hoped that the money now provided can be used for much needed navigational aids along the Queensland coast.

The provision of a subsidy of about \$1,200,000 for home-nursing services and the decision to subsidise the cost of furnishings for aged persons homes by 50 per cent will do much to assist in overcoming problems in these two areas.

It is pleasing to see that the subsidy for ambulance services is to be increased from 75c in the dollar to one of \$ for \$, and this will be of great assistance. However, I must impress on honourable members that, with few exceptions, ambulance brigades throughout Queensland are experiencing great hardship, and the continuation of services is a big problem to them. I commend the Treasurer for his action in supporting this very necessary service.

In dealing with hospital services, I refer specifically to the indication by the Treasurer that about \$45,000,000 would be made available this year for the building programme and establishment of hospital services, compared with an allocation of about \$18,000,000 last year. This should allow the continuation and extension of hospitals in various districts where they are needed, and I refer particularly to Wynnum.

Although the Wynnum district comes within the boundaries of the Greater Brisbane area, it is a district in its own right, with its own autonomy, servicing a population of about 50,000 people. The Government, in its wisdom and as part of its policy of decentralisation, has seen fit to establish in the district branches of various Government departments. It should continue that theme in the field of hospital services, and the establishment of a hospital in the Wynnum area would do much to meet the needs of the public and, at the same time, relieve pressure on the major hospitals in Brisbane.

Records will show that each year some 2,000 patients travel by ambulance from the Wynnum district to major hospital centres in Brisbane. I am advised that subscribers to the ambulance in most areas, and in the Wynnum district in particular, represent about 33 per cent of the population. It is therefore reasonable to assume that an additional 4,000 people travel by private transport to avail themselves of hospital services and attention in Brisbane, making a total of about 6,000 people from the Wynnum area who require medical services or hospitalisation. Surveys show that most of the population growth will occur on the south-eastern side of Brisbane, and that in itself would support the establishment of a hospital in that area.

The establishment of decentralised hospitals does much for the traffic flow to major hospitals in Brisbane, bearing in mind that not only patients travel to hospitals; a great number of relatives and friends visiting them further congest the roads. Comments were made earlier this year by the Minister for Health about peripheral hospitals. Peripheral hospitals are a forward-thinking idea and will do much to relieve the problem.

We look back at the barbaric system of extracting taxation in the earlier period of our civilisation. I am sure that those in the future will look back to the early part of the 20th century with similar thoughts about the present system of taking tax from the

dead. I refer, of course, to death duties. In abolishing death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse, the Treasurer has implemented the thoughts and wishes of Government members. Queensland has taken the lead, but it is only the first step. We must now turn quickly to the complete abolition of death duties in all forms so that the Australian Government can follow our example. The Auditor-General's Annual Report for 1975 indicated that duties collected totalled \$23,500,000. The Treasurer told us at the time of bringing down the Budget that the removal of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse would mean a loss of \$5,000,000 in Consolidated Revenue. Obviously that represents about 20 per cent of the annual revenue from death duties.

While it should be stressed that the exemption of estates passing from spouse to spouse is very desirable, statistics will prove that in most cases husbands and wives dying from normal causes will die within five years of each other at a later period in their life when they have not the desire or ability to dispose of the estate accumulated as a result of the death of the partner. It is hard to accumulate assets. The accumulation of assets is brought about by the desire for security, not only of husband for wife or of wife for husband but for the family.

Previous speakers have referred to the devastating effect that death duties have had on estates of some magnitude. In many cases death duties have completely destroyed the assets of a family. However, I shall refer to examples of smaller estates. An estate in the vicinity of \$32,000 left to a blood relative over the age of 21 years attracts death duties at the rate of 8.5 per cent, which means that an adult descendant beneficiary is called on to pay \$2,700. An estate of \$66,000 attracts duties at the rate of 11.5 per cent, which results in the descendant beneficiary having to pay \$7,500. In this period of inflation it is not unusual for an estate to be worth \$50,000. Death duties are causing hardship right across the board.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Row): Order! There is too much audible conversation, particularly on my left.

Mr. LAMOND: Although exemption from death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse is a great relief I should like to see relief as early as possible from all death duties. I am hopeful that the Treasurer will see fit in future Budgets ultimately to phase out death duties at all stages.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I think it is fair to say that we have started to phase it out now, but we cannot do it all at once.

Mr. LAMOND: I realise that. It is felt by certain sections of the community, and possibly rightly so, that in recent times situations have arisen where death duties have been paid on the passing of sizeable estates from spouse to spouse and now

beneficiaries over the age of 21 years will be called upon to pay the death duties to which I referred earlier.

As to pay-roll tax, the doubling of the exemption level to \$41,600 will give considerable relief to those small businesses that have a low number of employees, and the relief provided for employers with pay-rolls of between \$41,600 and \$72,800 will give confidence back to the employers in that bracket. There is no doubt that the imposition of various forms of taxation, permit fees and other charges has done much to destroy that vital section of our community comprising the small businessmen. They play an intricate part in the economy of our nation. I am pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit in his Budget to provide some relief to them.

The Treasurer is to be congratulated on his move to make available by way of general purpose grants to primary schools the sum of \$100 per school plus \$4 per student per annum. This will greatly assist primary schools to purchase items of equipment and to provide miscellaneous services that are presently provided from school committee funds.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Has the Treasurer told you you are getting a new high school at Wynnum?

Mr. LAMOND: Not as yet.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: Well, I'll tell you.

Mr. LAMOND: That is excellent. I am sure he will tell me in due course. If Wynnum is to get a new high school, it is only because I have worked hard continually to obtain education improvements in my electorate.

As I was saying, p. & c. associations throughout the State will be relieved of much of the pressure of providing equipment and services. They are called on to use almost every known method of raising funds, and the payment of these general purpose grants will give them more time to engage in school activities.

I am pleased to see that the Treasurer has increased the subsidies payable on high school assembly halls from \$60,000 to \$84,000. Having been involved in the erection of an assembly hall, I am fully aware of the nature of the work entailed. The subsidy payable for high school swimming pools is to be increased to \$50,000. Today I applied to the Treasurer on behalf of a school in my electorate for financial assistance for its swimming pool project. As well, the subsidy payable on a primary school activities building is to be raised to \$35,000.

In the past, although p. & c. associations have been greatly assisted by the Government, they have been deprived of funds.

Mr. K. J. Hooper: I don't want to interrupt you, but would you prefer to see a new high school in your electorate or an electoral redistribution?

Mr. LAMOND: I am very happy to answer. I would much sooner see a new high school. On 7 December last I proved that I could take the electorate of Wynnum from the Labor Party although it had held it for 30-odd years. I did so after a six-weeks campaign. I would much sooner have a high school. I do not need a redistribution to hold that seat from the Labor Party.

The increase of 8 per cent in police strength is a good planning measure. It is essential if we are to control the unfortunate, ever-increasing number of law-breakers. The plan to return police officers to the beat in the metropolitan and provincial city areas will do much to prevent crime at the point of inception. Getting police out of the stations has always been an interesting exercise. Earlier speakers referred to the employment of the clerical staff and stenographers. I have always wondered why we should require well-trained police officers—men trained to enforce law—to sit at a typewriter and tap out reports usually with one or two fingers. I hope that this move will allow police officers to get out and do the job that they have to do.

The increase which brings sporting subsidies to \$1,770,000 is welcome. At the same time extra provision has been made for youth leadership training. In all, some \$2,500,000 has been allocated in direct payments for sport, youth and recreational purposes. That demonstrates our Government's interest in this side of the life of our community and its realisation of its importance. Last year the additional finance provided in the form of subsidy in this sphere did much to aid many of these bodies in Queensland.

The provision of \$4,800,000 for the development of industrial estates will do much for employment and industry. It will have an indirect effect on the decentralisation of industry throughout the State and will bring employment opportunities closer to those seeking employment. Industry, both small and large, is a vital artery carrying an important section of the flow of employment and prosperity within the State. It cannot be overlooked.

Mr. Jensen: Tell us how you won the seat?

Mr. LAMOND: I shall in a moment.

I note with interest that expenditure on air pollution control in 1974-75 totalled \$203,000 and that for 1975-76 the allocation is increased by about \$132,000. The increase in staff from 20 to 29 is pleasing. I hope that it is sufficient to handle the vast task. Not many years ago we looked with horror at air pollution of the cities in America, Europe, the United Kingdom, and many

other parts of the world. In a naive way we said, "It cannot happen here." It has happened here. When returning from ocean-racing on a number of occasions, I have had little difficulty in charting a course from out at sea to Brisbane. Early in the morning, when one looks at Brisbane from out at sea, it is easy to see the mushroom of air pollution hanging over the city. I am certain that honourable members who travel to Brisbane from Toowoomba, or over Cunningham's Gap have little difficulty in pinpointing Brisbane by its mushroom of pollution.

The fact that Brisbane is situated on the banks of a river in a valley between two ranges and has its air flow controlled by prevailing winds from the south-east and the north-east results in a pressure of air creating a pocket around our city, causing the stalling and subsequent settling of pollution. The problem is not restricted to the capital of Queensland. Every major city in our State is affected by this man-made disease known as air pollution. We must look seriously at air pollution before it is too late.

In the field of education I note that the expenditure this year will increase by 42.8 per cent. That is very pleasing.

There are many other factors on which I would like to speak if I had the time. One of them is transport, which has been commented on by a number of members. I, like all other members, would be pleased if it were not necessary to increase freight costs by 40 per cent. However, having travelled by rail and having sent goods by rail in recent years, I for one have been quite alarmed at how cheap rail transport is in Queensland. I am quite sure an upward movement in the charges is overdue. I hope that, when the Treasurer allocates the increases to the various sections of rail transport, he will give consideration to those sectors of industry and primary industries of the State that are experiencing financial difficulties rather than implementing this increase across the board.

The remote-area allowance for students has done and is doing much not only for those children in areas that need assistance but also for schools. I quote as an example the Moreton Bay College, which is in my electorate. Recently, because of the inability of the organisation to attract sufficient students, it was found necessary to announce that it would close. I feel that it was as a result of decisions reflected in the Budget and a deputation on behalf of the school to the Minister for Education that an announcement was made last week that the school would remain open. The increase in the remote-area allowance has been a forward move, and its beneficial effect has been reflected in my electorate.

One could talk at great length about the effect on the economy of the increases in conveyancing charges, stamp duty, driving licence fees and Titles Office fees. However, I respect the Treasurer's judgment. They are all sectors which for many years have

been within the State's taxing powers. I do not feel that the additional conveyancing charge will have any great effect on the economy or on the sale of real estate. Possibly the greatest effect on the sale of real estate today would be the unserviceable interest rates which many authorities have to charge a couple purchasing a home. In many cases a young couple is incapable of servicing a loan and the deposit required is too high. When we consider the incredible interest rates presently prevailing, the small amount involved in conveyancing fees is of little consequence.

There are other points within the Budget. However, I prefer to restrict myself to the areas that concern my area more closely. In conclusion, I compliment the Treasurer, as I said earlier, for bringing down a Budget in a period of great difficulty—a period when most sectors of the community are having great difficulty in meeting their overheads. I feel that government is very little different from business, and that the Queensland Government feels a responsibility to produce a Budget which in effect balances the books. This does not appear to be the thinking of the Commonwealth Government.

I commend the Budget to the Committee, and I congratulate the Treasurer on bringing down such a Financial Statement in a difficult period.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (8.11 p.m.): It has been my privilege for many years now to speak to Treasurer's Financial Statements, and also to try to make contributions to the debates on these very important and complex documents. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, in order to make a detailed and exhaustive examination of the Budget one would need to have access to all receipts and documents from the Treasury Department, and also very high qualifications to understand them fully. I make that statement without hesitation and without fear of being regarded as below average intelligence. The Budget is in fact a difficult document to understand. That is why I feel that in this debate members are allowed the privilege of speaking on a wide range of subjects, some well removed from the Budget. If we were to be confined to the Budget, I think that many of us would very quickly be found wanting.

Queenslanders have been informed in this Budget that they will pay an additional \$44,850,000 in taxes and charges. All sections of the community will certainly feel the brunt of such increases. Most important, of course, is the fact that those on lower incomes will be the hardest hit. I think their leader pointed this out very succinctly when he said in this paragraph that I have before me—

"Queenslanders must understand that when it costs more to run their cars, more to buy a home or land, and more to sign a

cheque, it is their Queensland National-Liberal Government that bears the sole guilt for this increased taxation."

He went on to say—

"Likewise when Queenslanders in provincial and country areas pay more for their goods and primary producers experience export difficulties because of the savage new freight rises, again it is their Queensland National-Liberal Government that bears the sole brunt."

The Government must bear responsibility for this increased taxation. I think that different priorities could have been given to many of the charges.

For a long time now I have been dismayed at many of the subsidies paid by the Government. I think subsidies to certain sporting clubs have already been mentioned in this Chamber. I think I can say without fear of contradiction by any member that the Labor Party never begrudges the payment of any subsidy to a junior club or association. We are in favour of anything that assists in the training of youth and keeps them occupied in good, healthy sport. But we see in the Budget that the Royal Queensland Bowls Association is to be given \$90,022, the Queensland Golf Union \$138,359, and the Queensland Soccer Federation \$39,485 as subsidies or grants. They are all organisations catering for adults.

Let us also bear in mind that when these clubs expand, as they have over the last few years, the first thing that takes place is the provision of a bar. They cannot run their sport unless they set up a bar. I will never let up in my attack on the sale of liquor by sporting clubs. One can go to any sporting club in the suburbs or even in the country at this time of the evening and find hundreds of cars parked outside. These clubs are catering not for the youth of the city or the suburb, but for the adult population. I have no complaints against the legitimate hotel-keeper, who is engaged in a commercial undertaking and pays his taxes, and high taxes at that, but I will always object to the extension of the hotel system into sporting complexes. That is the trouble today. We cannot get a sporting club without a bar, and some have two bars, one upstairs and one downstairs.

Mr. Aikens: Do you suggest these sporting clubs are merely sly-grog shops?

Mr. DEAN: There is no sly grog about it. The honourable member can forget the word "sly"; it is done out in the open and within the framework of the law as far as I can see, but that does not make it morally right by any stretch of the imagination.

Mr. Lamont: I think you should morally reject any votes from a drinker in a club.

Mr. DEAN: I have no objection to the legitimate hotel trade, but as far as these sporting clubs are concerned I object strongly

to their being granted subsidies, which must go indirectly to the development of the liquor traffic.

I come now to the subjects of education and cultural activities, especially our Government school system. I think much of this money that is spread around the many organisations, especially some of these adult sporting clubs, would be better spent if it was channelled into school requirements. Schools in the Sandgate area are crying out for very necessary improvements. Some of this need arises through malicious damage and fires, but as well we still have demountable buildings. I know all honourable members have this problem. I am not the only one with complaints about the lack of facilities for the children of Queensland, and I feel that some of the Treasurer's priorities are wrong, especially his allocation of money to some of these sporting organisations. I think more emphasis should be placed on our schools. Let us begin spending money at home before we start spreading the money around outside.

Some of the money that has been paid as subsidies to these clubs to which I referred would have been better spent on adult education. A very good job is being done in adult education in this State. I have attended many of the classes to see how they are run and administered. The staff in charge are very efficient. The director of that section of the Education Department does an excellent job. He has a very good staff under him, making all kinds of education available to adults, and their work is much appreciated. Adult education is not confined to night classes. There are many day classes for the housewife and anyone else who has the opportunity and the desire to take advantage of the different courses available. These facilities could be greatly expanded and a little more comfort could be given to those attending these classes if we spent a bit more money for this purpose. Adult education should be high on the list of priorities.

We find that a great deal of money is spent in areas that are not as important, as far as I am concerned, as the State school system. Although there are many schools in the Sandgate electorate, I wish to refer particularly to the main primary school, which is the oldest school in the area. Because of the extension of the school buildings and the erection of temporary classrooms, very little playground area is left. The department has said for some time that an area would be found on which to build a new school. Several sites have been inspected, and I am sure that the department has made up its mind which area it will use. However, that is as far as it has gone. It is on paper and it finishes there.

If the Treasurer is able to obtain any additional finance for education, I appeal to him to ensure that it is used where it is most needed, that is, in the State school system. Many Queensland teachers are working under conditions of extreme hardship. I suppose they stay in the teaching service

only because they like teaching children. If they had the same opportunities as employees in industry to move to other fields, I think the Education Department would lose many of its good teachers.

While I am dealing with schools, I stress the need for the Government to consider seriously the problem of vandalism at schools during the absence of students and staff, both at night and at week-ends. The appointment of full-time residential caretakers is long overdue. I am aware that that request has been made before, but I think it should be pressed as strongly as possible. In high schools, for example, there is very valuable science equipment and other valuable educational equipment.

Sir Gordon Chalk: Do you mean 24 hours a day?

Mr. DEAN: Yes, 24 hours a day, and even to the extent of having someone living on the premises. It could be a home for a couple, and the caretaker could have a dog, if he wished, to assist him on his patrols of the grounds and the school buildings.

Mr. Aikens: You would have to work them three shifts a day, with overtime at week-ends.

Mr. DEAN: It could be worked out if full residential facilities were provided. Many years ago, as the Leader of the Opposition reminds me, teachers lived on school premises. I do not expect teachers to spend 24 hours a day in the school atmosphere or to live at the school. The provision of caretakers would require the allocation of additional money, but I am sure it would pay handsomely in the long run. In this way the Government would be providing accommodation for someone and, at the same time, giving full-time protection to valuable school buildings and equipment.

Mr. Houston: Even having someone on the premises would help.

Mr. DEAN: I accept the interjection of the honourable member for Bulimba. If someone was on the premises, many vandals would not enter the confines of the school. They would know that they could be intercepted and apprehended if they attempted to do any damage.

Only a few weeks ago another portion of the Sandgate school was almost lost. It was not, thanks to the alertness of a person who saw preparations being made for a fire. There have been three fires at the school already, and it is not the only school in Queensland to which vandals have set fire.

It is pleasing to see that the new Conservatorium of Music, which comes under the control of the Department of Education and Cultural Activities, has been completed in the Botanic Gardens. However, as modern as it is in many ways, it has been spoilt to a certain degree by a failure to provide a few additional refinements and facilities

for the general public, and in particular for certain people in the community. Aged and infirm people have difficulty in walking up some of the stairs and awkward parts of the pathway to the conservatorium.

It is a pity that the architects did not take notice of overseas trends. When new public buildings are being planned overseas, provision is made for ramps for the use of people in wheel-chairs. Unfortunately we have many paraplegics and others who are confined to wheel-chairs, but they are still playing their part in the community to the best of their ability. That provision was neglected in the conservatorium. Neither ramps nor handrails have been provided. To some that might sound a very trivial matter, but I know it is a great inconvenience to the aged and those with a disability not to have those facilities when they attend performances. I wrote a letter to the director explaining what I have said tonight, and he is going to do the best he can.

I hope that in the planning of all future public buildings architects will be instructed to make provision for all sections of the community. Railway stations have been modernised, particularly Brunswick Street and Central, but again certain conveniences have not been provided for people with physical disabilities. Those people should not be overlooked just for the sake of a few extra dollars, which would be all that would be involved in the over-all planning of the buildings. Architects go overseas in order to keep abreast of overseas trends. The mistakes that were made in the conservatorium and the railway stations should not be made. I sincerely hope that when plans for future buildings are being drawn up architects will provide the facilities I have mentioned.

From time to time the Minister for Health has referred to the habit of smoking. I am not so concerned about older people, but I am concerned about the lack of education for young people on the dangers of smoking. I sincerely hope the Minister will join with the Federal authorities on this matter. The Federal Minister for Health has given prominence to the non-smoking campaign, particularly on public transport. Nobody takes much notice of the no-smoking signs in railway carriages. Stronger action should be taken against offenders. A strong education programme should be launched on television and in the Press, pointing out to young people the dangers of this addictive habit. Tobacco is a powerful drug. Of course, adults can please themselves what they do, but alerting youngsters to the dangers of smoking, particularly over-indulgence in the habit, should be part of the curriculum of all schools. I couple with that problem drink-driving.

Mr. Doumany: Cut it out.

Mr. DEAN: I don't think the drink-driver can be mentioned too often. If many honourable members gave the campaign their support, it could be conducted on a much

wider scale. Statistics released show that 40 per cent of road deaths are attributable to the consumption of alcohol.

Mr. Lamont: What are your statistics?

Mr. DEAN: I am quite satisfied to have those supplied by the statistician.

Prior to the last State election the Government promised that it would implement a co-ordinated public transport system in the city of Brisbane. I realise that from time to time surveys are conducted, but during peak hours the public transport system in the metropolitan area is quite inadequate. It is no good expecting the Brisbane City Council to implement such a system, as it would be beyond the council's capacity to do so. Some people may claim that the council has made a mess of public transport. I would say the council has done the best it can in the circumstances. It is, of course, limited by finance. It is time that the Government honoured its pre-election promise to provide an efficient public transport system in Brisbane.

Although many suburban rail services have been improved, they benefit only certain sections of the community.

Mr. Burns: They haven't even got enough carriages.

Mr. DEAN: The Railway Department is short of many things.

On behalf of my electoral neighbour, the honourable member for Redcliffe, I ask the Government to extend the suburban railway system to the Redcliffe Peninsula as soon as possible. Every day of the week my electorate suffers from traffic congestion caused by motorists travelling to and from Redcliffe. Sometimes it is impossible for local residents to drive out of their premises onto the roadway without having to force their way into a line of traffic.

Mr. Houston: The honourable member for Redcliffe gave the bridge away when he backed Redcliffe against Wests. Do you remember when he said that?

Mr. DEAN: I was not in the Chamber at the time. The sooner Redcliffe is connected to Sandgate by rail the better it will be for people in both areas.

I hope that in the very near future a commencement will be made on the construction at Sandgate of a new "Eventide". The inmates could not receive better treatment from the dedicated staff there, but the old Air Force buildings in which they are housed have outlived their usefulness. They were constructed during World War II. From time to time the Government has promised a new "Eventide" and I sincerely hope that work will commence on the new complex within 18 months. The daily average number of residents there is between 800 and 1,000. The time is long overdue for a start on a new "Eventide".

Mr. Lindsay: Do you know the percentages of men and women in "Eventide"?

Mr. DEAN: At a guess, I would say the ratio of females to males is 2 to 1.

Mr. Burns: You've been advocating a new building there for years.

Mr. DEAN: Since 1960. My predecessor made the same request.

The renewal of the police station at Sandgate is long overdue. We have a modern court-house and ambulance service but police conditions at Sandgate are atrocious. The senior sergeant and his staff work under great difficulty. I was down there only yesterday and saw the difficulties under which they work. As honourable members probably know, we have male and female police officers at Sandgate, but the policewomen have no proper facilities. Employees in outside industry wouldn't tolerate it. They would be talking strike—and rightly so. The police staff do a great deal of work at Sandgate. In fact, I believe it is one of the busiest police stations in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Jensen: Does the Minister for Police ever go down there to look at it?

Mr. DEAN: I have had the Minister for Police down there. He gave me a sympathetic hearing, but that is not good enough. A new police station is well overdue. The police districts are to be changed. Perhaps when that is done we will get a new police station. I try to put myself in the position of the police sergeant and his staff. I certainly would not like to work under such conditions, and I am sure that no honourable member would. There would be an outcry if we had to put up with conditions similar to those at the Sandgate Police Station. I emphasise that it is a very busy station.

Mr. Yewdale: They have better conditions than the T.A.B. staff.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member should not start me on the T.A.B. staff. I am tempted to comment on that—I have the report here—but I shall not do so.

Mr. Lamont: Take a punt.

Mr. DEAN: It is too big a temptation. I shudder when I read of the millions of dollars raised last year by the T.A.B. Why is the money raised? I will not go off on that tangent. I refuse to do so. I could have based my whole speech on T.A.B. dividends.

I am sure that honourable members are becoming a little tired of the rather tedious nature of the debate. Many of us feel that we are duty bound to make a contribution. Indeed, it is an opportune time—and I have taken advantage of it—to push the local barrow. We should do this because things tend to be overlooked if we do not raise them.

As I said earlier it would be very foolish for me to try to discuss the Financial Statement in detail after my leader made a comprehensive survey of the financial position of the State. I would have been very interested in seeing the kind of Financial Statement presented by the Treasurer if there had been a change of atmosphere in the Federal sphere. I wonder what excuses would have been used by him for the world-wide inflation if a different Government had been in office in Canberra. He should consider himself very fortunate in having a good scapegoat on this occasion.

Mr. Houston: It has been very generous to Queensland.

Mr. DEAN: My word it has. I could quote figures from my leader's speech. I am sure they are authentic, because he would not have used them if they were not.

A Government Member interjected.

Mr. DEAN: I am quite confident that they are authentic. Being a leader, he would not quote figures that he had not checked. As he said, compared with previous years, the sum made available by the Federal Government this year has been enormous.

One thing that must be remembered above all else is that the Labor Government in Canberra has introduced many innovations into community life. If it is removed from power and Mr. Fraser becomes Prime Minister many of the new trends it introduced will remain. They will remain for a long, long time.

Finally, as I said before, I wonder what excuse the Treasurer would have given if the Government in power in Canberra had been of a different political colour. Nevertheless, we wait for the implementation of the Budget to see if the expectations and promises contained in it will come to fruition.

Mr. NEAL (Balonne) (8.41 p.m.): I rise to support the Treasurer in this Budget debate. In his closing remarks the honourable member for Sandgate said that he wondered what sort of Budget would have been introduced if the atmosphere in the Federal sphere had been changed. Let me say that there is no doubt that it would have been a much better Budget if there had been a change in Canberra. I am quite sure that the honourable member and the rest of Australia will in a short space of time see such a change.

We can only agree with him when he says that he wonders what we would have done if we did not have as a scapegoat the Government in Canberra. We certainly agree with his thinking that we do have a scapegoat in Canberra. The honourable member for Sandgate alluded to the money we have received from the Federal Government. Naturally we expect to get money from the Federal Government, which is benefiting by the tremendous rip-off from increased taxation resulting from the inflation they have created. Why shouldn't we get our fair share of that money?

I turn now to the Queensland Budget. Generally speaking, Queenslanders can be thankful that a reasonably good Budget has been introduced, especially when one considers the difficult circumstances under which it was framed. One does not have to speculate on the source of those difficult circumstances. Economic turmoil, unemployment, galloping inflation, lack of business confidence and national bungling are the direct result of the socialist rabble presently occupying the Canberra Treasury bench that has the hide to call itself the Australian Government. What a spectacle we are presently witnessing.

In such an atmosphere of instability, the Treasurer has certainly had to look into a crystal ball in an endeavour to meet the needs of this State for the next 12 months. It is to his credit that the State had a deficit of only \$8,350,000 at the end of the last financial year. What a contrast that is to the economic madness that prevails in Canberra, where the spending was some \$2,000 million in excess of the budgeted figure for the last financial year! That was not to be the end of the massive spending. Only last week it was announced that the Commonwealth deficit for the first three months of the 1975-76 financial year was almost \$1,900 million. What did the Federal Treasurer say about that? Mr. Hayden said that this was good news, and if the deficit got larger that would be a welcome result consistent with a much healthier situation in the economy. He also said that it could be as long as three years, certainly two, before we see a rather heartening lowering of the inflation rate.

It is small wonder that there is a lack of confidence in the private sector. The socialists in Canberra are quite content to accept a minimum of 15 per cent inflation for another three years. They do not wish to halt this spiralling; it suits their cause. They know that it is sending private industry to the wall. They have a vested interest in inflation.

Mr. Jensen: Which Minister's press secretary wrote this for you?

Mr. NEAL: Because the honourable member for Bundaberg cannot get a decent brief, it does not mean that I cannot get one. I write my own speeches.

As I said, inflation suits the Federal Government's cause because it knows that it is sending private industry to the wall. They have a vested interest in inflation, as it suits them in their socialist plan for mediocrity for all Australians. Until inflation is brought under control, and until the Government takes serious steps to halt its economically mad policies, none of the problems afflicting this nation will be solved.

Mr. Hayden paid only lip-service in his Budget speech to the problem of inflation. He said—

“On the economic front inflation is the nation’s most menacing enemy. We aim to curb it.”

What a laugh! He continued—

“Unless this aim is achieved, the nation’s productive capacity will run down and job opportunities will diminish.”

He went on further to say—

“Our present level of unemployment is too high. If we fail to control inflation, unemployment will get worse. It is inflation itself which is the central policy problem. More inflation simply leads to more unemployment.”

He certainly knows where the problems lie, but he has not taken one single, solitary step to overcome them. Rather he has added fuel to the flames.

Mr. Jensen: We would certainly like to know how you would go if Mr. Speaker’s ruling about reading speeches was adhered to.

Mr. NEAL: If the honourable member would listen for a while, he might learn something.

Mr. Doumany: That would be impossible.

Mr. NEAL: I agree with the honourable member for Kurilpa that that would be impossible.

Having outlined some of the difficulties which faced the Treasurer when framing the Budget, I now wish to deal with some of the matters that affect us and, in particular, people in my area. Education has long been a vexed issue in the outlying areas of the State. The increase of 50 per cent in the remote-area allowances from the beginning of next year—from \$160 to \$240 per annum for children in grades 6 and 7, from \$200 to \$300 for children in grades 8, 9 and 10, and from \$250 to \$375 for children in grades 11 and 12—will be well received. Personally I believe that in the interests of the education of children in remote areas, those allowances could perhaps have been increased even more.

The increase in the per capita grants to non-State schools will also be well received. A number of boarding schools are experiencing difficulty in carrying on. The cost spiral has dealt them a severe blow. Furthermore, because of increased schooling costs, many parents just cannot afford to send their children away to school. In many instances in my electorate, this applies not only to owners of properties and people in business but to their employees also. Independent schools play a very important role for people in the Outback, and they must be given every consideration to enable them to continue the work that they are presently doing.

The introduction of a new secondary scholarship scheme under which 500 scholarships will be in tenure each year will assist

private schools and will assist children in remote areas to receive higher education. Most children have education to grade 10 available to them. So far as availability in western areas is concerned, grades 11 and 12 present the major problem. What this scheme will mean, I take it, is that the 500 scholarships will be divided in the first year, half to grade 11 and half to grade 12. The following year one would expect that the 250 in grade 11 would go into grade 12 and the incoming group in grade 11 would then receive the other 250 scholarships so that the total number in both grades would not exceed 500 in the one year. I understand that to be eligible for such scholarships not only will the student have to comply with the criteria laid down for the determining of the remote-area allowance eligibility but also scholastic ability will be taken into account and a means test applied. This is reasonable provided that the existing means tests which is used to determine a student’s allowance eligibility is not used, as I consider it to be totally inadequate when related to the average family income. One would have to be very nearly a pauper to get in under the present student allowance means test.

As I understand the situation, the Government will pay up to \$1,000 to the school towards the cost of tuition and boarding fees. For example, if a child attends a school and the bill comes to \$2,500 and he is eligible for all Federal remote-area and other allowances as well as the State allowance, which could total as much as approximately \$1,500, then the Government would pay the extra \$1,000.

The increase of 33½ per cent in payments to school bus operators will also be welcomed. However, I do believe that we must take a good look at this situation as many operators drive their buses over unsealed, rough roads and their maintenance costs are far greater than those of operators who travel on sealed roads. The head-teacher has to verify each run yearly and I see no reason why he or some other officer of the department could not fill in the percentage of unsealed road to sealed road on which the bus has to travel and have higher payments made accordingly.

The doubling of the pay-roll tax exemption from \$20,800 to \$41,600 per annum with a tapering off to a limit of \$72,800 is a measure that may well have been introduced earlier. Many small businesses which do not have a large turnover find this type of tax difficult to carry.

Perhaps one of the best things contained in the Budget, and one that I am particularly pleased to see, is the total exemption from death duties where estates pass from husband to wife or vice versa. There is no doubt that this exemption will have the greatest impact in the area of greatest need. This insidious tax has created many hardships over the years. Surely we can learn from what has happened in the past. One

has only to recall the misery experienced by families that were unfortunate enough to lose the husband or breadwinner of the family prior to the collapse of the wool market and perhaps the worst drought this State has ever known. Land values plummeted as did stock values. Some wives were faced with the payment of duties far in excess of the value that their assets would realise on the open market; that is, if a market could be found.

We now have the slump in the cattle industry. Indeed, this problem is not confined to primary producers. People in all walks of life could be faced with a similar situation. The sooner we vacate this field of taxing people for dying the better. I hope that in the next Budget the Treasurer will be able to give consideration to further exemption for estates passing within the immediate family. As I said previously, the Treasurer has had his work cut out in framing this Budget and there are many provisions in it from which Queenslanders will receive benefit.

The lifting of road transport fees over three years, as promised by the Premier in his election policy speech, commences in this Budget with a one-third reduction on all operations. This amount may not be directly passed on, but it will allow transport operators to absorb some of the increased costs imposed by the Federal Government without having to pass them on by way of increases in charges to their clients.

As to the 40 per cent average increase in rail fares and freights—let me say, Mr. Hewitt, that I appreciate the position in which the Treasurer finds himself. He has pointed out that the operating loss for this year was \$64,400,000 and that profit on mineral line operations amounted to \$29,000,000. Without that profit of \$29,000,000, as I understand it, a loss of about \$93,000,000 would have been sustained on general operations.

With debt-servicing charges included, the loss on general operations totalled \$114,000,000. As I see the situation, the debt-servicing bill amounted to \$21,000,000 and the operating loss for the year was \$64,400,000, making a total over-all loss of \$85,400,000. That is certainly a massive loss.

The Government has done well to hold freight rates down for so many years—I appreciate that point—and people have benefited considerably as a result. However, with respect, I believe that it may have been more acceptable to increase freight rates gradually over a few of those years than to do it in one fell swoop. This increase will be felt not only by those industries that are enjoying some measure of prosperity but also by those that are not. One must remember that away from the seaboard freight is a double-edged sword; that is, people pay on what they send out and also on what they bring in.

I wish to touch on the position which grain growers will face. I believe that they will be disadvantaged to a certain degree. I am not denying that, generally speaking, grain prices are good. However, to assess the situation one must look at the set-up under which the grower receives payment. Grain freights have not increased since 1966. In 1966 the grower was receiving a first advance of \$1.10 a bushel. That has increased to an expected \$1.50 a bushel for this year. Last year it was \$1.20 a bushel. All set deductions such as freight, hail insurance and fire levy are deducted from the grower's first advance. His first advance has increased by 25 per cent over last year. However, all his other costs have escalated, probably more than in most other industries.

With the measure of profitability in the grain industry, growers may be in a reasonably good position to meet the increase in the long term, when other advances have come in. Of course, the problem could quite easily be solved if the anti-rural socialist Government in Canberra were to increase the first advance to a more realistic figure in line with the inflationary trend that it has itself created. Interest rates have increased by 70 per cent and costs have increased by over 100 per cent in the past 15 years. According to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in 1960-61 rural incomes totalled \$1,135 million, while in 1974-75 they amounted to \$1,147 million—an increase of only \$12,000,000, or less than 1 per cent. In that same period rural indebtedness increased two-and-a-half times, or by 250 per cent. The Federal Government, by not agreeing to increases in the first advance to keep pace with the inflationary trend, could well be encouraging the sale of grain on the black market. Growers who find themselves pressed by their financiers for repayments and the like would take a little less cash on delivery of outside sales and find that very attractive. But we do not want that to happen as the wheat industry has a good record of stability over many years.

Since 1966 the growers have profited in that their freight rates have been held down. In some areas there was an actual decrease in charges following the introduction of the tapering scale in 1972. I hope that the Treasurer will not find it necessary to change the tapering freight structure when the actual amounts of increase are being determined.

The Treasurer has indicated that the phasing out of the Regional Employment Development Scheme and other unemployment schemes by the Commonwealth Government will compound the unemployment problem. This may be so. However, they were ill-conceived schemes which gave little value for money and they should have been phased out long ago. Certainly many deserving people received relief unemployment, and a number of worth-while projects were undertaken for the good of a number of communities. I do not deny that. But it is

a pity that the money was not channelled through local authorities for their determination as to where it could be best spent. Surely local authorities were in the best position to make that determination. It soon became obvious from the number of applications rolling in that those schemes were destined for a very short life and that they just had to fold up. Organisations are now being advised that previous approvals are being cancelled. To say the least, it was ridiculous to allow that situation to develop. Money was being ladled out as though it were going out of fashion. Local authorities would have seen to it that value was received had they been given the opportunity. It is a pity that some projects may encounter difficulties with their completion. However, one has to expect that type of situation under a Government of socialists with their academic, armchair advisers.

Housing is another matter of concern. Applications for rental houses have increased by over 2,000 this year, after the record number constructed last year. The reasons for the tremendous increase in applications are simple to understand. With the increase in interest rates to an all-time high, inflation running unchecked, 5 per cent of the workforce unemployed and the building industry in the doldrums, one could hardly blame a person for wanting to rent a home rather than build or buy one of his own. Consequently people are now turning to the Queensland Housing Commission to meet their needs.

Total funds provided for housing in the Budget amount to \$61,700,000, which does not keep pace with inflation when compared with last year's allocation. The situation can be seen quite clearly when the reduction from \$43,800,000 last year to \$31,000,000 this year in the Commonwealth allocation is taken into account. The State's contribution has been increased by about 80 per cent, while the Federal contribution has been decreased by 30 per cent. The State had sought \$80,000,000 in Federal contribution to cover Queensland's needs. At least \$54,000,000 would have been necessary if one were to consider only last year's allocation of \$43,800,000, plus an inflation factor of 25 per cent, to reach a break-even point in the number of houses built.

Mr. Whitlam has said that his Government would pay for every Housing Commission home for which the Queensland Government could let a contract.

Mr. Hanson: The Queensland Government overspent last year by 6 per cent.

Mr. NEAL: Of course it did. Hundreds of applications poured in as a result of the economic chaos created by the honourable member's colleagues in Canberra.

It is obvious that with an allocation not even equal in actual money to that made last year, let alone equivalent in real money terms, the results can only be fewer homes,

longer waiting lists and less employment in the building industry. The Federal Treasurer (Mr. Hayden) very adroitly palms off the cut in over-all Commonwealth expenditure on housing as being the "recovery in private housing now in train". What absolute rubbish! To add insult to injury, this is put forward by a Government that professes to look after the low-income sector.

I sincerely hope that we can come up with the answers to this problem as well as to that confronted by us in relation to housing Crown employees. A committee of inquiry is now looking into the housing needs of Crown employees, which have created a problem over a number of years. Many workers who, in their Crown employment, are regularly transferred suffer a disadvantage. Because they are not stationed in any one area for a lengthy period they are unable to own their own homes. Schoolteachers, for example, are faced with this problem. Furthermore, they are unable even to obtain rental accommodation in certain areas. I know of Crown employees who were unable to obtain accommodation in the town in which they are employed and were forced to rent cottages on properties in the vicinity. The Federal Government has certainly made sure that in my electorate there are plenty of vacant cottages on properties. However, when families are split up as the result of the lack of suitable accommodation something must be done to alleviate the problem. The present situation is not good enough.

Housing Commission homes should be built in country towns both to provide accommodation for permanent residents and to encourage others who may find temporary employment there to stay. The drift to the city areas is fast enough already without our doing anything to hasten it.

I refer now to the Federal Government's waste of money in making hand-outs to radical women's groups. It imported Flo Kennedy to speak to Australian women and to air her views and thereby grossly insulted the women of Australia.

Mr. McKechnie: Mr. Whitlam liked her.

Mr. NEAL: I realise that. Lord help this country if the views some of the rat-bag rabble-rousers who are forced on us by the Whitlam Government were in fact the views of the average Australian woman. We do not want women to step down from the pedestal on which they stand. I believe that the liberation of women is only a state of mind. There is nothing wrong with being a housewife and a mother. After all, the mothers in our community are the mothers of the nation's children, and surely their role is the most important of all. But if a woman wishes to be regarded as being equal to men, she should be allowed to do so.

I for one certainly do not wish to see women taking their place side by side with men in the shearing sheds and in a whole

host of other manual labouring jobs. If that is what Women's Liberation means, I certainly do not want a bar of it. I believe that women are on a pedestal and we want to keep them there. I hope that they themselves do not want to step down from it and I am sure that the average Australian woman does not want to do so. Let us not forget the old adage, that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. There is a great deal of truth in it. That message could well be pondered on by some of the Women's Liberation supporters.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer on the introduction of his Budget. I congratulate him not only on the fact that it is his 10th Budget but also on having introduced what I consider to be a reasonably good Budget. There are areas with which I am not happy. However, I believe that in the circumstances he has done a reasonably good job. I am sure that by the time he presents his next Budget the situation will have changed considerably. There may even be a change of Government in the Federal sphere. In fact, I am quite sure that there will be. With a change of Government in the Federal sphere there will be an immediate change in the outlook of private industry. There will be an immediate return to confidence in private industry, which, after all, employs 75 per cent of the work-force. Private enterprise, I am sure, will again play the role that it should play in expanding production and creating more employment.

Mr. GUNN (Somerset) (9.12 p.m.): While I welcome the opportunity to speak in the Budget debate, at the same time I realise that listening to various speeches on it is not the most exciting way of spending an evening. The same things must be repeated. However, the debate affords honourable members an opportunity to talk of various things affecting their electorates.

On this occasion the Budget was framed under circumstances never before encountered in the history of this Assembly.

Mr. Hanson: Do you want to get your speech into the local Press?

Mr. GUNN: I am not concerned particularly where it is reported. The debate gives me an opportunity to express my views and that is the most important thing.

Sir Gordon Chalk: The "Queensland Times" will give you a worthy coverage.

Mr. GUNN: It generally does. It is a very good paper that covers not only my electorate, but the whole of Queensland.

About 40,000 people, or 4.6 per cent of the work-force, are unemployed in Queensland. That is what the Treasurer had to face when framing his Budget. I believe that I am expressing the opinion of most honourable members when I say that, under the circumstances, we were pleasantly surprised by the Budget. In the Federal sphere a great deal

of money has been wasted. When we consider the welfare payments that the Whitlam Government made so easy to get in order to achieve popularity, at a time when there was a little money around, we begin to realise how much money was wasted. In my area quite a number of itinerant workers were working during the day and collecting dole cheques. That was known to the powers that be, but they did not worry about it. They are now becoming a little concerned about blocking this practice, which has been in vogue for a couple of years.

Another area in which a great wastage of money occurred was the so-called R.E.D. scheme. Councils will say that they made use of the money, but I consider that the money would have been spent much more wisely if it had been handed out to the State Government for distribution to the local authorities, with the local authorities being allowed to do the work that they thought was best for their areas.

Increased charges in the Budget were absolutely necessary, but I consider that the Treasurer has chosen wisely. Of course, it is impossible to satisfy everybody. The Whitlam Government has been the cause of most of the trouble experienced by the primary producer. Mr. Whitlam has a very abrasive nature. While that might have been accepted in 1972, it has been the cause of his downfall in 1975. It has been estimated that half the people who supported him in 1972 are now rejecting him. He has been overwhelmingly rejected by the electorate and there is no doubt that his Government will be annihilated in the next election, which I hope will be in the near future.

Even the A.C.T.U. has gone cool on Mr. Whitlam. It has been reported that at the A.C.T.U. Congress in Melbourne Mr. Whitlam tried to build up his Government's stocks by listing his party's achievements; but, apart from a polite cheer for Medibank, Mr. Whitlam was received in cold silence. He is also receiving criticism from the Aborigines, the conservationists, the academics and the woman's movements that supported him in 1972.

An Honourable Member interjected.

Mr. GUNN: I believe that they voted for him in 1972. Once again in 1974 he got a lot of their support. However, they are the people who are now criticising him. No doubt they are disappointed with his efforts.

The president of the Trades and Labor Council (Mr. Jack Egerton), in comparing him with our own Premier, admitted that the Premier was closer to the people. I believe that in that observation he summed up the matter. The Prime Minister has become distant from his people. He is no longer close to the small people—the people who matter. Australia is made up of little people, whose only desire is to own their own business, their own block of land and their own home. The Labor Party does not appeal

to them. In fact, if any people in the community will be unable to forget the three years of the Labor Government in Canberra, it is the small people. Business confidence is at a low ebb. When it is considered that private enterprise employs 75 per cent of the work-force in Australia, is it any wonder that the country is experiencing such massive unemployment!

When the Whitlam Government found itself bleeding to death through its own incompetence, it immediately attacked the Press. At times I do not agree with the Press. However, I believe that in politics one must be able to take it. No person in politics can expect everything to run his way. We have to expect a little criticism, even when we are losing. I consider that the attack on the Press by the Labor Government is a sure sign of its impending defeat.

I now turn to the Budget. The 50 per cent increase in motor vehicle registration fees, which was recently approved, and a further \$1,000,000 special allocation from the loan fund, together with the Commonwealth contribution from petrol-tax collections, has enabled the State to mount a roads programme costing \$103,000,000 and a total Main Roads Department expenditure programme for the year of \$169,500,000, compared with an expenditure of \$148,800,000 in 1974-75.

I must say how disappointed I am with the State's share of petrol tax. We now receive only 57 per cent of the revenue obtained in this way. I can remember many years ago that the State complained bitterly when it received 90 per cent of petrol tax revenue, and 10 per cent went into Consolidated Revenue. Today we receive only 57 per cent of petrol tax.

The downturn in the beef industry to June 1975 was reflected in a slackening demand for transport by road. Suspension of permit fees under the State Transport Act and special assistance to the beef and sheep industries have been very important features of the Budget. But I am wondering if the phasing out of the transport tax will be the immense benefit that we considered it would be.

Mr. Houston: It is not being passed on.

Mr. GUNN: That is the point I am about to make. I have received complaints that many transport operators are now increasing their charges. That is not what the Government intended. We intended the benefit to go to the producer. I have had so many complaints about increased charges that I think the Government will have to look closely into the matter. I met some transport operators the other night and they told me that it was their intention to increase their charges.

Mr. Houston: You were not silly enough to think that that would not happen, were you?

Mr. GUNN: I think there has to be a certain amount of trust in these matters. If we find that transport operators are not doing the right thing, it will be up to us as a Government to do something about it.

Sir Gordon Chalk: It could also kill small industry in country areas.

Mr. GUNN: It could. It is not having the effect that I thought it would have.

Sir Gordon Chalk: I could have told you that years ago.

Mr. GUNN: It is up to us to do something about it.

In his Budget speech the Treasurer said—

“Rail fares and freights will be increased by an average of 40 per cent as from 1st November, 1975, to produce an extra \$24,300,000 this year.”

The last increase, of course, was in 1966, and since that time average weekly earnings have increased by 184 per cent. Despite the increases, the railways still expect to show an operating deficit of \$41,000,000 in the coming year.

Increases are never popular at any time. However, I think we have to accept the fact that rail freights were very low, and the State was losing very heavily on them. Although I can well appreciate the problems of grain growers, low rail freights were an encumbrance on the State. I heard on the radio this morning that within a 50-mile radius of Toowoomba grain is costing \$7 and some cents a tonne, which will rise to approximately \$10. I believe the price of cash grains this year will be much the same as it has been, so there will probably be a small imposition on grain growers.

Once again I return to the point that it is extremely difficult to satisfy everybody. Costs increase, and someone must pay. Whilst revenue from freights will increase, the Government will lose \$5,000,000 by the removal of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. This provision must be welcomed all over the State. It has been put to me quite often, as no doubt it has to other members, that large estates very seldom pass to the surviving spouse; rather do they pass to other members of the family who have worked on them. Certainly death duty is a tax that nobody likes to pay but which most of us have had to pay at some time over the years. Its removal is at least a step in the right direction. It is unique in Queensland, and probably in the rest of Australia. I think we will find the other States following our lead in this area.

Mr. Houston: You followed the Labor Party. It has been our policy for years.

Mr. GUNN: You have done a lot of talking over the years and taken very little action.

Mr. Houston: We haven't had the opportunity.

Mr. GUNN: That's right; you haven't had the opportunity. That gets back to the point that it is very easy for members of the Opposition to frame any policy they like. Their colleagues in Canberra did exactly this and, of course, found they could not carry out many of their promises. We can see the trouble that they are in today.

Mr. Houston: You will have the same problems in the Senate.

Mr. GUNN: We will be back in very shortly, I should imagine. If we can improve the economy, we will have achieved something. At the moment we are going downhill and have no hope of recovery.

As from 1 December 1975, the stamp duty on cheques will increase from 6c to 10c, which will provide an additional return of a little more than \$1,500,000 for 1975-76. As the post office has increased the minimum standard letter rate to 18c, I consider that this increase is fair and reasonable. It will give the Government nearly \$3,500,000 in a full year.

Road transport fees, which I referred to earlier, will be reduced by one-third in the first year and eventually this tax will be eliminated. I can only repeat that this is one area we will have to watch very closely. It is one area in which I am extremely disappointed.

There is provision for the continuing and rapid erection of pre-school centres. At the end of this financial year it is expected that some 350 units will have been provided, staffed and equipped, and 64 per cent of the programme will then be complete. I was one person who was sceptical about pre-school centres. As a matter of fact, I would rather have seen more high schools erected in country areas which do not have access to them. Some children in my electorate have to travel very long distances to get their 11th and 12th grade education. It is most unfortunate that a child should have to travel some 60 miles a day to receive the higher education which is so necessary today. It is absolutely necessary for a child, if he or she has the ability, to go on to 12th grade, or senior standard.

A new subsidy arrangement for local authority libraries will be instituted so as to provide greatly improved library facilities in all areas of the State. The subsidies, amounting to about \$600,000, are paid on a dollar-for-dollar basis on the cost of books, ancillary materials and the salaries of certain qualified staff. I might add that qualified staff are extremely hard to get. I cannot understand why more young people, particularly girls, are not interested in taking this course. It must be an extremely interesting one, and I believe that salaries are somewhere in the vicinity of \$10,000. It is probably a bit higher than that for well-qualified staff. So it does offer a great opportunity for those young people who are interested in libraries and I should

imagine it is a very interesting occupation. At the present time there are many local authorities which would like to have qualified librarians but are unable to get the staff. These grants will be increased by approximately \$900,000 to \$1,500,000 per annum by extending this dollar-for-dollar subsidy scheme.

In the field of health, subsidies on furnishings of homes for the aged will be increased by 50 per cent as from 1 July 1975. I welcome that, because in my electorate a new home for the aged is to be built in Kilcoy and there are already two homes for the aged in Laidley. In addition, the Lutheran Church intends to build a 33-bed hospital onto its well-appointed home for the aged.

Homes of this type enable people to retire in their home town, and that is of great comfort to them. They also save the Government a great deal of money. If people did not have homes such as these to go to, the Commonwealth and State Governments would have to provide accommodation for them, and it would be very costly. Most churches are involved in providing homes for the aged, and they are serving a very useful purpose in cities and towns throughout the State. The increased subsidy on furnishings will assist existing homes and possibly expedite the construction of more such homes.

In his Financial Statement, the Treasurer said—

"Expenditure on hospitals this year will increase by 65 per cent from last year's provision of slightly under \$140,000,000 to \$231,000,000. As an indication of the importance of the new hospital policy, I point to the fact that in addition to the further \$50,000,000 from the Commonwealth Medibank Scheme, the State will provide from its own resources for a contribution of \$134,123,351 which represents an increase of \$35,857,113 or 36 per cent over the amount of \$98,266,238 provided last year."

There is a need for the erection of new hospitals in Queensland and the Government has already gone a long way in this field. Many country hospitals—and this would also be true of hospitals in city areas—are antiquated and have been in operation for a number of years. Wooden structures, of course, are a fire hazard, and many other faults can be found with them. If medical men are to be attracted to country areas, the facilities offering there must compare favourably with those in the area in which they have been trained.

Mr. Jensen: In the old days doctors would go anywhere, but they don't do that any more, do they?

Mr. GUNN: In days gone by when there was only one G.P. in an area, he did everything. He was on call 24 hours a day.

Mr. Jensen: Those men liked their work.

Mr. GUNN: I think it was hazardous to their health to work under those conditions. In the country area in which I was born, there was only one doctor. I do not think he ever went away. He was on call day and night, and that is a tremendous imposition on any man.

These days most doctors engage in clinic practice and are rostered for duty at weekends. I am rather concerned about the situation in city areas. Many medical men in these areas work from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and they have just become pill counters. They do very little after-hours work. As a matter of fact, in parts of Brisbane it is difficult to get a doctor at night. Recently one of my children was sick and the local doctor was telephoned. The person who phoned was informed that the doctor had finished work at 9 o'clock, was given the number of an answering service, and then phoned one doctor after another.

Mr. Wright: That was a private doctor?

Mr. GUNN: Yes. My son is in his final year of training, and he was on duty at Princess Alexandra Hospital. He was able to get one of the doctors there to attend. In my town we have three doctors. It would not matter what hour of the day or night a person got sick, he could get one of those men to attend to him.

Mr. Wright: You give full credit to the country doctor?

Mr. GUNN: Yes. I have heard that even in Ipswich now there are no night surgeries. That is a tragedy. Working people finish at, say, 5 p.m. If the doctors finish at 4 p.m. there is no hope of their getting any medical attention. In most country areas, that is not so. Doctors are available until 10 p.m. and someone is always available for an emergency.

I am very pleased that the State Government will institute a special inquiry into its capital subsidy scheme to local authorities. Subsidies to local authorities now amount to more than \$30,000,000 a year. The inquiry will update the scheme and recommend the best way to get the money to local authorities. I think the Treasurer will agree that over the last 12 months local authorities have become dependent on hand-outs from the Federal Government. This is very unfortunate. There are always strings attached to that type of money. It is the aim of the Federal Government and the A.L.P. Opposition in this State to regionalise local authorities. That would be a tragedy.

Mr. Houston: What strings for instance?

Mr. GUNN: There wouldn't be any grant to which no strings were attached.

Mr. Houston: I am not complaining about it. I am just asking.

Mr. GUNN: First of all, the money is given to them as long as it is spent for a particular purpose.

Mr. Houston: Give us some examples of what the purposes were.

Mr. GUNN: Take the allocation of a grant to the Rosalie Shire Council.

Mr. Houston: Did you object to that?

Mr. GUNN: I haven't finished. That money could have been spent on roads, but it was given provided it was allocated to a football field.

Mr. Houston: Did the council want a football field?

Mr. GUNN: I don't think it did. The point is that a local authority has to have a list of priorities. It does not necessarily follow that the council gets money allocated to No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 or No. 4 priority. Surely the council is the expert.

Mr. Houston: Did it ask for it?

Mr. GUNN: It is prepared to take the money. That is what I am getting back to with the R.E.D. scheme. The council is prepared to take the money. Why shouldn't it? It is its money.

Mr. Houston: Did it ask for money for the project?

Mr. GUNN: It asked for money for a project, but the project was dictated by the Federal Government.

Opposition Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the honourable member had better proceed with his speech.

Mr. GUNN: The special State Government free grant to local authorities which was introduced last year to assist in the financing of their running costs will continue, and \$5,500,000 has been provided for this purpose. I should like the Treasurer to know that this was one of the most welcome grants the councils have ever received. Even the smallest councils receive about \$12,500 to assist them in administration costs.

An Opposition Member: What for?

Mr. GUNN: The added cost of running a shire. It is very handy money for a small council. Of course, the bigger the council the more money it receives. Each of the seven councils I am involved with asked me to write to the Treasurer once again to ask him would this money be available. It was not necessary for me to do so, because I knew this would be in the Budget.

Mr. Burns: Have things improved since you left and the new shire chairman took over?

Mr. GUNN: I certainly put him on the right track, and I would hope they have improved. Laidley has a good council. Billy McMahon started us off with his grants. Some of them totalled \$10,000. They were valuable grants, too, because we were able

to spend the money in the areas that we thought needed it most. It was spent mainly on kerbing and channelling and amenities such as that. As a matter of fact, after the first year, Laidley won the Tidy Towns Competition. Last year Kilcoy won it.

Mr. Burns interjected.

Mr. GUNN: All that the Leader of the Opposition knows about this could be written on the back of a postage stamp—and plenty of room would be left on it to write all that he has achieved since he entered Parliament.

I turn now to the allocation of \$55,800,000 to the State's hospital and health services and shall dwell for a few moments on the allocation of \$8,900,000 to the School Dental Service. The Minister for Health has told me that the service is to be updated.

Mr. Jensen: Financed by the Federal Government, too.

Mr. GUNN: I am not particularly interested in where the money comes from. It is, after all, the people's money. Surely the Federal Government is under an obligation to assist.

Mr. Jensen: Why not be unfair like other Government members and really attack the Federal Government?

Mr. Burns: You are being reasonable.

Mr. GUNN: Perhaps I am. However there is no earthly doubt that within the next month, we will have a change of Government. I will pay credit where credit is due, but the problem with the Federal Government is that the right things it has done have been far outweighed by the wrong things it has done. I would say that one of the right things done by the Federal Government was the setting up of the Grants Commission. I hope that it will continue.

Mr. Houston: No. Fraser said he would cut it out.

Mr. GUNN: That would be a tragedy. Of course, it was not a Labor Government that introduced the Grants Commission; it was set up by a Liberal-Country Party Government.

Honourable Members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is far too much interjection.

Mr. GUNN: The Grants Commission has assisted local government in no small way.

Mr. Wright: Don't you think that local authorities should have direct access to the national Government?

Mr. GUNN: If they were given direct access to the Federal Government, strings would be attached to any assistance given by it. Don't worry about that. I know what would happen. A region stretching from Brisbane far into the inland areas of the State would be created. It would be, in effect,

a little State Government. The Commonwealth wants to take over the whole damned thing.

Mr. Burns: On that same basis, do you believe in this new water authority that the State Government has set up?

Mr. GUNN: I do. When I think of the mess made by the Brisbane City Council of the Somerset Dam and Pine Rivers areas—

Mr. Burns: Do you agree to regionalisation of water supply?

Mr. GUNN: Yes.

Mr. Burns: What about transport authorities?

Mr. GUNN: A lot of these things are good. But a local authority is responsible for more than water supply and sewerage; it also provides roads, libraries and so on. It is absolutely essential for small areas to maintain their councils.

Mr. Houston: I don't deny that.

Mr. GUNN: The honourable member says he does not deny it, but his party's policy is to regionalise.

Mr. Houston interjected.

Mr. GUNN: Water is entirely different. I wonder who advocated the West Moreton Water Authority.

While on the subject of water, I wish to refer to the sum of \$8,100,000 that has been set aside for further land resumptions and auxiliary work on the Wivenhoe Dam. Construction of this dam will commence in 1978 and it should be completed by 1982. As with all industries one of the main worries is the high level of wages.

Mr. Houston: You don't like that.

Mr. GUNN: It is not a matter of liking it. Industries cannot afford it.

Mr. Houston: You are a low-wage champion.

Mr. GUNN: I am not a low-wage man. I have never had high wages myself.

Mr. Houston: You haven't?

Mr. GUNN: I have never received them.

Many of the unions have priced themselves off the market with high wages. The honourable member for Bulimba has never paid high wages himself. Most A.L.P. members have never been in business.

Mr. Houston: How do you know?

Mr. GUNN: I have a fair idea. Most of them do not have a worried look like the honourable member for Port Curtis, who employs quite a lot of labour. As generous as the honourable member for Port Curtis is he must flinch when he has to pay a 17½ per cent loading on a month's holiday for

10 or 12 employees. It is a sad business that nothing can be taken back, but unions can price themselves off the market.

Mr. Jensen: They have just about priced me out of the pubs.

Mr. GUNN: When the price of beer goes too high, the public will soon boycott it.

I applaud the increases in ambulance subsidy to \$ for \$. That was necessary because many ambulance centres were in trouble. It will be welcomed by all centres.

Mr. Burns: Do you think you should allocate the casket proceeds to ambulance centres?

Mr. GUNN: I assure the Leader of the Opposition that the Treasurer will be able to look after that.

I welcome the increase in police strength and the proposal to put quite a number of police on the beat. Although a great deal has been said in the last few months about the police, I emphasise that we still have one of the best forces in Australia. I understand very well what country police officers do. I have no complaint against the policemen in my region.

Mr. Wright: They live among the people and they have a personal approach.

Mr. GUNN: That is true.

I feel certain that a lot of what we have heard is not true. We have an excellent Police Force and I pay tribute to the Minister and his commissioner on doing an excellent job.

Opposition Members interjected.

Mr. GUNN: In 1957, when Labor was in power, the police were riding push-bikes. All we had was a horse and push-bike. The Forest Hill Police Station was provided with a motor-bike without a light.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer. I appreciate that his task on this occasion was difficult. Obviously, it would not meet the approval of everybody, because somebody must be hurt. However, all in all, the majority of the people in Queensland are satisfied, and I think that is all that counts. At this stage, that is all I have to say.

Progress reported.

LOCAL BODIES' LOANS GUARANTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (9.52 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act 1923-1973 for the purpose of making

special validating provision in relation to certain borrowings by local bodies and certain guarantees by the Treasurer with respect to such borrowings, and for purposes incidental thereto."

The Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act provides for the repayment of money borrowed by a local body within the meaning of that Act, and the interest thereon, to be guaranteed by the Treasurer on behalf of the Government.

The Act was amended in 1973 when it was brought to our notice that in certain isolated cases the lender was in a strict legal sense without security because debenture documents had been issued in respect of some loans prior to the issue of the Order in Council which authorised the loan. Honourable members will appreciate that until a loan is authorised by Order in Council, the local body may not lawfully accept funds or issue a debenture in respect of that particular loan.

In the case of conversion loans, which are frequently offered by the original lender, there is no actual repayment and reborrowing of the balance of the capital amount to be repaid at the end of the original loan. However, in such cases it is necessary that loan formalities be completed and an Order in Council issued before the maturity date of the old loan and the issue of the new debenture.

As a general practice, the formalities are strictly observed. The Order in Council is issued before the date of commencement of the conversion loan, or, in the case of a new loan, before the money is advanced and debentures are issued. The amendment of 1973 was introduced to validate any debenture loans which were entered into in good faith but nevertheless, by a strict interpretation of the law, unlawful because the authorising Order in Council was not issued before the other events.

Following the passing of the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act Amendment Act 1973, a circular was forwarded from the Treasury Department to all local bodies to remind them of, and to make clear to them, their responsibility to ensure that loan formality procedures were observed. This action resulted in an inquiry from one local body as to whether the amendment would validate borrowing by way of sale of inscribed stock as well as by way of debentures. The local body pointed out that, so far as they were concerned, there were several instances where Orders in Council were dated after the date of conversion of inscribed stock loans.

The 1973 amendment applies only to debenture loans. The Bill which is now presented will extend the validation of borrowings to include borrowings by way of sale of inscribed stock. It repeals the section inserted in the Act by the 1973 amendment and replaces it with another very similar section which validates past borrowings by way of sale of inscribed stock. In addition,

it restates the previous provisions with respect to borrowings by way of the issue of debentures.

So far as the future is concerned, both lenders and borrowers are now fully aware of the need to complete formalities before the loan commences. The responsibility to ensure that this is done rests with the parties to the loan transaction. The validation by way of the present Bill applies only to loans authorised prior to the date of assent of this amendment so far as inscribed stock is concerned and, in the case of debentures, only those authorised prior to the date of the previous amendment.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

Mr. HOUSTON (Bulimba) (9.58 p.m.): Two years ago, as the Treasurer said, a Bill was introduced to validate some loan borrowing that could have been construed as not complying with the law at that time. I think, from memory, the Treasurer said that the Solicitor-General had queried the legality of certain actions. On that occasion the Treasurer said that he did not intend to name the local authorities concerned. I believe that no harm would be done if local authorities that transgressed the law were named. After all, it is this Parliament that is validating the situation, and what we as an Opposition are asked to do is endorse a recommendation by the Treasurer and his advisers. From the scant information given by the Treasurer, the Opposition has no opportunity to gauge the extent of the inscribed stock that is affected or the number of local authorities concerned.

I suggest that on the second reading of the Bill the Treasurer should give the House some indication of the volume of transactions that have been so affected and he should also name the local authorities that require the inscribed stock. I believe that if that were done, no doubt would be left in anyone's mind that the Bill is in fact as simple as the Treasurer claims. After all, we are validating something that could be considered illegal at the present time. It is correct that a person or an organisation that lends money to someone in good faith should be secured. We all understand that, when it comes to local government activities, it would be very hard for anyone to claim the value of the asset created. Quite often we find that when money is spent on a local authority project, there may not be any tangible asset with resale value so I think it is important that we make provision for protection of those who see fit to lend money to local authorities. Perhaps one of the tragedies about lending institutions in Queensland is that so many of them have diverted their investment programme to other than local authority fields because local authorities, as many of us have said, are active in the development of our State and the bodies closest to the citizens as a whole. If they are starved for money, then their area naturally does not develop, and as they have not the assets themselves

to stand guarantor for the work they carry out with the loan money or inscribed stock, whatever it happens to be, then naturally the State Government has to come to the party.

With those remarks the Opposition accepts the introduction of the Bill. As I said, I believe the Treasurer should give the Committee a little more detail of the value of the inscribed stock and perhaps the number of local authorities or other bodies associated with this problem.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (10.2 p.m.): The Bill before the Committee at the moment is of a procedural nature. I think the honourable member for Bulimba summed it up when he said that the Opposition is simply being asked to endorse a recommendation of the Treasurer, but it is worth while taking note of the reasons for the introduction of this legislation. We are talking about the borrowings of local authorities and I think that comes back to the difficulties local authorities are experiencing today. It is not something new; it has been going on for many years, and I suggest it will continue for many decades unless we look again at the system.

The growing debt of local authorities is fast outstripping those of the States and the Federal Government. One only has to look at the percentage of the revenue of local authorities being used to meet interest and redemption payments to understand this point. Moreover, there is a growing amount of money owed to local authorities by ratepayers, be they in country or city areas, who simply do not pay their debts or cannot afford to pay their debts. So we do need to have a long, hard look at the revenue-raising areas available to local authorities. I recall some time ago when the Minister for Local Government suggested that we have some sort of poll tax, some sort of per capita tax and this was violently opposed by many members of the community. It has been suggested in other countries such as the United States that we look at an entertainment tax, a vehicle tax and so on.

It has already been suggested to me by a person who has some experience in the field of local authorities that we should be looking at a residential tax, some sort of tax based on the ability of people to pay, to ensure that all persons within a local authority area are contributing towards the services and facilities provided by local authorities and the argument is based on the fact that people benefit from the facilities and services provided by local authorities irrespective of whether they are ratepayers. They benefit from the libraries, the parking facilities, the recreation areas, parks, sporting activity areas, aged persons facilities and so on, so maybe there is real merit in the idea.

But I think we should go a little further and councils should be encouraged to look at the over-all system of local authorities.

The first thing they need to do is cut their overheads. It has been said before in the Chamber and there has been some debate about it; there are too many local authorities in Queensland. I think the number is 131. I will not go back into the boundaries dispute, but there are too many shires, too much duplication of services and a need for greater co-operation. The previous Minister for Local Government, the Honourable H. A. McKechnie, put forward the view of regionalisation. The moment one mentions regionalisation in this Chamber, it is a boggy word because it is something the Labor Party is supposed to pursue by way of a policy.

Mr. Frawley: I don't recall his saying that.

Mr. WRIGHT: Yes, he did. It was Mr. McKechnie who first introduced the idea of the 10 regions.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not intend to allow debate on regionalisation on the initiation of the Local Bodies' Loans Guarantee Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. WRIGHT: I take your point, Mr. Hewitt, but the idea was introduced by the former Minister for Local Government.

Mr. McKechnie interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have ruled that I will not allow discussion on regionalisation, either by interjection or in a speech.

Mr. WRIGHT: Councils should look at their income-raising methods and should be encouraged to undertake some income-producing ventures. I know that the Rockhampton City Council, for example, has shown what can be done in the field of caravan parks. The Mt. Morgan Shire Council has proved what can be gained for an area by a council involving itself in tourism.

I would also like local authorities in Queensland to emulate local authorities in New South Wales that are becoming involved in home-site development, which levels out the cost of land and also enables local authorities to make substantial profits.

Mr. Houston: The cost of providing tourist facilities should not be charged to a local authority.

Mr. WRIGHT: I agree with that.

It has even been suggested that now is the time, with the terms of reference of the Australian Housing Corporation being sorted out, for local authorities to consider the idea of becoming construction agencies and virtually the landlords of housing construction.

The question is an important one. It does not require only the validating of borrowings of local authorities. I take this opportunity to suggest to the Treasurer that he should use both the expertise in the Treasury Department and his own expertise to look for other avenues of raising revenue for local

authorities, because I can see that time and time again we will be discussing in this Chamber local authority borrowings and the difficulties and debt structures with which local authorities are faced. The problems will not be overcome until a completely new system is introduced, and I believe that such a system must be found. Consideration could be given to the idea of their having access to the national pool. There are many ways in which it could be done; I am not saying that there is only one way. The important thing for honourable members to accept is that there is a need for a different approach to the whole question of the revenue and functions of local authorities.

Mr. McKECHNIE (Carnarvon) (10.7 p.m.): I support the motion and compliment the Treasurer on bringing it forward.

I also support the suggestion by the honourable member for Rockhampton that new methods of raising money for local authorities should be devised. It is very obvious that as soon as there is a change of Government in Canberra, which probably will be very soon, the Liberal and National Parties plan to assist local authorities by giving them some autonomy and a fixed share of the national revenue. It is not a plan such as the one devised by the A.L.P. purely to try to give local authorities the kiss of death. I compliment the next Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, on the foresight he has displayed in putting forward a plan that will give local authorities a much better deal than they have received from the present A.L.P. Government.

I will admit, Mr. Hewitt, that the present-day A.L.P. Government in Canberra has given a great deal of money to local authorities that former Liberal-Country Party Governments did not give them. But I do not think that the reason the Federal A.L.P. Government has given that help can be repeated too often. It is that, for ideological reasons, it wanted to bypass the States, and I do not really believe that it wanted to assist local authorities. However, it probably spurred the Liberal-National Party Opposition into thinking a little harder, and I say again quite bluntly that when a change of Government takes place in Canberra, local authorities will be much better off.

The honourable member for Rockhampton mentioned my father's name. In case anyone confuses my father with me, I just indicate clearly that two different persons are involved. Any ideas on regionalisation that my father had were different from those of the A.L.P.

I reiterate my support for the motion.

Hon. Sir GORDON CHALK (Lockyer—Deputy Premier and Treasurer) (10.9 p.m.), in reply: I think it would be correct to say that the honourable member for Bulimba spoke more closely to the proposed legislation than did any other member. The point is that this is what might be described

as a simple Bill. Its purpose is to validate the actions taken by certain local authorities in recent years.

I cannot agree with the honourable member for Bulimba, who acted as spokesman for the Opposition, that we should have a witch-hunt among local authorities because of an oversight. Let me make it quite clear that I believe there was also an oversight in some of the actions taken by the Government. It was not until our attention was drawn by the Auditor-General to the fact that there could be some oversight in relation to conversion that it was found necessary to have a fairly close check made. Quite candidly I probably would not know even now exactly whether there were any oversights of this nature in some particular places in recent times or prior to the matter being drawn to our attention. It is not something like what has happened at the Federal level where loan raisings have been the subject of a great deal of speculation. There was nothing about this matter that would cause any Minister of the Crown to have to hand in his resignation. This is a clear, validating Bill for the purpose of ensuring that if there has been an oversight by a local authority it will be rectified. I quite understand the honourable member for Bulimba raising the point, but I do not feel that there is any need for me to say that this particular shire or that particular local authority was an offender.

The honourable member for Rockhampton tried to use the debate as a platform to make an attack on local authorities. Because of his nearness to the Mayor of Rockhampton he no doubt believed he would get some headlines in the Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin" by raising this issue. It is true that local authorities need additional finance. It is equally true that on the basis on which the State Government has dealt with local authorities down through the years, with the co-operation of the Federal Government until 1972, it was possible to have an arrangement under which local authorities could decide the priorities of the work they wanted to undertake. The responsibility then rested on local councillors or aldermen, who were answerable to the people of their locality on election day every three years. But what have we seen since 1972? First of all we have seen the direction of the allocation of funds from the Federal Government with complete disregard in many instances of the priorities and desires of those responsible for the administration of local authorities.

I can point to local authority after local authority that has been pleased to receive money as a Federal hand-out because it has assisted it to maintain employment in its area. On the other hand, that money has done very little to solve the urgent problems of those local authorities because the money has been directed not to where the local authorities

themselves believed it would be best spent but according to the whims of those providing the hand-outs. If the honourable member for Rockhampton wants to have a debate on the local authority issue, I am prepared to match him any time. He can rant in this Chamber as much as he likes and try to get as many headlines as he wishes, but he laughs at the plight of local authorities and thereby shows his insincerity in putting forward the suggestions that he has made tonight.

He has tried to use this Chamber as a political platform and as a means of gaining some cheap kudos for himself in Rockhampton. All he has done is attack local authorities, which are doing all they can to develop the State. Local authority men are dedicated, and many of them are not receiving the huge salary that is paid to the honourable member for Rockhampton, who sits in here on his tail day in and day out and does little or nothing on behalf of his constituents. Local authority men work untiringly in the interests of the community.

It ill behoves the honourable member for Rockhampton to attack local authorities and aldermen. He would inflict on the ratepayers of Rockhampton such things as entertainment tax and residential tax. Is this an indication of a change on the part of the Labor Party? These suggestions have been put forward not by me but by the honourable member.

Next he said he wants to cut the cost. In other words, he wants to sack half the staff of the Rockhampton City Council. "Behead those people and reduce the overhead," he cries. This has come from a member who represents the Rockhampton area. He has chosen to attack local authorities, and the Government will not stand for such ranting in the Chamber.

He spoke of following the New South Wales pattern of providing more homes and of abolishing subsidy schemes. He would have us revert to the New South Wales system. Then he talked about contractor agencies and of a new system of a national pool. What does he mean by that? Propaganda of this type has been coming from Canberra over the last three years. The honourable member has been indoctrinated by this type of Whitlamism. It certainly cannot be Dr. Cairnsism, because we know what happened to him. I emphatically deny that the legislation is in any way connected with the propaganda put forward by the honourable member.

I compliment the honourable member for Carnarvon on his very moderate approach to the Bill. He indicated the sincerity of not only himself but also of his father, a former Minister for Local Government. The honourable member has indicated his understanding and appreciation of the requirements of local authorities. He has not made a speech along the lines of that made by the honourable member for Rockhampton. I

am sure that those people who read the remarks of the honourable member for Rockhampton in tomorrow's "Morning Bulletin" will condemn him for his approach to the Bill.

Motion (Sir Gordon Chalk) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Sir Gordon Chalk, read a first time.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.21 p.m.): I move—

"That the Bill be now read a second time."

The objects and purposes of trustee companies were well canvassed during the introductory stage of the Bill and it will serve no purpose to repeat them now. Arguments for their discontinuance have been answered and while the present Government is in office trustee companies in Queensland will be permitted to continue their operations in the interests and for the good of the community.

The Bill is only a small one in size but large in importance. It provides that trustee companies may be properly recompensed for their efforts on behalf of their clients. Let me emphasize that the figures which I propose to mention are maximum percentages and not necessarily the rates to be charged.

It is proposed that the maximum commission which may be fixed by the directors in respect of the capital value of an estate be increased from 4 per cent to 5 per cent and that in respect of income from 5 per cent to 6 per cent. I would like again to draw honourable members' attention to the fact that since 1892 there has been only one increase, in 1952, from 2½ per cent to 4 per cent, in respect of capital value, and none at all since 1888 in respect of income. It says much for the management of the companies concerned that they have been able to survive as long as they have and still be able to afford their best services to the public.

An additional charge at the rate of 0.1 per cent is also proposed at the end of each five years on the value of the estate in respect of trusts in perpetuity.

The honourable member for Port Curtis made great play in referring to what he described as "tremendous charges" by trustee companies. He is not aware apparently that most charges by trustee companies are subject to review in the Supreme Court upon the application of any person interested in the estate. Where the court or judge is of the opinion that a fee charged is excessive, the fee can be reduced.

The honourable member also adverted to references that wage bills of trustee companies were excessive and stated that everyone in business in the community has an excessive wage bill. He failed to mention of course that not everyone in business in the community is restricted by legislation, as are trustee companies, as to the charges they can make.

Despite the attempts by members of the Opposition to discredit the operations of trustee companies, I can assure this House that these companies make a very worthwhile contribution to the needs of the public in the fields in which they are authorised to act, and I feel that no-one can deny that the small increases proposed by the Bill are justified and warranted.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (10.24 p.m.): The Opposition's attitude to trustee companies was well canvassed at the introductory stage, when it was clearly pointed out that the value of these companies to society is limited and highly questionable. In contrast, the problems caused by them in handling estates are well known. What was said by the honourable member for Port Curtis at the introductory stage and by members in other debates has been well proven. The reason given for increasing the commission and fees could be debated endlessly. We maintain that the increase is not necessary and it is up to the Government to prove that it is. I still maintain that the increase in the capital value of estates handled—and thus the increase in the income earned on them—should be sufficient to meet the increased costs that have been referred to. We should not be legislating simply to assist some aspect of private enterprise. If the value of the shares of these companies on the stock market is not as high as it should be, surely that is their worry.

In the earlier debate an honourable member said that they are having trouble in attracting investors. Surely it is not our job to start propping up private companies and trustee companies, as we are here. The Minister said that the commission in respect of the capital value of an estate is to be a maximum of \$5 in every \$100, or 5 per cent, and, in respect of the income received by a trustee company on account of the estate, a maximum of \$6 for every \$100. Those may be the maximum commissions, but, taking into account the advantages of the added fees and commissions received by the companies, they are not warranted.

If one looks at section 45 of the Act, one notes the additional type of revenue that is available to the trustee companies. In addition to the moneys earned from commission for the management and administration of estates, they get a special fee for the arrangement of insurance. If they act as auctioneer or real estate agent, again they can charge. For the preparation of accounts and returns for succession and estate duties,

there is another charge. They get a special fee for the preparation of income and land tax returns.

Mr. Greenwood: They get paid for the work. That is a strange thing, isn't it!

Mr. WRIGHT: I am glad the honourable member made that point, because I thought at the start it was made plain that the 5 per cent or the 6 per cent was for administering the estate. It is now said that as well as that we should be paying them to do the work. Surely the work is done in the first instance and there should not be additional fees for the preparation of income and land tax returns. There should not be additional fees for inspection and report upon real and personal property in an estate, for keeping books of account in respect of any business or undertaking, or for the supervision of any business or undertaking. That is what the commission is for.

It is said that there should be an initial fee or commission of 5 per cent maximum (or 6 per cent in another instance) plus additional fees for all the other jobs, as the honourable member for Ashgrove said.

Mr. Greenwood: You wouldn't pay them?

Mr. WRIGHT: I do not believe that there should be additional fees. If there is a fee for management or administration, why claim that the keeping of books of account is not part of the administration or management? Surely it is. Surely the preparation of income tax and land tax returns is part of management and administration. It should not be separate and distinct from it—in fact, in addition to it.

Mr. Lowes: Would you agree that if they gave the taxation affairs to an accountant outside their own office, the accountant would charge a fee?

Mr. WRIGHT: I heard the honourable member for Brisbane say in the Chamber only the other night that there were experts in the offices of the trustee companies; that they had legal backgrounds and were accountants; that in fact within the offices the companies had all the expertise necessary to handle the estates and that that was their value to society. Now he is suggesting that they hand these out and charge for it.

Mr. Lowes: No.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is what the honourable member said. If the companies have employees who are experts in these fields, surely the cost of using those experts should be taken out of the total commission and not added to the commission.

We note, too, that the companies assess their own fees for work done and the services rendered in relation to the administration of the investment in the common fund. Admittedly that is limited so as not to exceed 0.5 per cent per annum of the

capital sum invested in the common fund. But it is important to look at the common fund. Section 36 of the Act says—

“A trustee company may establish and keep in its books one or more funds to be called a ‘Common Fund’”.

The moneys in that fund may in turn be invested virtually as the company determines. Surely that is the role of the trustee company to invest and look after the funds and the returns of the various estates.

The Government says that instead of having a straight-out administration fee—instead of having a management commission—we should have all these additional costs. We must bear in mind that it is the estate that pays the cost. It is the beneficiaries who lose out eventually.

As if that is not bad enough, the Minister suggests that there should be an additional fee to be calculated every five years at 0.1 per cent. I seriously question the need for that. I question whether there should be anything more than a straight-out administration fee or a straight-out commission for managing the estate. If it is to be 5 per cent, let it be that. Let us not have all these additional charges as well. I say that if we are to have payments for book work—for the management of the estates—they should include all the accounting that is necessary and all the returns that are necessary for submission to the Lands Office, the Taxation Department and so on. I do not believe that these extra fees are warranted. The estates pay, the beneficiaries lose and only the companies gain.

I know that nothing is going to be changed by the debate tonight, but I think it important to have recorded in “Hansard” exactly how some people think on these issues. It is all very well for the Government, which is tied to the private-enterprise wagon, to support anything put to it if it has the slightest taint of private enterprise. But I think that we in this House have a responsibility to protect the beneficiaries of estates, and to see that people do not use statutory provisions for their own benefit. That is all that we are doing tonight; we are simply propping up a system that should not be in operation.

It was said at the introductory stage that there is in this State a Public Curator Office that is unsurpassed by any other institution. But the Government is starving it and preventing it from working efficiently. If the Government had the decency to look after estates as it should in the interests of the people of Queensland, it would do everything possible to staff the Public Curator Office properly. It would make sure it had the necessary legal expertise, and sufficient clerks and other staff members. Instead, the Government is reducing the amount of work carried out by that office. The honourable member for Port Curtis clearly stated that the number of wills handled by the Public Curator Office is decreasing year after

year. This is happening as a result of work not being made available to the office simply because it does not have adequate staff to handle it.

I reiterate the point that I have already made. I believe that in the Public Curator Office Queensland has an organisation that is competitive with the trustee companies and I think that we should be standing by it instead of destroying it.

Mr. GREENWOOD (Ashgrove) (10.32 p.m.): I shall not detain the House for long. Obviously there should be either one overriding fee as the method of charging, or a basic fee which is suitable for many purposes (but not for additional services that might have to be given to a particular estate), to which is added the various specialist fees that might necessarily be incurred. Each has a lot to commend it, and either one or the other could be selected. But the one that is adopted must be followed and developed. That is what is being done here.

The honourable member for Rockhampton said a great deal, but ultimately it boiled down to the fact that he thought that an additional fee of 0.1 per cent was reprehensible. I remind him of how the rates in this State compare with those in other States. I take Western Australia as a good example. The charge in that State is 6 per cent on capital and 6 per cent on income. In addition, there is a charge of 0.25 per cent on capital for each five years in respect of trusts in perpetuity.

In Queensland the fee is to be increased to 5 per cent on capital, which is still below the rate in Western Australia, and 6 per cent on income, which is level with the Western Australian rate. Instead of 0.25 per cent on capital each five years for trusts in perpetuity, the charge in Queensland is to be what the honourable member for Rockhampton regards as exorbitant at 0.1 per cent. All that I can conclude is that the honourable member either does not understand the practical problems involved in providing this sort of service for Australians in times of inflation or, if he does, he does not really want our society to be able to provide these services.

It is all very well for people who are fairly wealthy and have a multiplicity of business interests and their own family solicitors to look after themselves. There is no difficulty in those cases in finding professional men to act as trustees. But what must be remembered is that there are small estates that need the assistance and guidance of a trustee company that is expert in the field and prepared to act, almost as a common carrier, in the capacity of a professional trustee.

That is what we are talking about here and it is because this Government thinks it is important that this service should continue to be provided to the people of Queensland that we are taking the realistic view and allowing trustee companies to increase their charges to a level which will enable them

to stay in business. What is the alternative? Would the honourable member force them out of business? Would he prevent Queenslanders from having access to this sort of successive—

Mr. Wright: No, make them stand on their own feet; make them more efficient.

Mr. GREENWOOD: The honourable member would make them stand on their own feet, whatever that might mean. The Minister for Justice and Attorney-General has looked very closely at these charges and has come to the conclusion that they are fair and reasonable. If he had not come to that conclusion this Bill would not be before the House. But he has and it is here and we support it.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.36 p.m.), in reply: The honourable member for Rockhampton seems to persist with this view that trustee companies are redundant. His words were, "It is not our job to prop them up." I have a contrary view. It is our job to supervise trustee companies. That is what this Act is all about and it goes back nearly 100 years. That is one of the reasons why these companies have flourished for the benefit of the people of the State, and many tens of thousands of people have benefited from the existence of these companies under the supervision of Parliament. We have a responsibility in this regard, and in fact in order that they should remain viable, because they are limited by legislation in what they can do, we are making this amendment at the moment. So it is our job to take a very special interest in these trustee companies and not allow a dog-eat-dog situation to occur.

For that very reason I would have expected the honourable member for Rockhampton to speak in an entirely different tone. I would have expected his party to support legislation of this type to supervise the operations of companies with the special interest that they have. And it is in order to protect the public that it becomes our job as a Legislature to look at the fees. We are not propping up the trustee companies; we are making it possible for them to carry out their continuing responsibility to people who have long since left this earth and have, indeed, relied very heavily on the continuity of these companies and their supervision by this Parliament to ensure that their beneficiaries enjoy the benefits of their estates. If it were not for the interest which this Parliament takes in the matter, there would be many people in the community in very perilous circumstances. It is for that reason that I would have expected a different attitude to be taken by the Opposition.

We are not starving the Public Curator Office of the work. It is run extremely well and it, too, plays a vital role in this area of public trust.

Mr. Wright: How come its work is going down when the work of every other department is increasing?

Mr. KNOX: What is going down?

Mr. Wright: How come the number of estates handled by the Public Curator is getting less?

Mr. KNOX: Is that so?

Mr. Wright: This is on your own figures.

Mr. KNOX: We will have a look at the figures and see what they look like when the report is published and tabled in this House.

Mr. Wright: They dropped by 2,000.

Mr. KNOX: There may be all sorts of reasons for that. All I can say is that because of the work which flows from the estates that it manages the amount of work that the Public Curator Office handles increases each year. I hope that this Bill has the full support of honourable members and I trust that the honourable member for Rockhampton, with a little more knowledge after a study of the Act, will understand his responsibility in regard to it.

I thank the honourable member for Ashgrove for his support and for answering some of the matters that have been raised.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.42 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

This Bill embodies into a separate Act the provisions relating to the appointment, registration, function and revocation of justices of the peace.

Justices of the peace do play an important role in our community and it is only proper that particulars of each appointed justice be recorded in a register and that he be furnished with a certificate of registration. The number of appointed justices in Queensland is indeed large and a programme has been prepared which will enable the register of justices to be kept up to date by the use of computer facilities.

For the future appointment of a justice of the peace the Bill provides that only fit and proper persons of or above the age of 21

years and under 66 years of age at the date of the appointment will be appointed by the Governor in Council.

There has been some misunderstanding on this point. A number of people thought that they had to surrender their title of justice of the peace because they had reached 66 years of age. That is not so. The provision relates to future appointments.

Honourable members seemed generally in favour of age 21 as the appropriate age for appointment, whilst some members indicated age 18, presumably to conform with the Age of Majority Act. However, I do believe that we must appreciate the difference between determining one's own affairs and determining in a judicial way the affairs of others.

Mention was also made during the introductory debate on this Bill of the extension of the present provisions relating to appointment by virtue of office. The only new category appointed on an ex-officio basis is the officials of the various courts of law in this State, as it is they who are directly involved in the day-to-day administration of justice and who are, therefore, constantly called up to perform the functions of their office by the issue of summonses, warrants and other similar forms of process.

The Bill provides that a justice shall not exercise the functions of his office until he takes either an oath of allegiance and office or an affirmation of allegiance and office. Hence, a perusal of the Bill will have satisfied the honourable members who raised the query of oath-taking by non-Christian believers or of those without religious belief. I think that was also answered by the honourable member for Ashgrove.

The most frequent criticism concerning justices of the peace received by the Department of Justice is the difficulty associated with locating a justice to witness a signature on a document. The Bill seeks to overcome this difficulty by providing for lists of justices to be published from time to time. With the assistance of the computer, it will not be a difficult task to publish a list of persons appointed a justice of the peace in each electoral district. Such a computer programme will be made much easier by the requirement contained in the Bill of identifying appointed justices on each printed electoral roll.

The availability of published lists of justices in court-houses and police stations, and possibly in other locations as well, will make it a less tedious exercise for members of the public to locate a justice when necessary. With the huge number of justices, it is just not practicable to consider entering in a telephone directory the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all justices of the peace.

Honourable members will be familiar with the tales of the trading justices who lived by fees and extortions, and in particular the story of the Bow Street runner who in the

good old days would issue warrants indiscriminately against vagrants and prostitutes and could, by taking up 100 girls a night, wax fat and flourish. In this regard the Bill creates offences punishable summarily of demanding and accepting fees and bribes and of assuming to act as a justice when not in fact a justice.

The suggestions of honourable members for some alleviation in the numerical limitation placed on the nomination of persons for appointment to the office and for some form of training for persons appointed a justice of the peace are both being considered.

I am confident that the Bill will assist a justice of the peace to exercise the important duties of his office in a more proper and just way and so contribute to the general administration of justice in this State.

Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (10.46 p.m.): The Opposition has had an opportunity to consider the Bill carefully, and I am pleased to say that its provisions have generally received the approbation of honourable members on this side. We have long maintained that the existing Justices Act was inadequate, particularly as it relates to justices of the peace, their appointment and functions. We have long believed in the necessity for a new and separate Justices of the Peace Act, which we now have before us tonight. For those reasons we welcome the Bill and lend our support to its enactment.

The idea of setting up a register is a good one. We hope that—as it is aimed to do—it will cull out persons who have obtained appointment to the commission of the peace in Queensland simply for the sake of prestige. I hope it will cull out those people who no longer desire to act as a J.P. I note that the registrar will have power to decide whether a person is desirous of continuing in this way. I will discuss those powers in clause 7 at the Committee stage. It is obvious that some kind of culling-out process is needed. It is fairly obvious that it is ridiculous to have something like 40,000 justices of the peace in the State, especially when one cannot be found when he is required. That is usually the problem. A lass in my office is a justice of the peace, and she gets repeated requests, as do members of Parliament, from people who want documents signed, affidavits taken and so on.

It is important that we have a register of justices, but it is more important that that register should be available and kept up to date. That is going to be the task of the registrar, one that I do not envy him. Having regard particularly to the way people move around the State, it is not going to be an easy task. Daily hundreds of people transfer from one point to another. Many of them are justices of the peace who will have to be re-registered. Many of them will have

to be included in different registers in the court-houses and police stations throughout the various electorates. That is an administrative task, and no doubt the person carrying it out will be capable of doing it; but I question whether he will be able to make an objective decision on a person's desire to be a justice of the peace at any time, or his capability. That is a point I will pursue later on.

I note that there will be a prescribed fee for registration. The Minister might comment on that. We do not know what the prescribed fee is going to be. I certainly hope it is not just another way of raising money. I realise the need for some kind of revenue to meet the cost of providing certificates and setting up a registrar, but I hope it will not increase year after year until it is exorbitant.

I note that the Bill prescribes ages between 21 and 66 years. I take the point made by the Minister that just because a person turns 67 years of age it does not follow that he has to cease as a justice of the peace. The Minister made the point that the age restriction is only for the appointment of justices of the peace. Let us have some consistency here. If we believe that 18 years is the age of majority in the State, that a person of 18 years of age is mature enough to enter into a contract (it could be for many thousands of dollars), mature enough to marry, mature enough to fight and mature enough to act as an adult in the community, surely he is mature enough to sign or witness a document.

Mr. Chinchin: To sit on the bench?

Mr. WRIGHT: We talked about that before. Maybe that is one area we need to look at. I take the point made by the honourable members for Mt. Gravatt and Ashgrove and other speakers in the introductory debate. This is an area we need to look at, but I wonder whether jurisdiction at the Magistrates Court level is more onerous or entails greater responsibility than the signing by an 18-year-old person of a document that could hold him or her to a contract of \$20,000 or \$30,000. I begin to wonder whether dealing in court with a matter involving the sum of \$100 is more important than signing a contract for many thousands of dollars.

If we believe that a person of 18 years of age has the ability to decide whether or not he is able to meet his commitments under such a contract, and if we believe that he is old enough and mature enough to enter into it, why shouldn't we give him some recognition by saying that he should be able to make some judgment in the Magistrates Court as a citizen? It is a debatable point and I accept the honourable member's interjection. It has been pointed out by the honourable member for Townsville that in some areas the age is not 21 years but 25 years. I do not believe that an 18-year-old

person should be prevented from being a justice of the peace and from performing the normal tasks of taking affidavits and witnessing documents.

I also make the point that if it is good enough for a chairman of a local authority or a mayor or a Lord Mayor automatically to be appointed a justice of the peace by virtue of his or her office, and to maintain that position while holding such office, surely it is good enough to acknowledge members of this Assembly in like manner. The Bill sets out two categories of persons, one comprising judges of the Supreme Court and District Court, stipendiary magistrates, registrars of the Supreme Court and District Court and clerks of the court—all engaged in the non-political field—and the other comprising members of the Executive Council—that is, Cabinet—and the chairmen, mayors and Lord Mayors of local authorities, all of whom are in the political field. However, a member of Parliament is not included. I give notice now that at the Committee stage I intend to move an amendment to so include members of Parliament. Members of Parliament should be included automatically while they hold office.

A member of Parliament is called upon to nominate a person for appointment as justice of the peace. Quite often we have to represent people in very important matters. Yet we are not automatically appointed justices of the peace by virtue of our office.

I hope that the Minister will accept my amendment. I think it has the general approval of many members in the Chamber. The Opposition does not have the numbers to have the amendment approved in a division; nevertheless I ask the Minister to give it his earnest consideration. I do not want to appear to be throwing bouquets to the Minister, but, as I have said on earlier occasions, he has done more for the law in this State than any other Minister for Justice over the past decades. He has cleaned up the Statute Book and done a lot of other things not only in the administration of justice but in consumer affairs as well. However, he is rarely prepared to accept an amendment from the Opposition. Perhaps he will break his rule tonight.

Mr. Greenwood: The legislation is so well thought out beforehand.

Mr. WRIGHT: Is it really? Is that why Acts introduced in 1973, such as the Small Claims Tribunals Act, have to be amended in 1975? I am not sure that the honourable member's point is a valid one.

I also accept the need to have in legislation the power to revoke an appointment. I note that the Bill provides for the suspension of a justice of the peace. I have no argument against the application of cessation provisions to people who are convicted of indictable offences or declared bankrupt or who are mentally ill. But I would question the severe penalty—and I

suggest it is a severe penalty—to be imposed upon a person who does not deliver up a certificate of registration. He could be fined \$500. I think he is given only 14 days to do this, and such a penalty seems to be excessive. No doubt there has to be a limit, but this seems to be not a maximum but an automatic penalty. Perhaps the Minister will comment on that.

I support the identification of justices on the electoral roll. I take the point that it may be difficult to list justices of the peace in the telephone book. However, maybe the Minister could make a public declaration or statement encouraging justices of the peace to have the letters "J.P." inserted after their name in the telephone book. There is nothing to prevent that, and it would be of great assistance to the community generally to have such a notation in the telephone book. Undoubtedly the identification of justices in the electoral roll would help many people, but I ask how many people have access to electoral rolls?

Mr. Greenwood: We can't force the P.M.G. to put something in the phone book.

Mr. WRIGHT: Why does the honourable member always argue? I know he has bitter lemon for his meals and sucks on lemons in this Chamber, but that is no excuse for his being such an argumentative type. Perhaps he has suffered some frustration at the bar and is taking it out on us in this Chamber.

Mr. Greenwood: Do you think you can force the P.M.G. to do that?

Mr. WRIGHT: Oh, give us a go. No, we cannot, but we could certainly encourage a justice of the peace to have the letters "J.P." inserted after his name in the phone book. Surely it is a reasonable request that the Minister could make in the interests of the community.

Mr. Chinchin: In the event of a justice committing an offence and his name being removed from the list of justices of the peace, he could remain so listed in the phone book. That could be an offence.

Mr. WRIGHT: Only if the Act said so. The Minister would have to answer that question. The offence is acting in the capacity of a justice of the peace, not having his name listed as a J.P. on a register that could be out of date. I am sure our barrister member, the honourable member for Ashgrove, could give us a learned dissertation on the legal aspects of that point.

I take a point about service being honorary. While \$1,000 may be a pretty stiff penalty, we must ensure that we maintain the honorary capacity of justices.

The Minister emphasised that copies of the lists of justices will be in the Government Gazette, the Magistrates Courts and Police Stations. I ask that they be sent automatically to the offices of members of Parliament.

Mr. Frawley: I asked for that; you read my speech.

Mr. WRIGHT: I do not know that the honourable member asked for it. If that is the case, I support his representations on it. I think it is a good idea. I was not aware that the honourable member suggested it and I noticed that the Minister did not refer to it when he replied. It may be that the honourable member did not refer to it. In any case I will check his speech tomorrow. I think this is a good idea. Many people know where the offices of members of Parliament are located and many people come to them for assistance and so on. It certainly would not hurt to have a list sent to them automatically.

My next point arises from comments made by the honourable member for Ashgrove. We do learn something from him on occasions. We have here new legislation—completely separate legislation for justices of the peace. We therefore have an excellent opportunity to make it complete, but we have not done so. We should have included in this Bill a detailed list of functions and jurisdictions of justices instead of a clause referring to the Justices Act 1886-1975. At the introductory stage, the honourable member for Ashgrove went to some pains to explain to the Chamber the functions of a justice of the peace in addition to those normally known, such as the taking of affidavits and declarations and the attesting or witnessing of documents and other instruments. He mentioned warrants of arrest and the issuing of search warrants and stressed that in order to obtain a warrant a person praying or seeking same has to satisfy a justice of the peace that it is reasonable in the circumstances to obtain a warrant or to invade someone's privacy.

In other words, he said it was very important to remember that the role of a justice can include more than merely the attesting of documents. We accept that. We realise that justices can serve on a Magistrates Court bench, but few of them do so. He made it very clear that functions of justices of the peace were not only not known by members of this Assembly, but also were generally unknown throughout the community. While we have a clause pertaining to the various functions of justices—

Mr. Greenwood: I was not criticising the community.

Mr. WRIGHT: I imagine that the honourable member would criticise anyone.

Mr. Greenwood: I was criticising you.

Mr. WRIGHT: I have come to expect that. One thing that certain members of the legal fraternity do not like is someone being able to match them at their own game when they know full well that that person has not had full legal training. That irks some elements in the legal fraternity. I

know how the honourable member for Ashgrove must feel about the excellent job that the Minister for Justice does even though he is not a lawyer. The honourable member for Ashgrove has not made any comments on this matter to me, but I often wonder what goes through his mind, and how he aspires to hold that high and honourable office.

Mr. Frawley: There is one thing certain, and that is that you will never hold it.

Mr. WRIGHT: That is a debatable point.

I reiterate my views on the need for education and for some type of correspondence course for newly appointed justices of the peace in Queensland. The Minister said he would look into this matter. I hope that he does so and provides some type of booklet or course that helps people to understand the full ramifications of registration, especially if the failure to return a certificate could involve a fine of \$500. A booklet would help them to understand fully their responsibilities, their functions and the penalties involved, and should include additional material on warrants, the taking of oaths and service in the Magistrates Court. That information would be no burden to carry.

I do not think that many people who aspire to be justices of the peace would mind taking a correspondence or reading course. It is obvious that they would have the capacity and the interest and motivation to do so. After all, they are asking for the position in the first place. I ask the Minister to give serious consideration not only to carrying out the idea of an education course but also to ensuring that it provided for some type of booklet that would be available to the whole community.

I repeat that the Opposition welcomes the legislation. I have some comments to make on clause 7 and an amendment to clause 9. Otherwise, we fully support the legislation.

Mr. LESTER (Belyando) (11 p.m.): I take the opportunity tonight to tell the Minister for Justice and his committee that their efforts have been commendable and searching. No doubt they have done their best to improve the Act for the community in general and justices of the peace in particular.

I am still a little disappointed that people have chosen not to take any notice of my comments about people 18 years of age and over. I did not lightly take the decision to support on the floor of the Chamber efforts for young people to become justices of the peace. It happened when some young people approached me some time ago and said, "If ever this matter comes up, will you at least speak for us on the floor of the House?" I considered the matter seriously and decided to support them. I have not regretted doing so.

Since speaking on this matter at its initiation in Committee, I have made further investigations. It is a fact that many of our young people died fighting for our country in Vietnam. It is a fact that many of the people who teach our young children on the way of living are not 21. Many notable incidents of bravery have been performed by people between the ages of 18 and 21. If those people at that age are good enough to be entrusted with those responsibilities, they should not be excluded by this Parliament from eligibility to become justices of the peace.

I repeat that those people have already passed a searching test. They have to be able to live up to the test they will be given before being allowed to become justices of the peace. I might point out by way of illustration that recently a young person driving between Moranbah and Clermont in my own car came upon an accident. A number of people were standing around looking at the scene of the accident but not doing a damn thing about it. This girl put six people in my car. One of them fainted on the way to Clermont. She stopped at a house to ring an ambulance and left one of the people there. She had the presence of mind to stop the ambulance to tell them what had happened. She then delivered the other people to the Clermont Hospital. That is a true account of an act done by a person 18 years of age. She arrived at my house somewhat shaken, but she had done the job—a job that some older people who were standing there gawking at the scene of the accident did not have the guts or the courage to do. That is one person on my list who will be knocked back simply because she is 18 years of age and, it is stated, would not know how to act in certain circumstances. It is terribly wrong. Unless the Minister reconsiders the matter, we in the Parliament will have very heavy consciences.

I am pleased that the Minister has decided to make it possible for more people to become justices of the peace and that he has tried to organise things generally so that justices of the peace will be more accessible to the community. His efforts to have the initials "J.P." placed after the names of justices of the peace on the electoral rolls as well as his other efforts to place lists up on notice boards and so on, are very much appreciated.

In conclusion further to my comments about 18-year-olds, let us be very severe with any who are nominated, really give them the works and make sure that they are all right; but let us not exclude them. I sincerely ask the Minister and the Parliament to reconsider the matter. I would not do so if I did not think it was worth while. I am one who has made a reasonable success of my life, and it is not because I have made wrong decisions. I believe that I am right in what I am now saying. I am not taking this matter lightly, and I ask Parliament to at least consider what I have said.

Mr. DEAN (Sandgate) (11.6 p.m.): Although I spoke at the introductory stage, I want to make a few more comments. In the first place, I believe that justices of the peace should be doing more in the community. I think that too much social standing attaches to the office. I also think that it is too easy to obtain nomination and appointment as a J.P.

The honourable member for Rockhampton said that there were about 40,000 justices of the peace in Queensland. I think that that is a ridiculous number. But it is still difficult to find one because no-one knows where they are. Why cannot justices of the peace have plates on their front gates? That would at least let people in the district know where to find a J.P.

Mr. Frawley: I said that.

Mr. DEAN: The honourable member for Murrumba always says something after it has been said by someone else. Why should not a justice of the peace have some identification on the front gate of his premises to let the local people know that he is a J.P.? I hope that the Bill will do a little tidying up in this direction.

Although it has been said that a list will be kept by the registrar, I think lists should be permanently displayed in many places in each electorate to let the people know where to find justices of the peace. I cannot see why they should not have some means of identification at the front of their premises.

Mr. Kaus: In New Zealand they have their house numbers in different coloured paint.

Mr. DEAN: There could be many forms of identification.

Mr. Moore: Brand them on the forehead.

Mr. DEAN: Perhaps it would be a good thing to brand the honourable member for Windsor, but I would not suggest that for the average justice of the peace.

I hope that the Bill will extend the duties and responsibilities of justices of the peace. Although I do not think that there should be a high fee charged for nomination and appointment, I think that more consideration could be given to the selection of justices. An applicant should not be appointed simply because he is a good citizen. After all, there are thousands of good citizens. Potential justices of the peace should have some qualifications, the most important of which are common sense and intelligence.

Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumba) (11.9 p.m.): Although I did not intend to speak on the second reading of the Bill, I have to put the record straight. It is obvious that some A.L.P. members have not read my speech at the introductory stage in which I suggested the displaying of nameplates on the homes of justices of the peace. The honourable

member for Rockhampton copied another of my suggestions. I think that credit should be given where credit is due.

A Government Member: Sit down.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I will not sit down, and there is no one here game enough to try to make me.

I agree with most of the provisions of the Bill, but I do not agree that a person of 18 years of age, as has been suggested by other members including the honourable member for Belyando, would be competent to make some of the decisions that a J.P. could be called upon to make.

Mr. Lester: Oh, Mr. Frawley!

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do not believe that at all. At least I have the courage of my convictions and I am prepared to stand up and disagree with anyone with whom I feel that I should disagree.

Mr. Wright: You'll never be a Minister.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't give a hoot whether or not I become a Minister. At least I have more chance than the honourable member of becoming a Minister.

The fact that the Minister is going to place the letters "J.P." on the roll after a person's name is most commendable. Although I would like to see them put in the telephone book, I can understand why they cannot be.

An Honourable Member: It's a waste of good ink.

Mr. FRAWLEY: It is not a waste of good ink at all. Many people have access to the rolls and it is just possible that some people might get some information from them. But I do hope that the Minister takes into consideration another suggestion I made, which the honourable member for Rockhampton repeated—to place a list of justices in the electorate office of each member of Parliament.

Mr. Casey: You have to look up the roll.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I mean the same list as will be put in the court-house.

Honourable Members interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am not going to answer any stupid interjections.

An Honourable Member: Most members keep a record of the justices of the peace in their electorates.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I keep a list of the justices in my electorate and I still think a list of justices should be kept in each

electorate office. I know they are shown on the roll, but it is too hard to look up the roll. It is far better to have a list.

I think that the penalty of \$1,000 for wrongfully acting as a justice is a good one. I am not going to say exactly where this occurred, but I can tell honourable members a story about when I was at a construction camp once and the men were looking for a justice of the peace and could not find one. So a mob of them got together and said to one of the fellows, "You can be the J.P.," and he signed the document. It might have only been some simple act, but I have often wondered what would have happened had it reached the point where that man's signature had some important bearing on a point of law. So I think it is a very good suggestion that any person acting as a justice should be subject—

An Honourable Member: Are you going to take all the applications to your legal adviser?

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't get legal advice from anybody.

In regard to the prohibition of reward, I believe that a justice should not extort or get any reward at all. The honourable member for Townsville South said today that when he entered this Parliament he was told by members of the A.L.P., who were in Government at the time, to charge £2/10/0 for witnessing a signature. I know for a fact that when the A.L.P. was in Government its members used to charge people for a commission as a justice of the peace.

Mr. Wright: We wouldn't do that.

Mr. FRAWLEY: He told the truth. If everyone stood up as the honourable member for Townsville South does and was not afraid to show the people in his electorate that he is—

Mr. Wright: He'll bucket you for sure.

Mr. FRAWLEY: He won't bucket me at all. I do not say anything for which I have to be bucketed by anybody. I issue a warning that anybody who buckets me is going to get a hell of a big bucket tipped back over him, so don't worry about that.

The introduction of this Bill is not before time. I am concerned that an unlimited number of justices of the peace might be appointed. Members of Parliament were previously restricted to nominating 16 people a year from their electorate. Now that it is going to be an open go, a member can nominate as many people as he likes. I certainly hope that some pretty stringent conditions are applied, and that everyone who is nominated is not appointed.

Mr. Lester: Why do you say that?

Mr. FRAWLEY: God Almighty, we don't want justices all over the place.

Mr. Moore interjected.

Mr. FRAWLEY: What a lot of rubbish! For a change I am going to disagree with the honourable member for Windsor. It is about time. I am in a disagreeable mood tonight, anyway.

I do not believe that justices should be appointed willy-nilly. I reiterate what I said in my speech during the introductory debate: I do not believe that commissions should be given to two members of the same family residing in the same house. Appointments should be parcelled out. I have known of three people in the one little firm wanting to be appointed justices of the peace and I just would not nominate them all. I think we should be careful about who are given commissions and they should be given in areas where they can be made use of.

Mr. Moore: You are talking your way out of Murrumba.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I don't give a hoot if I am talking myself out or not. I will get out of Murrumba when I am ready.

Mr. Lester: You are excluding a lot of good people in the 18 to 21 age group.

Mr. FRAWLEY: I am not complaining about that. I am quite convinced that many people over the age of 21 years should be given the opportunity to become justices. The Minister said 21 years of age, so I will agree with that.

Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.14 p.m.), in reply: The honourable member for Rockhampton has raised some matters which are worthy of consideration.

As to fines—the penalty mentioned is a maximum.

It is proposed to have some arrangements made for training.

Mr. Wright: Will you produce booklets, as you did for legal aid, or something along those lines?

Mr. KNOX: No. We can assist the Justices Association with some of the education programmes it has been pursuing.

As to members of the Legislature automatically becoming justices of the peace—I will consider that suggestion without making a statement at this stage that it would be acceptable. I point out for the information of members that the qualifications for appointment as a justice of the peace are more stringent and higher, if I may use that term, than those for members of the Legislative Assembly. That may seem paradoxical but it is true. Quite a number of people have been rejected as not being suitable for appointment as justice of the peace because of unfortunate circumstances in their background, and they have sought to become members of Parliament. I will not say

that they have been successful, but they could have been successful. I know of two instances, possibly three. Perhaps other honourable members know of similar cases.

Mr. Frawley: You include members of the Executive Council but you won't give it to back-benchers.

Mr. KNOX: It is not a question of not giving it to back-benchers. I am pointing out that, in the selection of members of the Executive Council, it is assumed that people are of such standing that they do not have unfortunate backgrounds. I am not saying that there are any at the moment, but there have been members of Parliament who would never have been made members of the Executive Council if they had been in the House for 100 years.

Mr. Casey: Similar conditions apply to people who wish to become members of local authorities.

Mr. KNOX: Aldermen do not automatically become justices of the peace, but chairmen of shires and lord mayors do.

Mr. Casey: But similar conditions apply before they can become members of a local authority.

Mr. KNOX: Yes. That raises a very important question. Should they remain included as ex-officio members? A person who has become chairman of a shire or mayor of a city may commit some offence or indiscretion that would in other circumstances prevent him from becoming a justice of the peace but would not prevent him from being chairman of a shire or mayor of a city. I think honourable members can think of circumstances that have arisen in this State that would fit that description. So the question does arise as to whether these people should automatically continue as justices of the peace.

I will consider the suggestion made by the honourable member for Rockhampton, because I want to seek advice and examine the background of the circumstances under which members of Parliament become eligible and whether or not they make themselves ineligible to become justices of the peace by committing an indiscretion.

It is interesting to note that a person who has been charged with a drink-driving offence cannot be a justice of the peace, but there is no prohibition on a person's becoming a member of Parliament, or continuing to be a member of Parliament, if he is convicted of a drink-driving offence.

Mr. Moore: Or a judge.

Mr. KNOX: Or a judge, in certain circumstances, yes. I will examine the matter and discuss it at the Committee stage when the honourable member proposes his amendment.

The honourable member for Belyando raised the question of age. It was, of course, discussed by the joint Government parties as to whether the age should be 18 or 21 years. The majority view was that a person should be at least 21 years of age before he could be appointed a justice of the peace. It is not a question of whether a person can fight for his country or do certain other things. It is a question of whether he can exercise discretion in relation to the affairs of others in a judicial manner.

If the only duty of a justice of the peace were to witness signatures, there would not be any difficulty; but of course, other duties are attached to the position. The alternative would be to have these people merely witness signatures. I think there is a general title for that in some places—commissioner for affidavits. I should imagine that there would be no problem for those 18 years of age and over to witness signatures but there would be a problem for those under 21 years of age in filling a judicial position. I feel that the views of Government members fell very heavily in favour of people being at least 21 years of age before filling the office of justice of the peace.

As to having "J.P." on the gate—I am not sure whether that was suggested by the honourable member for Sandgate and supported by the honourable member for Murrumbidgee or the other way round.

Mr. Frawley: I suggested it.

Mr. KNOX: It was originally suggested by the honourable member for Murrumbidgee and heavily supported by the honourable member for Sandgate. If it were canvassed generally in the community that a person should have "J.P." or "Justice of the Peace" on his gate post—

Mr. Moore: Or on the forehead.

Mr. KNOX: Those with plenty of forehead would have no problem.

If that were suggested, I think a lot of people would regard it as an invasion of privacy. I have noted that some justices of the peace do let others know that way.

We will see what can be done about having a list of J.P.s made available to electorate offices. If a general roll is established, and it would be of value to members of Parliament, that could be done. I should think that the people seeking advice from an electorate office would be people living in that electorate, and in future that information will be on the electoral roll.

I do not intend to go into Committee at this stage.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.23 p.m.