

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 16 OCTOBER 1975**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

## THURSDAY, 16 OCTOBER 1975

---

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

### PAPERS

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

#### Reports—

Department of Primary Industries, for the year 1974-75.

Council of Griffith University, for the year 1974.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

#### Orders in Council under—

Industrial Development Act 1963-1973.

The Rural Training Schools Act of 1965.

Schools of Arts (Winding Up and Transfer) Act 1960-1973.

### QUESTIONS UPON NOTICE

#### 1. RETRENCHMENTS AT MONDURAN DAM; GIN GIN MAIN CHANNEL

**Mr. Jensen**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Water Resources—

(1) Did the Commissioner for Irrigation and Water Supply write to the chief construction engineer to inform him that the Minister had been advised that some 20 men, in addition to 15 already retrenched, would be retrenched on the Monduran Dam site in the near future?

(2) Did he express concern at the limited Commonwealth finance which prevented him from keeping within the allocations and suggest proceeding with the retrenchments gradually?

(3) Did he also foreshadow a question in the House and request the engineer to prepare a draft reply for the Minister in anticipation of the question and to throw the blame on the lack of Commonwealth finance?

(4) Is there more Commonwealth finance available this year, actually \$2.5 million, than there was last year?

(5) Have some of the men listed for retrenchment had from one to six years' service with the department?

(6) Have the men been offered or will they be offered a transfer to other projects such as Eton and Invicta?

(7) Will work on the construction of the Gin Gin main channel be severely restricted because most of the money available is to be spent on pumps, ancillary equipment and buildings to house the pumps and equipment?

(8) Why did the State Government not increase its allocation for this project in this year's Budget?

Answers:—

(1) Yes. I have arranged with the commissioner to keep me informed of necessary retrenchments within the commission to enable me to check all possible avenues to ensure reductions in the work-force are kept to a minimum.

(2) Yes.

(3) The possibility of a question in the House was raised. A request was made earlier this year to the Commonwealth through the Department of Northern Development for funds in addition to the \$2,500,000 in 1975-76 in order to maintain the existing work-force. This request for additional funds for the Bundaberg project was refused in a recent letter from the Prime Minister.

(4) Yes. The initial allocation in the year 1974-75 was \$2,000,000 and the Commonwealth subsequently agreed to increase this to \$2,500,000. However, the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission was able to expend only \$2,070,000 and the allocation was reduced to that figure.

(5) This is correct; but, as there are insufficient funds for the whole job to continue, it is necessary that some men be put off.

(6) No. Most projects are in a similar situation.

(7) Yes.

(8) The State is already heavily committed on other urgent works, including the Burnett River barrage and works in the Gooburrum system, and was not able to allocate funds to works on the Monduran pump station and Gin Gin main channel. State funds allocated to the Bundaberg irrigation area this financial year total \$2,300,000, which represents 26 per cent of State finance available to the commission for construction of various projects throughout Queensland.

## 2. REGISTRATION OF HOUSEHOLD PEST EXTERMINATORS

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

(1) Are household pest exterminators registered under any section of his department and, if not, does he contemplate having them register and advise his department on the various pests in an area and the respective chemicals used for their control or extermination?

(2) As persons using certain poisons must be registered with his department, do pest exterminators using other chemical solutions such as dieldrin (which are not regarded as poisons relative to humans under the Act) need to be registered?

Answer:—

(1 and 2) Persons using methyl bromide, hydrocyanic acid and carbon disulphide as fumigants must be licensed under the Poisons (Fumigation) Regulations, 1973. Persons using fluoacetic acid or its salts (1080 poison) or thallium or its salts, except prepared salts containing 0.25 per cent or less of thallium, must have the written authority of the Director-General of Health under the Poisons Regulations of 1973. Pest exterminators using other poisons are not required to be registered under State health legislation but distribution of poisons by them is controlled by the Poisons Regulations. It is my intention to introduce legislation in the near future to provide regulation-making power by which registration may be achieved.

## 3. RAILWAY EMPLOYEES, MT. ISA AND CLONCURRY

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

How many railway employees (a) were employed, (b) resigned and (c) were transferred during the last three years in (i) Mt. Isa and (ii) Cloncurry?

Answer:—

The details sought are not readily available. The information is being extracted and will be duly conveyed to the honourable member.

## 4. DOCTOR'S RESIDENCE, AUGATHELLA

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

In view of the announced extra money to be spent on hospitals, will a new doctor's residence be constructed in Augathella in the near future?

Answer:—

I am aware of the strong representations of the honourable member in this matter. I assure the honourable member that his representations will be given consideration in the overall review of health services in rural areas of the State.

## 5. FUTURE OF NURSING HOMES

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

(1) As some nursing homes have had to raise their charges from \$78 to \$95 per fortnight and as the pension is only \$82 per fortnight, what is the future of the nursing homes under the present Commonwealth Government policies?

(2) What chances are there for persons in these nursing homes who have no means of support other than the pension?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) While I share the concern of the honourable member at the financial situation of pensioners in privately run nursing homes, I must point out that this matter is outside my portfolio, as pensions, benefits under the National Health Act and fees of nursing homes are all fixed by Commonwealth authorities. I assure the honourable member the Queensland Government has always expressed concern, however, at the financial burden placed on people living in these nursing homes. I would support any effort to urge the Commonwealth Government to increase benefits to these people. I appreciate the very real concern shown by the honourable member in this and other health matters.

#### 6. MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION RENEWALS

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

(1) Will the difficulties of delay being occasioned with the renewal notices for vehicle registration outside the metropolitan area be resolved in the near future?

(2) What procedures should be adopted by owners who have not received notices at the due date and what is their position relative to operating vehicles on the road after the renewal date, when registration fees have not been paid?

*Answers:—*

(1) There is no delay in the issue of renewal notices. These are issued at least a month before the due date.

(2) An owner who has not received a renewal notice can apply for renewal to the Main Roads Department, or any clerk of the court, who will inform him of the amount payable on advice of details of the vehicle and purpose of use for third-party insurance purposes. I would add that in a number of cases people do not receive renewal notices, because they have failed to notify change of address or transfer documents have not been submitted promptly. If registration and other fees are not paid by the due date, the vehicle is not currently registered and is uninsured and its use on a public road is a breach of the law.

#### 7. SCHOOL LIBRARIES, NORTHERN REGION

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

Will he list (a) the secondary and (b) the primary schools in the northern regional area which have new library buildings and those schools in order of forward priority for which libraries have been approved?

*Answer:—*

This information is being collated and will be provided when it is available.

#### 8. BITUMEN-SEALING OF SECTION OF THE CLERMONT-CHARTERS TOWERS ROAD

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

As the Peak Downs Highway is nearing completion, will he extend the bitumen surface of the Clermont-Charters Towers Road towards the Kilcummin turn-off to help grain growers, cattle people and tourists?

*Answer:—*

Yes. A job providing for the construction of 2.9 miles of bitumen road, and costing about \$170,000, should be made available to the Belyando Shire Council during November. This will leave another 8 miles of gravel road to the Kilcummin turnoff, but limited funds do not allow further work to be planned this financial year. However, the honourable member may rest assured that I will see that sufficient funds are made available to carry out much more work on that road, because I want him to be the member for Belyando for many years to come. He is working hard for his electorate, and he will receive all possible assistance from me.

#### 9. PROFESSOR R. HENDERSON'S REPORTS ON POVERTY

**Mr. Ahern** for **Mr. Lane**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Community and Welfare Services and Minister for Sport—

(1) With reference to the two reports into poverty which were prepared by Professor Ronald Henderson, Director of the Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research at the University of Melbourne and tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament in April 1974 and August 1975, has his department been supplied with copies of the reports?

(2) Were his officers consulted in their preparation?

(3) Has Queensland been invited to discuss with the Commonwealth the findings contained therein, with a view to co-operating with the Commonwealth in implementing those recommendations in which we could be of assistance?

*Answers:—*

(1) The Department of Children's Services received one copy of each report from the Commission of Inquiry Into Poverty.

(2) During the time of the inquiry, the commission made marginal contact with the department in relation to its terms of reference but the Department of Children's Services assisted the inquiry in three main ways, viz.—(i) a survey of One-parent Families; (ii) a study of Incentive to Desert; (iii) a study of Housing and other Services in Brisbane. The survey on one-parent families and the study of housing and other services were performed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Queensland Council of Social Service respectively with assistance being given by the Department of Children's Services with respect to the referral, with concurrence of families known to the department to be living in circumstances less than satisfactory. The study of incentive to desert was undertaken by departmental officers and involved an in-depth survey into the financial and personal standing of applicants for family assistance both before and after desertion. This project was undertaken over a period of three months and involved the interview of 134 families. In addition, the former Director, Department of Children's Services, Mr. C. A. P. Clark, made a written submission as well as giving evidence to the Commission.

(3) My department has not been invited to discuss with the Commonwealth Government the findings contained in the report, but the Director, Department of Children's Services, is a member of a committee on family services established under the Social Welfare Commission Act and that committee at its last meeting spent some time discussing chapter 7 which is headed "Welfare Services" in a general way. However, I am of the opinion that there would be value for the Commonwealth Government to discuss the findings and recommendations contained in the report with the Governments of the States to establish the best ways of implementing the recommendations and to avoid the costly overlapping, duplication and fragmentation of welfare services that is evident at the present time and which has been accelerated since the present Commonwealth Government came to power.

#### 10. LANDS FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

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

(1) In relation to this State's application to the Commonwealth for financial assistance under the States Grants (Nature Conservation) Act for the acquisition of lands for nature conservation purposes, which I understand was made in January 1975 to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment, what is the total area of

land, suitable for wildlife habitat and acquisition, contained in the Queensland submission?

(2) Where are the areas of land situated?

(3) Has any land yet been acquired under this scheme?

(4) What part of the Commonwealth Government's \$9 million fund, contained in the 1974-75 Budget for this purpose, has been allocated to Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1) The total area of land in the proposals is about 15,040 hectares. Being national parks proposals, they are of course eminently suitable as wildlife habitats.

(2) The areas cover many parts of Queensland including: Lamington Plateau—Mt. Barney—Springbrook areas; Crow's Nest area; Cape Cleveland; Babinda—Innisfail; Severn River Gorge; Eurimbula area.

(3) No land was acquired under the scheme by this State in the 1974-75 year, chiefly because no individual purchase agreements had been received from the Commonwealth Government. The first such agreement has only just been received and is being processed now.

(4) Of the \$9,000,000 promised to the States in 1974-75, Queensland's share was to have been between \$1,500,000 and \$1,800,000, depending on final purchase prices. In the 1975-76 Commonwealth Budget, the over-all total was reduced to \$1,800,000, of which Queensland's tentative allocation so far is \$288,000.

#### 11. MR. A. J. CREEDY, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

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

(1) When did Mr. A. J. Creedy, Director of Cultural Activities, commence duties with the Queensland Government?

(2) Is there a signed contract between Mr. Creedy and the Government? If so, what are the respective terms of the contract and on what date does the contract expire?

*Answers:—*

(1) 1968.

(2) No. Mr. Creedy is employed under the Public Service Act and Regulations.

## 12. PETROL SERVICE STATIONS

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

(1) Is he aware that Queensland has 1,740 service stations and that representatives of the Queensland Automobile Chamber of Commerce have said that this was 500 too many?

(2) If the excess was reduced, would the capital cost savings to oil companies mean that petrol prices could be maintained in Queensland?

(3) Has his department engaged in any project which could lead to a reduction in the number of service stations?

(4) Is there a large turnover of operators of service stations, which would make it possible to close down stations without inflicting hardship?

(5) Does his department have any say in whether a petrol station can operate in a particular area in Queensland?

*Answers:—*

(1 to 4) I am aware of the statement. The Government has moved to assist retail outlets by banning retail sales from wholesale pumps and depots. The Government, through my colleague the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, initiated discussions with the oil companies in an attempt to resolve this problem, but subsequently the introduction of the Trade Practices Act prohibited the pursuance of this matter to a successful conclusion.

(5) No. Local authorities control the siting of service stations.

## 13. OPENING OF NEW LAW COURTS BUILDING, TOWNSVILLE

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

(1) What was the total number of public servants from all departments who attended the opening of the new Law Courts Building in Townsville?

(2) What were their names and which departments did they represent?

(3) How many members of Parliament attended this opening?

(4) What was the total cost of air fares, accommodation and out-of-pocket expenses for this visit and were these expenses met by his department or other Ministerial departments?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) Apart from the Department of Justice, this information is not available to me.

(3) A number of members of both the Queensland and Federal Parliaments received invitations to the opening ceremony. Details of acceptances and actual attendances are not available to me.

(4) Public servants will be paid travelling allowances, dependent upon the duration of absence from Brisbane, at the rates prescribed by the Public Service Regulations. The total cost is not known to me.

## 14. THREAT FROM IMPORTED FOOTWEAR

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

In view of the aggravated threat to local shoe manufacturers from the Commonwealth Government's decision to permit a further increase in import levels, will he investigate the situation confronting Queensland footwear manufacturers and inform this House of the anticipated consequences of this policy, particularly with respect to levels of employment?

*Answer:—*

I am, of course, well aware of the detrimental effect Commonwealth Government policies and actions have had on not only the footwear industry but many other industries in this State. Having already suffered severely from earlier reductions in the tariff, there is no doubt this latest imposition will have a further dampening effect on local industry and those whose livelihood depends on it. Manufacturers with whom my department has been in contact over the past few days confirm that the Commonwealth action must inevitably lead to further unemployment in the industry.

## 15. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS

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

As the Victorian Agriculture Department in its latest News Bulletin, quoting as its source the Information Services Section of the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, has told farmers that they can apply for unemployment benefits where it can be demonstrated that they are without livelihood owing to crop failure, drought or economic factors, and in view of the plight of Queensland beef producers, will he investigate this matter and clarify the entitlements of potential claimants in this State?

*Answer:—*

I have been informed that the policy of the Commonwealth Department of Social Security is that in the circumstances

to which the honourable member has referred in his question, provided a primary producer has ceased to work his property, his property is not producing income and he offers for suitable employment away from his rural property, then in accordance with the other usual conditions for eligibility, for example, in respect of other income sources, he may receive unemployment benefits.

16. BUILDING COMPLETION PAYMENTS,  
ST. GEORGE HOSPITAL

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

(1) Is he aware of the problems regarding the completion of payments to the Toowoomba carpenter who built the St. George Hospital?

(2) Has he had requests to interview the contractors?

(3) Will he outline the present situation?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 3) The honourable member would be aware of the circumstances surrounding this matter and in this connection I would refer him to my letters to him of 20 June and 5 August 1975. I consider that, despite the honourable member's request, no benefit would be gained by seeing the building contractors as the position has not altered and I am of the opinion that the company is not entitled to the rise-and-fall claims being made as all payments have been made in accordance with the contract and the relevant awards.

17. STUDY OF DRUG-TAKING HABITS OF  
NURSING STUDENTS

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** for **Mr. Melloy**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Has he read the front page story in the September 1975 issue of the "R.A.N.F. Review" and the editorial of the review which reports that permission to include student nurses from the Royal Brisbane and Princess Alexandra Hospitals in a study on the drug-taking habits of nursing students had been refused?

(2) As the journal reports that full co-operation was obtained from all private hospitals and the Repatriation General Hospital and that the study was initiated as a result of a decision taken by the nursing students, why was the request to carry out this study refused and will he reconsider his attitude in the light of the desire of the nurses to carry out such a study?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes.

(2) The decision not to participate in this study was made by the North Brisbane and South Brisbane Hospitals Boards and any reconsideration would be a matter for those boards. I recently interviewed Mr. Stott, when he intimated that he was no longer associated with the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, and it is therefore obvious that the decision of the hospitals boards was a correct one. During the interview, I invited Mr. Stott to forward a submission regarding the type of information he desires, and on its receipt I will give further consideration to the matter.

18. CONVICTIONS AND FINES FOR S.P.  
BETTING

**Mr. K. J. Hooper** for **Mr. Melloy**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General—

(1) How many S.P. betting convictions were recorded in each of the last three years for which figures are available?

(2) In each year, how many were first, second, third or multiple offenders?

(3) What was the total amount received in fines each year?

(4) How many fines represented the maximum penalty which could be incurred?

*Answer:—*

(1 to 4) This question should be directed to another Minister.

19. STRIKE AT ROSS RIVER MEATWORKS,  
TOWNSVILLE

**Mrs. Kyburz**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Industrial Development, Labour Relations and Consumer Affairs—

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the irresponsible strike action of the male meatworkers at the Ross River meatworks in Townsville last week?

(2) As the men who caused the strike have made themselves the subject of pitiful derision, is there any way that the Government can protect the women who make up one-third of the members of the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union, as they are obviously not being allowed a sufficient voice within the union?

*Answers:—*

(1) While the employment of meatworkers at the Ross River meatworks at Townsville is governed by an award of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, I am aware that certain male meatworkers refused to work with a female slicer in the boning room.

(2) This action was in defiance of a direction of the officials of the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union of Employees. However, work has now been resumed. I am not aware of any action by the union itself which has discriminated against female members. I am amazed at this action by a disgruntled section of this union, particularly in view of the general attitude of the trade union movement in according to women full equality in all respects. I feel that those who took this action must find themselves out of step with the trade union movement generally. I would also mention that there is in operation in Queensland a State Committee on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation and on which the Queensland Government is represented. The secretary of this committee is Mr. J. Hamilton of the Commonwealth Department of Labour and Immigration, Eagle Street, Brisbane. Any person who feels he or she is being discriminated against should complain to this committee.

20. SURVEY BY PROF. BROWNLEA INTO CHILDREN'S HEALTH FACILITIES

Mrs. Kyburz, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) Is he aware of a survey prepared and conducted by Professor Brownlea of the Griffith University and funded by a \$60,000 Commonwealth Government grant, which purports to question the needs in terms of children's health facilities in certain southside suburbs?

(2) As the professor stated that the use of the \$60,000 is to find out what facilities are available and what services are needed, has he in fact approached the Health Department for this information, which surely must be available?

Answers:—

(1) Yes, I am aware of the survey.

(2) When the Commonwealth Hospitals and Health Services Commission referred the proposal in its application stage to my department, it was closely examined by our Health Services Planning and Development Unit, and was commented upon favourably as it was believed that the information gathered by Professor Brownlea would be useful in planning health services in the future.

21. MATERNAL AND CHILD WELFARE CLINICS AS VACCINATION CENTRES

Mrs. Kyburz, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Health—

(1) What are the functions and facilities provided by maternal and child welfare clinics?

(2) Will he consider using the suburban maternal and child welfare clinics as vaccination centres to replace the present City Hall system, as it is most inconvenient for mothers of young children to come into the city?

Answers:—

(1) The Division of Maternal and Child Health plays an advisory role in mothercraft and provides supervision in the development of children from birth to school-entry age. One of its major roles is to advise parents on feeding and growth of children. In some areas it also provides an ante-natal service. The facilities needed to carry out these functions are provided by centres, subcentres and mobile clinics. In addition to accommodation for clerical and record purposes, the clinics contain the necessary equipment for medical examination, weighing and measuring of children.

(2) Immunisation against communicable disease is a responsibility of local authorities, which in this particular instance is the Brisbane City Council. I am advised that in addition to its clinic at the City Hall the council visits all schools in the metropolitan area once every two years. As well as schoolchildren, mothers may bring pre-school children for immunisation. Any difficulties encountered with the time between visits would be equally presented if maternal and child health clinics were used for this purpose. As the honourable member is obviously very concerned about this problem, in view of her representations I will discuss the matter with the chairman of the Health Committee of the Brisbane City Council to see if some assistance can be obtained to alleviate this problem in her area.

22. APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR OF POLICE, CHARTERS TOWERS SUBDISTRICT

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

(1) When will the new inspector for the Charters Towers sub-district take up this newly created position?

(2) As one of the major advantages of the creation of the new sub-district will be a unified command structure for the flood-prone Flinders River basin and as the wet season will commence shortly, will the appointment be made as soon as possible?

Answers:—

(1) The date on which Charters Towers is to become operative as a district headquarters station is not known at this stage, and consequently I can give no firm date as to when an inspector will be appointed to take up this position.



(2) Difficulty is being encountered in obtaining suitable accommodation for additional police who will be necessarily transferred to that centre on Charters Towers becoming a district headquarters station. It will also be necessary for major structural alterations to be made to the existing police station to accommodate additional police required at Charters Towers. This problem is aggravated by a lack of funds for the purpose of departmental houses and for the structural alterations to be made to existing police station premises. Until accommodation problems are resolved, Charters Towers will not commence to operate as a district police headquarters station.

### 23. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT FOR SMALL BOATS

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

(1) With reference to the A.B.C. news item of 15 October attributed to Senator Bishop, the Postmaster-General, indicating that extra VHF channels will be available to small-boat owners, will small-boat owners now be able to purchase the cheaper VHF sets with the full knowledge that they will be able to use them for all radio communication without the unnecessary restrictions which the P.M.G. previously placed on them?

(2) Does the Commonwealth Government plan to phase out the use of all VHF sets in small craft by 1982 in favour of the more expensive SSB sets?

(3) Will he make a full statement in the near future regarding the use of two-way radios in small craft, as the majority of people are completely confused by the conflicting statements of the Postmaster-General?

*Answers:—*

(1) I am advised that the Commonwealth Post Office is investigating the allocating of extra Very High Frequency channels to small craft. However, the normal effective range of VHF is within visible range of a base station, that is, approximately 20 to 30 miles. For greater distances high frequency radio must be used.

(2) I am advised that the Commonwealth Post Office will not license existing double side band equipment after 1 January 1978. VHF will continue to be licensed.

(3) The licensing of maritime radio equipment is a function of the Commonwealth Government. Any installation is required to be licensed. In Queensland, commercial passenger vessels are required by law to carry a licensed radio installation. Private vessels are not so required,

although, of course, it is in the interests of their safety that they do so. I suggest that the honourable member might care to seek further details from the Postmaster-General.

### 24. SAND-MINING ON FRASER ISLAND

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

(1) With reference to the article in the "Hervey Bay News" of 10 October on various claims by F.I.D.O. and M.C.A.G., is there absolutely no condition, restriction or qualification in the lease agreements, other than verbal promises, to stop the whole length of the ocean beach being mined, with the exception of the areas in front of the resorts of Happy Valley, Eurong and Orchid Beach?

(2) Has Q.T.M. mined through Fourth Creek and do they plan to mine through Third Creek?

*Answers:—*

(1) Mining can be carried out on the ocean beach, but only subject to strict conditions framed to protect the beach and foredunes.

(2) Queensland Titanium Mines Pty. Ltd. has not mined Fourth Creek, but early in 1973 it traversed that creek with little, if any, disturbance of the vegetation fringing the creek. My department is not aware of any plans by the company to mine through Third Creek. The company might have occasion to traverse that creek in the same manner as was done in the case of Fourth Creek. If so, it is expected that, again, there would be little, if any, disturbance of the vegetation fringing the creek.

### 25. IMPROVED WATER SUPPLY, KARUMBA AND NORMANTON

**Mr. Hanson**, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Water Resources—

(1) Is he aware that following discussions between fellow Ministers, Dr. Rex Patterson, Mr. Tom Uren and Senator Cavanagh, regarding the water demands at Karumba, it was proposed to augment the supply from the Glenore Weir on the Normanton River by increasing the size of the pipeline, thus enabling Normanton to receive a better water supply, allowance being made in the agreement for Normanton's demands to be met?

(2) As the proposal was put to the Queensland Government in January 1975 on the basis that the Commonwealth Government provide the funds and the Queensland Government do the work, why has no reply been received or action been taken by this Government?

*Answer:—*

(1 and 2) This question comes under the jurisdiction of the Premier.

26. WATER POLLUTION FROM TIN-MINING,  
HERBERT RIVER

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

(1) With reference to recent statements by Cr. Williams of the Herbert River Shire Council, when referring to river pollution advices from the Premier's Department and the Department of Mines, that they were typical examples of the Government's double talk, has his department made any approach to the Minister administering the Clean Water Act regarding this matter?

(2) As the council obviously feels aggrieved because of the alleged machinations of the Government, why have the provisions in the Mining Act relating to sludge abatement not been exercised in regard to the sludge from tin-mining operations on the headwaters of the Herbert River?

*Answers:—*

(1) Yes. For many years officers of the Department of Local Government have inspected dredging operations and sludge-abatement measures on the Atherton Tableland, and the pollution of the Herbert River has been discussed by the Water Quality Council of Queensland on many occasions. The Minister for Local Government and Main Roads is well aware of the problem.

(2) My powers as Minister under the sludge-abatement provisions of the Mining Act are discretionary. The dredging companies at Mt. Garnet have undertaken such measures as will mitigate the pollution as far as possible. To require them to do more could render dredging uneconomic and bring about cessation of operations with resultant unemployment. On 20 February 1975 the Director of Water Quality, on the recommendation of the Water Quality Council of Queensland, requested the Regional Co-ordinator (Northern), Co-ordinator-General's Department, to investigate certain aspects of the tin dredges on the Atherton Tableland. A report entitled "Tin Dredging—Atherton Tableland—An Analysis of the Benefits and Costs Accruing from the Present Level of Operations" has recently been received from the Regional Co-ordinator (Northern) and it is understood that the Director of Water Quality has sent a copy to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council.

27. DEFECTS IN MOTOR-CAR MANUFACTURE;  
HOLDEN MODELS

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

(1) What powers does his department possess to force a car manufacturer to rectify defects in a vehicle?

(2) Can his department do anything about the locking device on the HQ Holden and the LJ Torana, which, unless rectified, might endanger peoples lives?

*Answers:—*

(1) There are no powers in this regard within my administration. However, when inspectors of motor vehicles or the police report that a vehicle appears to be defective, an order is immediately issued on the owner for that vehicle to be presented to a motor vehicle inspection station for examination by competent motor vehicle inspectors.

(2) The locking device on the HQ Holden and the LJ Torana complies with the requirements of the Australian Design Rules for Motor Vehicle Safety prepared by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. The Chief Safety Engineer is of the opinion that the problem is not a vehicle defect and stresses that a driver should not attempt to turn the key to lock the steering whilst the vehicle is in motion. This constitutes a dangerous practice. However, as my colleague the Minister for Transport is represented on the Australian Transport Advisory Council, I will arrange for both of these matters to be referred to him with a request that they be listed for the consideration of that body.

28. SHARK-MESHING PROGRAMME

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

(1) What areas of Queensland coastal waters are meshed to prevent shark attacks?

(2) What is the annual cost of the meshing programme to the State Government?

(3) In view of the approaching summer season, are any popular beaches still left unmeshed?

*Answers:—*

(1) Shark-meshing programmes are in operation at the following beaches: in the area of Gold Coast—the beaches of Southport, Surfers Paradise, Northcliffe, Broadbeach, Kurrawa, Mermaid, Nobbys Beach, Miami, Burleigh Heads, Tallebudgera, Pacific, Palm Beach, Currumbin, Tugun, Bilinga, North Kirra and Greenmount; in the area of Near North Coast—the beaches

of Noosa, Coolum, Maroochydore, Alexandra Headland, Mooloolaba, Point Cartwright, Moffat, Caloundra, Bribie Island, Sunshine and Peregian. At Rainbow Beach—Tin Can Bay; in the Central Queensland Coast—the beaches of North Yeppoon, Yeppoon, Cooee Bay, Lamer-moor, Kemp, Mullambin, North Emu Park, Emu Park and Tamby Point; in the vicinity of Mackay—the beaches of Bucasia and Harbour; in the vicinity of Townsville—the beaches of Pallarenda, Kissing Point, Picnic Bay, Nelly Bay, Alma Bay and Horseshoe Bay; in the vicinity of Cairns—the beaches of Ellis, Trinity, Pal, Clifton and Yorkeys.

(2) The costs of these programmes for the financial year 1975-76 are estimated at \$200,000. Costs for the 1974-75 financial year were \$177,000.

(3) It will be apparent to the honourable member that the more popular beaches are being meshed. However, I am sure he will appreciate that it would not be possible to provide protection for every beach in Queensland used by bathers. Every request for a protection programme is carefully considered on its merits. At the present time my Department of Harbours and Marine is investigating the feasibility of shark-meshing programmes at Kelly's Beach, Bargara Beach and Mon Repos Beach in the vicinity of Bundaberg, and has proposals to commence a limited meshing programme at Ocean Beach on Stradbroke Island.

29. SCHOOL TOILETS

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

Does his department have firm guidelines in regard to the installation of toilets at primary and secondary schools and, if so, what proportion of the number of toilets is allocated to (a) male teachers, (b) female teachers and (c) male and female students?

Answer:—

This is a matter administered by my colleague the Honourable the Minister for Works and Housing.

30. HOUSING COMMISSION LAND, BRISBANE

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

(1) In what areas of Brisbane does the Housing Commission own land suitable for home construction within the next 12 months?

(2) How many blocks are available in each area?

(3) What are the top areas requested by home seekers when providing priorities in their applications to the commission?

(4) What efforts are made to obtain land in high-priority areas?

Answers:—

(1 and 2) For house construction—

Locality	Sites
Brackenridge .. ..	24
Redcliffe .. ..	179
Deception Bay .. ..	57
Kallangur .. ..	45
Petrie .. ..	2
Arana Hills .. ..	4
Ferny Hills .. ..	9
Bunyaville .. ..	41
Gailes .. ..	5
Carole Park .. ..	9
Goodna .. ..	21
Riverview .. ..	18
Inala .. ..	8
Manly .. ..	3
Murarrie .. ..	1
Capalaba .. ..	43
Birkdale .. ..	3
Alexandra Hills .. ..	32
Woodridge .. ..	39
Kingston .. ..	56
Loganlea .. ..	67
Slacks Creek .. ..	11

(3) Applicants submit up to 3 areas of preference. Many would prefer one of the inner suburbs where the commission erected substantial numbers of houses prior to say, 1960. Such areas include Chermerside, Stafford, Enoggera and Grovely on the northside, and Carina, Holland Park, Mount Gravatt, Murarrie and Coopers Plains on the southside. These suburbs are now built out and the commission has to rely on vacancies in those older houses. A great many applicants nominate only "southside" or "northside" and others do not have a limiting preference. On the northside Brackenridge and Redcliffe are popular. On the southside there is increasing demand for Woodridge and Kingston owing to relative proximity to industrial establishments. A substantial number of applicants are very happy to be allotted houses at Inala, Acacia Ridge, Gailes and adjacent areas. The Commission recognises that proximity to employment and schools are important considerations and considers this in allotting houses. It is found in practice that each area in which the commission is building has its own particular advantages in meeting the varied requirements of individual applicants.

(4) Land for new house construction is not available in inner city suburbs. The commission is continually acquiring developed sites or acquiring and developing raw land in areas which it is satisfied will be acceptable and suitable over a wide range of applicants.

31. SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT, WOLSTON  
PARK HOSPITAL

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

(1) Has a decision been made to close the Social Work Department at the Wolston Park Hospital?

(2) How many people were employed in that department at the hospital in December 1972, 1973, 1974 and as at 1 October 1975, and what were their classifications?

(3) If there was a reduction in the staff, what were the reasons for the reduction and what social work facilities are now available to residents at Wolston Park?

*Answers:—*

(1) No.

(2) 31 December 1972—4 social workers; 31 December 1973—1 senior social worker, 5 social workers; 31 December 1974—1 senior social worker, 6 social workers; 1 October 1975—2 social workers. During most of the period since February 1973, two social work associate cadets have been stationed at Wolston Park Hospital for training purposes and to assist in social welfare services.

(3) As a result of the recent emphasis on community oriented services provided through agencies of the State and Commonwealth Governments and voluntary bodies, there has been a proliferation of new social-work positions throughout Australia. In the absence of a corresponding increase in the number of qualified personnel available, competition for staff has hindered recruitment to institutional settings. Consideration is being given to means of minimising inconvenience to patients of Wolston Park Hospital pending expected improvement in the situation. I would point out to the honourable member that for the last three years the approved establishment of social workers has been 10 but for the reasons given it has not been possible to fill the vacancies.

32. LUXURY OFFICE IN NEW RAILWAY  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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

(1) Has a luxury office been furnished for the new Railway Department building in Ann Street, at a cost of \$57,000?

(2) Did the carpets in this office cost \$3,000 and did the furnishings include large amounts of Royal Doulton crockery and crystal sherry glasses and, if so, what was the cost?

(3) As the size of the Railway Department deficit last year was astronomical and as rail passengers and people sending freight on the railways have been subject to a gigantic 40 per cent increase, what is the justification for this extravagance and wastefulness on the part of the department?

*Answers:—*

(1 and 2) I am unable to identify from the figures quoted the office to which the honourable member is referring. The new Railway Administrative Building, comprising 15 storeys, was constructed at a cost of \$5,377,000 by the State Government Insurance Office. In addition, an expenditure of \$2,211,000 was incurred in partitioning, carpeting, provision of telephone exchange, message-switching computer, air-conditioning, furniture, furnishings, tableware, etc.

(3) The amount invested in the building will be repaid by the Railway Department over a period of 53 years. The new office accommodation fills a much needed want as for a considerable period members of the administrative staff of the Railway Department in Brisbane were scattered throughout the city and many accommodated under overcrowded or sub-standard conditions. I am sure that railway employees generally are appreciative of the Government's action in providing modern working facilities in keeping with those enjoyed by employees of private enterprise and that they will take a very dim view of the insinuation of the honourable member that they should be continually confined to the deplorable conditions under which they were expected to carry out their duties when a Labor Government was in power in this State.

33. LEGISLATION AGAINST SEX  
DISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOLS

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

With reference to the announcement by the Premier of Victoria in August this year that his Government intends to introduce anti-discriminatory legislation which will improve equality of opportunity in schools and eliminate sexual stereotypes from textbooks, is he aware of the special State committee report on discrimination in Victorian schools and, in view of its findings, is he considering introducing similar legislation in Queensland?

*Answer:—*

No, I have not seen the Victorian report though I did see the newspaper reports of the decision of the Premier of Victoria, Mr. Hamer. There are no plans for legislative changes in Queensland.

34. SAFETY OF QUEENSLAND ART COLLECTION

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

(1) With reference to an article in "The Sunday Mail" of 1 June in which it was stated that part of the Queensland art collection had been on loan and was flown by an artist/pilot in a small chartered plane to outback centres and isolated homesteads, and while the intention behind this scheme is praiseworthy as it allows people in the country areas to see art usually seen only by city dwellers, is there any risk that constant manhandling in and out of country halls and private homes in varying atmospheric and climatic conditions, and without any of the safety and security precautions which the trustees said were so vital when they closed the State Gallery for over 12 months, could be detrimental to the paintings?

(2) Have any paintings been damaged during the operation of this scheme and, if so, what are the details?

(3) What is the yearly rental of the temporary premises used to house the Queensland Art Gallery?

(4) What has been the cost to date of the travelling art collection scheme?

Answers:—

(1) Twelve oil paintings were loaned to the Australian Flying Art School for the period 15 May to 11 June 1975 to be taken on tour to the country centres visited by the principal (and pilot) Mr. M. Moriarty. The aim of making this particular exhibition available was to contribute to the art development and appreciation of people in remote areas of the State who have no access to any cultural mainstreams. It is the practice of art galleries throughout the world to make such services available. I am informed that any risk to the paintings was absolutely minimal. The aircraft was first inspected by the gallery's assistant director and education officer before the loan was approved. Each painting was packed in a specially tailored container to protect it and allow for simple and safe repacking. The paintings were handled and arranged for display by Mr. Moriarty, who is himself an artist, sensitive to the needs of proper handling of art works. All the paintings were oils, which are less susceptible to climatic (i.e. humidity) changes than water colours. Furthermore, they were not works of major value; the total insured value of the 12 paintings was only \$4,978.00.

(2) The paintings were carefully inspected on their return and there was no damage.

(3) The yearly rental of the gallery's temporary premises in the M.I.M. Building is \$70,792.00.

(4) The only cost for the exercise was that of packing materials \$15.00 and insurance premium adjustment \$12.45 which was paid by the Australian Flying Art School.

35. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE GUTEKUNST REPORT

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

(1) Is he aware of the front page article in the 16 July edition of the "Australian Presbyterian Life" headlined "Queensland disruptive R.I. must go—report"?

(2) Did a Queensland Government report on religious education in State schools, as claimed in the article, blast the present system of religious instruction as disruptive and unacceptable and state that it can no longer be justified?

(3) Was the Gutekunst report which was prepared by a Government-appointed committee of inquiry, as also claimed, withheld from publication by State Cabinet because it was so critical of the churches?

(4) Irrespective of the present study being undertaken on religious education in State schools, will he now release the Gutekunst report for public perusal and thus remove the unnecessary veil of secrecy which has surrounded the report since its presentation to Cabinet?

Answers:—

(1 to 3) The article referred to was drawn to my attention and was the subject of amicable discussion between me and a representative of the Presbyterian Church and the article was inaccurate and emotional; it represented neither the attitude of the Presbyterian Church nor the recommendations of the report under question.

(4) As the Gutekunst report was intended for use within my department and has been superseded by events, no useful purpose would be served by its release.

36. PASSENGER WHARVES, PORT OF BRISBANE

Mr. K. J. Hooper for Mr. Houston, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Tourism and Marine Services—

(1) What are the main passenger wharves in the port of Brisbane?

(2) What public facilities are on these wharves for the benefit of passengers or visitors?

(3) Are there any shops, etc., at the wharves?

(4) What regular public transport is available from each wharf?

*Answers:—*

(1) The main passenger wharves in Brisbane are situated in the Hamilton Reach, and include wharves operated by Bretts, Brisbane Wharves and Wool Dumping and Messageries Maritime.

(2) A covered waiting area is provided in adjacent sheds. Essential amenities such as toilets are available. Customs facilities are provided at each wharf.

(3) No.

(4) Taxis and bus services are available in Kingsford Smith Drive just outside the wharf area.

#### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

##### STATEMENT BY SENATOR STEELE HALL ON DELAY IN SUPPLY

**Mr. ELLIOTT:** I ask the Premier: Is he aware that Senator Steele Hall stated during a "T.D.T." interview last night that Mr. Fraser had relied on Senator Field and Senator Bunton to delay Supply? Is it a fact that the Liberal-National Country Party numbers in the Senate are sufficient to take that course of action without the support of either of those gentlemen?

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** I saw that programme last night on which Senator Hall made that statement. Of course, it is completely incorrect, like a number of other statements he has made from time to time. It is a very sad state of affairs indeed when a man who is elected tries to mislead the people of the nation. From time to time Senator Hall is apt to make such statements, and it amazes me that he should hope to retain his seat in the Senate. We know very well that Senator Field was not in the Senate for the vote.

**Mr. Knox:** He is not allowed to be there.

**Mr. BJELKE-PETERSEN:** That is so. Senator Bunton voted with the Government.

##### ADVICE TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL ON OVERSEAS LOAN

**Mr. MILLER:** I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General: Is it a fact that approval to raise a loan of \$4,000 million overseas, without reference to the Loan Council, was granted by the Governor-General on the advice of a number of Federal Ministers? Who were the Ministers who informed

the Governor-General that all the loan arrangements were legal and proper? Are they the same Ministers who are now seeking to advise the Governor-General on legal aspects relating to the rejection of Supply? If so, in the light of the loan affair, can their advice be trusted?

**Mr. KNOX:** The circumstances under which the recommendations were made to the Governor-General have been published. They were first published not in the Parliament of the nation or in newspapers or Press releases from an alleged open Government but in telex messages to Mr. Khemlani. The minutes of the Executive Council of this nation were transmitted by telex to a foreigner who has nothing to do with this nation except through this peculiar arrangement. The Federal Government had to be forced to produce the minutes in the Parliament. It is most unusual for such documents to be revealed to anybody.

Nevertheless, it is disclosed in those documents that the persons who advised the Governor-General were the Prime Minister, the Attorney-General (at that time Senator Murphy), the then Treasurer (Dr. Cairns) and the then Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr. Connor). They were the four people who advised the Governor-General that it was in order for him to sign those minutes, even though it was contrary to all the rules and regulations governing the operations of the Loan Council, in which the States are involved. At no time were the States consulted on whether that was a proper minute for presentation to the Governor-General. The persons named were the ones who advised the Governor-General that it was in order to sign the minute for a loan of \$4,000 million for temporary purposes.

Since these circumstances were revealed in the Parliament, the minute has been revoked. But, strangely enough, of the four who gave the Governor-General incorrect advice, three are no longer members of the Executive Council. Two have been dismissed from office in very dubious circumstances, and the third has been sent "upstairs", also in dubious circumstances. The remaining one, the Prime Minister of Australia, has yet to be removed from office. Presumably the people of Australia will be given that opportunity in due course.

If the people of Australia are not given that opportunity, presumably the present Prime Minister is going to take the A.L.P. into oblivion, because that will be the effect of his action. If he wants to make himself not only bigger than the Parliament but bigger than the law and greater than the Constitution and his own party, he must ultimately destroy them also. He is adopting the Nixon-like stance of using other people to protect himself and to hide behind in order to save himself from the fate that befell Mr. Nixon, and that course will be to

the detriment of this nation, the party that he represents, and, indeed, the whole principle of constitutional government in this nation. I have named those who were the advisers to the Governor-General. There is nothing to suggest that the situation has improved, because the chief executive among them, the Prime Minister of Australia, is still there as the Governor-General's principal adviser.

**PIGEON INFESTATION OF BELLEVUE BUILDING**

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Minister for Works and Housing: Consequent upon the infestation of pigeons in the more salubrious portion of the Bellevue Building and the ever-present possibility that one or all of the three members in residence in rooms 224, 226 and 227 might, to their subsequent embarrassment be dive-bombed by a pigeon as they sleep, can anything be done to preclude this happening?

**Mr. LEE:** First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Bellevue comes under your jurisdiction, but I believe what the honourable member should do is shoot the pigeons.

**Mr. Aikens:** Get a gun and go to it. You don't expect us to do it, do you?

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** Why don't you get under the bed?

**Mr. Aikens:** That is where I sleep now for safety purposes; so do Keith Wright and Mr. Alison.

**CHANGE OF NAME BY MR. JUSTICE MURPHY**

**Mr. AIKENS:** I ask the Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, if it is within the province of this Parliament: Did Mr. Justice Murphy of the High Court change his name by deed poll or otherwise from his baptised family name and, if so, what was his family name and for what reason did he change it?

**Mr. KNOX:** This is a matter that does not come within the jurisdiction of this State. As far as I know, Mr. Justice Murphy was not born in Queensland.

**TIN SHED USED BY CURRUMBIN MINERALS AT CURRUMBIN CREEK**

**Mr. PORTER:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: As the deplorable tin shed used by Currumbin Minerals at the mouth of Currumbin Creek is still in use, despite an agreement with the firm for its removal almost two years ago involving a substantial Government contribution towards the cost of plant relocation, will he use every endeavour to ensure that the firm forthwith honours the agreement and removes this dirty, ramshackle eyesore before the coming festive season commences?

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** I know the circumstances related to this matter, and can I say that within the past two to three weeks I wrote to Mr. Keith Farrell, who is

the principal of Currumbin Minerals, drawing his attention to the fact that the Government had, some two years ago, indicated its willingness to provide a certain amount of money by way of compensation to ensure that this building would be removed. If I remember correctly, I indicated to Mr. Farrell that I believed I was the last "friend"—and I emphasised the word "friend" in inverted commas—that he had within the Queensland Government, because it was true that his company gave an undertaking to remove the shed at the earliest possible opportunity. It is true that at one stage Mr. Farrell informed me that the delay was caused by problems that had arisen in relation to the land on which the new factory will be erected. I think there were some complications regarding the transfer of that land. However, Mr. Farrell has assured me that those complications have now been overcome, and in the letter that I wrote to him some time in September I indicated that I expected that the building in question would be removed by the end of November so that the beach area would be available to the public from that date.

I have to say that I am disappointed in what has transpired, because the Government has played its part. On the other hand, I hope that the fact that the matter has been raised in the House by the honourable member for Toowong will be an indication to Mr. Farrell and members of his company of the deep concern of honourable members at this matter and that he will therefore ensure that the shed is removed by the end of November.

**LEGALITY OF BANKCARD SYSTEM IN QUEENSLAND**

**Mr. LINDSAY:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Has the legal position of the use of the Bankcard system in Queensland altered since his last statement to the House?

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** The position at the present moment is still undecided. Discussions are being held between certain representatives of the banks, the Bankcard organisation and Treasury officers. We have received a certain legal opinion, and at the moment we are discussing just what action might be taken. When I spoke on this matter in the Chamber previously, I indicated that I believed that the use of Bankcards could be illegal under a particular Queensland Act. Advice tendered to the Government by a Queen's Counsel has been along the lines that that expression of opinion was not entirely correct. There is a degree of doubt. The operators of the Bankcard organisation are discussing with Treasury officers ways and means whereby, I hope, we can make a compromise so that the State will not be deprived of considerable revenue which it would otherwise receive through the normal cheque system. The matter is still undetermined, but I believe that we will reach a reasonably satisfactory conclusion for all concerned.

TIN SHED USED BY CURRUMBIN MINERALS  
AT CURRUMBIN CREEK

**Mr. JENSEN:** I ask the Deputy Premier and Treasurer: Apropos his answer to the question asked by the honourable member for Toowong about the shed at Currumbin, will he state whose electorate the shed is in and what action has been taken by the appropriate member to have it removed?

**Sir GORDON CHALK:** I believe the building is in the electorate represented by the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads. He has spoken to me on several occasions about this matter and, in line with the usual energetic manner in which he represents his constituents and carries out the tremendously important duties of the high office that he holds, he has done everything possible to have it removed. I can assure the honourable member for Bundaberg that my colleague has done all he can to have the building removed as soon as possible.

FORM OF QUESTION

**Mr. McKECHNIE** (Carnarvon) having given notice of a question—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I will have a look at that question. Most of it is supposition.

PROPERTY LAW ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL

INITIATION

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Property Law Act 1974 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

LIENS ON CROPS OF SUGAR CANE ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL

INITIATION

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931-1971 in a certain particular.”

Motion agreed to.

EXPLOSIVES ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL

INITIATION

**Hon. L. R. EDWARDS** (Ipswich—Minister for Health): I move—

“That the House will, at its present sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider introducing a Bill to amend the Explosives Act 1952-1974 in certain particulars.”

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY

COMMITTEE—FINANCIAL STATEMENT—  
RESUMPTION OF DEBATE

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

Debate resumed from 14 October (see p. 1154) 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. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (12.3 p.m.): In introducing the Financial Statement on 25 September, the Treasurer commented on the fact that this was the 10th occasion on which he has had the privilege—I think the word he used was “honour”—of presenting the Budget for the State of Queensland. Sir Gordon has set some type of record, and I am sure that all honourable members would congratulate him on having done so.

He referred to the responsibilities placed upon him personally in the office of Treasurer. He said he deemed it a privilege and honour to be involved in the preparation and management of the State's Budget. He also made the point that its preparation and management are very onerous tasks.

All would agree that the preparation of the Queensland Budget is no mean task. This is borne out by an examination of the Financial Statement, which reveals that the anticipated expenditure from Consolidated Revenue in 1975-76 is approximately \$1,400 million, the estimated expenditure from Trust and Special Funds is \$1,481 million, and the total estimated expenditure in the Loan Fund programme is more than \$217,000,000. These figures indicate just how onerous the Treasurer's task is.

And because we are the biggest business in the State, Treasury officials and departmental officers must be totally disgusted with this Parliament—and with politicians generally—when they hear and read the tripe that has flowed from many Government members during this debate. One after another, Government members rose to make their contributions and abused the very privilege of being here. They have used the time available to



them simply to attack the Federal Government. Very few Government members—I could probably count them on my fingers—made even a passing reference to the Financial Statement, the important document that we are supposed to be debating.

One newly elected honourable member—I concede that he is newly elected—even said to me somewhat innocently that he had seen a film relative to the Treasurer in the Legislative Council Chamber. Apparently some type of film was shown on the day the Treasurer introduced the Budget. The honourable member then said to me that it would save him the task of reading the Financial Statement. I do not know whether he even read it. I wonder how many other Government members read the Financial Statement or bothered to go through the statistics.

**Mr. McKechnie:** Name him.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I would not embarrass him by doing that.

**Mr. McKechnie:** That's an untruth. I ask you to name the honourable member to substantiate what you are saying.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Through you, Mr. Hewitt, I ask the honourable member for Carnarvon if a film was shown in the Legislative Council Chamber? Were Government members the only ones who viewed it? Is that true?

**Mr. McKechnie:** It doesn't matter about the film. You are accusing a Government member of not reading the Financial Statement. I say that's untrue. That is why you will not name him.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Of course it is true!

I accept what the honourable member said to me although he may have said it innocently. We have come to expect this attitude in certain Government members. But what really gets me is that when the Treasurer finally replies—and he will probably do that on Tuesday—he will go to great pains to applaud the contributions made by these members. And then just as earnestly he will attack the comments made by Opposition members regardless of whether they were reasoned and constructive or not.

**Mr. Jensen:** It's a habit he's got into.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Maybe.

The Treasurer may acknowledge his responsibility in bringing down the Budget. But it is high time that he passed on his attitude to many of the Government backbenchers who made a farce of this debate.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** I have already drafted it.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I know that the Treasurer has.

In 1973-74, the total expenditure from Consolidated Revenue, Trust and Special Funds and the Loan Funds amounted to slightly in excess of \$1,800 million. This year the State is expected to spend almost \$3,100 million. That represents an over-all increase in expenditure of about \$1,300 million—or 72 per cent in three years. Because of the size of the Budget—and we are talking about a lot of money today—it is vital that those who have the spending power—those who play the decision-making role—have clearly determined and specific aims on how the money should be used.

I listened very intently to the Treasurer's introduction of the Budget. I was waiting for the phrase that he coins to describe every Financial Statement. On this occasion he called it a "Press Ahead" Budget. Regardless of this description, it is not easy to see whether the Government has a distinct fiscal policy under which the State is administered. Admittedly a large portion of the money will be used in the normal way to simply keep the wheels turning—to pay the public servants and other Government employees. A tremendous sum will be used to meet miscellaneous costs associated with financing the large bureaucratic organisation that we have in Queensland. Those are normal expenses.

Some of it will be used to pursue programmes commenced previously. In that regard I cite two fields—education and health. That money will be used to expand existing hospitals and schools. If honourable members study the Financial Statement they will see that Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra and the Mater Hospitals hold their pride of place in this year's Budget. In the education sphere expenditure on pre-schools is highlighted. Surely this expenditure is to be expected. It is forthcoming not because the Government has an enlightened approach to health, education or any other avenue of administration, but because such programmes are necessary simply to meet the normal increased demand for things such as health care and better education facilities in the community.

Irrespective of the political colour of the party in power, new schools have to be built, hospitals have to be extended, new roads have to be constructed, and so on. Again irrespective of the political ideology of the Government, the citizens have a right to expect an increase in the number of teachers and an increase in the number of police simply to maintain a respectable ratio with population growth if not to lower class sizes and to provide better law enforcement in the community.

I personally welcome the increase in expenditure on education, which I believe is something like 42.8 per cent. I welcome the idea of increasing the number of police to allow them to get back within the community in a neighbourhood role—"on the beat" as it is being called. I support the expansion of the hospital system because

medical care is vital to every citizen within the community. However the expansion is due not only to this Government's recognition of the need for it but also to the general injection of finance from the Commonwealth through Medibank, the Schools Commission and so on. It amazes me that time and time again Government members rise in the Chamber to attack, criticise and denigrate the Federal Government, claiming that the problems in this State have in fact been caused by the Federal Government.

Unfortunately, the State Government has gone to extreme lengths to hide the amount of Commonwealth financial assistance, but it can be proved and I intend to do so. I suggest it is that assistance—that injection of millions of dollars—that has enabled Queensland to leap ahead in the field of education in the last few years. A similar injection of finance will make Queensland's hospital system a worthy one and something that people can be proud of.

The Schools Commission Report published in July this year clearly outlines the type of assistance that has been given not only to Queensland but to all States. The report, on page 3, in specific reference to Queensland Government school programmes, sets out the recurrent expenditure assistance as follows:—

	\$
Primary Schools .. ..	6,008,427
Secondary Schools .. ..	4,006,845
Disadvantaged Schools .. ..	712,941
Special Schools .. ..	568,700
Subtotal .. ..	<u>11,296,913</u>

In addition, assistance for capital expenditure was—

	\$
General .. ..	3,887,002
Libraries—Primary .. ..	837,887
Secondary .. ..	577,000
Disadvantaged .. ..	793,503
Special Schools .. ..	885,000
Subtotal .. ..	<u>6,980,392</u>

The total assistance, therefore, was \$18,277,305.

I turn now to the non-Government schools. Grants for recurrent expenditure totalled \$10,064,306 and for capital works, \$558,773, making a total of \$10,623,079. Finally, the joint Government and non-Government school programmes received grants of \$1,430,324 for recurrent and capital expenditure.

**Mr. Moore:** What other points are you making—apart from reeling off figures that mean nothing?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It is important to have recorded in "Hansard" exactly the extent of the assistance received by the State from the Commonwealth because it is very difficult to find it in the information given by the Treasurer. It is very, very difficult to get that information by asking the Minister for Education exactly what assistance has been given by the Commonwealth and what it has been used for. The people of Queensland have been hoodwinked. When they see a school library opened, they think it is a State enterprise. When they see a new community health centre, they think it is a State enterprise. Although those projects have been financed to a great extent by the Commonwealth Government, no credit is ever given. I intend to record exactly what the Commonwealth Government has done for the State.

I have been talking about a 12-month period from 1 January 1974 to 31 December 1974. In that time the State received a grand total of \$30,330,708 under the Commonwealth's States Grants (Schools) Act—money that was vital to the development of the Government, the Catholic systemic, and the non-systemic schools; money that was essential to upgrading the many disadvantaged schools in the State; money that was vital to the development of libraries, innovative projects, in-service training for teachers, the establishment of education centres and so on.

Let us again note the breakdown. A sum of \$1,414,887 was granted for libraries in primary and secondary Government schools. Just imagine that! Almost \$1,500,000 was given, yet it received no recognition by this State Government.

For the conduct of library training courses for teachers in Government and non-Government schools, \$67,000 was made available. I wonder how many teachers who undertook such courses were told that the whole basis of their attendance was money received from the Commonwealth Government. Of course they were not told that. The impression conveyed to them was that they were receiving something special from the State Government.

I return to the money provided for teacher-education centres. Unfortunately this was not used by the Government although it was made available. That amounted to \$75,000, and additional millions were made available for general building projects for disadvantaged and special schools.

**Mr. Hartwig:** The Commonwealth Government took \$143,000,000 in coal tax.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** From what I was told of what was going around departmental lobbies, the State Government intended to take similar action.

**Mr. Jones:** It was beaten to the punch.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Yes, it was.

Much has been said by Government members about the treatment that this State has copped from the Whitlam Labor Government. Even the Treasurer has tried to blame Canberra for the financial problems confronting his Government. He made such a comment in his Financial Statement. I readily accept that the State has had serious problems such as inflation and unemployment, and they have had a distressing effect on current economic conditions, but surely recognition should still be given to the efforts of the Whitlam Government to assist this State and local authorities financially. The Whitlam Government took many unprecedented steps, but no recognition has been given them.

I have heard many Government members say in this Chamber that we were much better off under Liberal-Country Party Federal Governments. I even started to believe that myself. They almost had me conditioned to believing it. I started to think, "Perhaps we have had a bad deal. Perhaps we have not received the assistance that we needed." So I took time to compare what this State received in 1971-72 under the last Tory Government with what it received in 1974-75. Government members will hate what I am about to say, so I suggest they either go outside or apply themselves to reading something.

In grants for technical and further education, in 1971-72 the Liberals gave Queensland \$1,238,000. In 1974-75, the Whitlam Labor Government gave \$6,335,000. In grants for Government and non-Government schools, the Liberals gave \$7,955,000. The Whitlam Government in 1974-75 gave \$63,573,000. For migrant education, the Tories gave \$81,000 in 1971-72, whereas last year this State received \$361,000 from the Whitlam Government.

Let us now look at grants for recurrent expenditure on education research. Three years ago the amount received was a miserable \$59,000. Last year it was \$219,000—almost four times the amount received from the Tory Government.

Let us look at grants made for colleges. I have heard the honourable member for Callide and other Government members talk about the poor deal being given to the tertiary education system by the Commonwealth Government. In 1971-72, colleges of advanced education received \$5,636,000. Last year, under a Labor Government, they received \$40,668,000—over seven times more.

**Mr. Katter:** Are you proud of that?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Of course I am proud of it, and I want recognition given to it. Of course there are things that I and many other Queenslanders have not liked about the Federal Government, but I think it is time that credit is given where it is due.

Let us look at the grants made to universities. In 1971-72, \$11,009,000 was provided. In 1974-75, \$59,697,000 was made available. One can add to that the \$5,540,000 given in 1974-75 in grants for services for children, such as pre-schools. Nothing was given for this purpose by previous Liberal Governments. We could point to the assistance given in other areas of education.

But it is not limited to education. Let us come back to such things as the community health centres, the ones that the State Government takes the credit for. In 1974-75 \$3,173,000 was granted for community health facilities. How much was given under the Liberals? Nothing; not a penny! We received \$3,035,000 for tuberculosis control in 1974-75 compared with only half that in 1971-72. For the school dental clinics the State received \$2,981,000—almost \$3,000,000—last year from the Commonwealth, compared with how much under the Liberals? Nothing!

**Mr. Moore:** So much paper for a printing press. That's all it is, and you know it.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I notice the honourable member has never risen in this Chamber and said, "Let's not take it", or is he saying the people who live in country areas do not deserve the service? Is he saying the school-children should have to go to some of these dentists who are charging \$16 or \$17 for their services? Is he saying we should not have this assistance? If he is, let him get up and say so! As the honourable member for Murrumba says, he will be pushing his way out of Windsor at the next election.

Let us look at the health education programme. We received \$118,000 in 1974-75 against only \$47,000 in the last year the Liberals were in power. In 1974-75 we received \$416,000 for expenditure on blood transfusion services against a mere \$119,000 from the previous Government. Another grant is of great interest to me. Honourable members know that my wife has had a kidney transplant. Last year the Federal Government gave \$570,000 for the home dialysis scheme. What had the Liberals given before that? Not a penny! Look at the grants for home-care services in 1971-72. They amounted to \$158,000 under the previous Government against \$1,245,000 under the Whitlam Government—almost nine times as much. The grant for current expenditure to senior citizens' centres increased from \$1,000 in 1971-72—imagine it, I wonder how the previous Government even had the audacity to give \$1,000—to 11 times that figure in 1974-75. The estimated capital expenditure on these centres in 1975-76 will rise to \$1,300,000 compared with \$91,000 in 1971-72.

**Mr. Katter:** It is only our money. We are only asking for our money back.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I am glad to hear the honourable member say that because I will take him up on it when we start talking

about the dual tax system later on. I thought he was a fairly bright boy on economics, but obviously he does not understand. He can get some pretty good booklets from the university that might help him.

Let us look at the grants for capital expenditure on pensioner dwellings. In 1971-72 the figure was \$661,000. It jumped to \$1,314,000 last year.

In 1971-72 payments for Aboriginal advancement were \$3,038,000. In 1974-75 the total of recurrent and capital expenditure in this field rose to \$10,362,000.

A lot of noise has been made by honourable members about the Whitlam Government's role in housing. I have heard the Minister for Works and Housing rise and deride the Whitlam Government and say that we have been ruined and so on. In 1971-72—the Treasurer's financial tables show this—Queensland received \$467,000 for housing. Just think of it, \$467,000 in 1971-72!

**Mr. Katter:** You can build houses for them.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** What a ridiculous statement, Mr. Hewitt. The honourable member said that we can build houses for them. If we work it out, we can build 40 or 50 houses per \$1,000,000. The Federal Government in 1971-72 gave less than \$500,000 and the honourable member says that we can build houses.

**Mr. Katter:** You can.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** What, 21 or 22? And who are you going to give them to—Liberal Party bludgers or someone who has a special way in with the Minister for Works and Housing?

**Mr. Katter:** I rise to a point of order. I am being misrepresented here. I made an interjection—

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

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Let us get back to it, Mr. Hewitt. In 1974-75 that amount has increased from less than \$500,000 to \$44,576,000. Just imagine! Let us move to 1975-76. Admittedly that grant is decreasing to \$32,022,000. All right, it is going down—and I accept the Minister's calculation that it is going down by something like 30 per cent. It will go down to \$32,000,000, but that is still a far cry from the \$500,000 we got from the previous Government. Look at the Federal assistance for the area improvement programme.

**Mr. Katter** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! the constant interjections by the honourable member for Flinders will cease.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Thank you for your protection, Mr. Hewitt. Federal assistance for the area improvement programme totalled \$2,500,000 in 1974-75 compared with nothing under the previous Liberal-Country Party Government. Total payments for sewerage works in the various cities amounted to almost \$13,000,000 compared with nothing under the previous Government.

A similar story can be told in the area of leisure and recreation. Before Labor gained office in 1972 the assistance given by the Federal Government was limited to the National Fitness Fund. One now notices that in this sphere, which is of vital importance because of the amount of leisure time that people have today and because of its significance at local government and grass-roots levels, \$772,000 was made available for capital and recurrent expenditure. Likewise, Queensland received \$791,000 for expenditure on the national estate. How much did it receive under the Liberals? Not a penny!

The Minister for Main Roads has made out—and he has had a great deal to say about it—that Queensland has not benefited but in fact has lost as a result of the introduction of new types of roads grants schemes in the Federal sphere. Again it is worth placing on record exactly what Queensland has received, exactly what assistance the State has been able to glean from the Federal Government and the advantage to which it has put it.

Under the National Roads Act, Queensland will receive a total of \$80,000,000 between July 1974 and June 1977 for the construction and maintenance of national highways. Similarly, during the same period Queensland can expect to receive under the Roads Grants Act another \$147,700,000 for rural arterial roads, developmental roads, rural local roads, urban arterial and local roads, and beef roads. So we are talking about a massive amount of money, Mr. Hewitt.

During 1974-75—and this is what has been received already, not what is projected—Queensland received \$75,000,000 for all the roads in the State, and it can expect another \$90,659,000 in the current financial year. Again that is a massive amount of money.

To get a realistic view of how valuable this is to Queensland, let me go back to what the State received in 1971-72—\$45,000,000. So there has been an increase of about 60 per cent. In spite of that, the National-Liberal Government persists in claiming that Queensland has been badly done by. The truth is that the Government of this State has fiddled the books. It has been said by members representing country electorates that the money has been taken from provincial and rural areas and has been used in the metropolitan area for freeways and other road improvements. I invite the Minister to speak to some of the

country members on the Government side about it. They will admit that they are not very happy about it. I invite him also to read what the local authority leaders in this State have said. They know that what I am saying is true. They know what has happened—that the money was given by the Federal Government but has been frittered away on other schemes.

When it comes to road works, the facts are very clear. Last year the Commonwealth Government gave Queensland more than \$75,000,000 for roads, compared with the \$45,000,000 provided by a former Liberal-Country Party Government.

**Mr. Doumany:** Have you ignored inflation?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No, I have not ignored inflation. The honourable member has ignored the assistance given.

Let me go back to the assistance given under the urban transport assistance scheme. This is another area of new ground broken by the Labor Government, and Queensland has already received more than \$2,000,000 under the scheme.

So often one hears country members rise in this Chamber and say that the rural sector has been kicked by the Labor Government. They tell us, Mr. Hewitt, how badly they have been treated. They complain about the superphosphate bounty being taken from them. They forget to mention that the Leader of the Opposition in the Federal sphere, Mr. Fraser, was one of the beneficiaries and that he received about \$5,000 a year. Many Queen Street farmers and similar people in the capital cities of Sydney and Melbourne also benefited greatly.

Let us see exactly what the rural sector has received. In 1971-72, it received \$458,000 for the eradication of bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis. In 1974-75 that had increased to \$1,661,000. Likewise, the grants to agricultural extension services increased from \$1,251,000 to more than \$1,500,000.

Similarly, grants for the investigation of water resources—and I have heard a number of Government members refer to the importance of assessing the water resources of this State—were made available by former Liberal-Country Party Governments, but they have increased from \$544,000 to \$878,000 under Labor.

Again for the first time—another breakthrough for the Labor Government—in 1974-75 grants were given for the development of tourist attractions and Queensland received almost \$200,000.

I turn now to apprenticeship training. From the previous Commonwealth Government we got \$25,000 whereas last year we got \$212,000.

Another first occurred in legal aid. Last year we got \$160,000.

If we turn to the firsts in expenditure by the Whitlam Labor Government, as against what was spent by previous Governments, let us take local authorities. I am told that on the other side of the Chamber we have some experts in the field of local government—experts because of their three or four months' service on local authorities. Let us look at the recommendations of the Grants Commission for local authorities, under which Queensland received a total of \$8,954,000. Assistance of that sort was never received before or even offered. It gave totally new life to many local authorities in the State. I am pleased that at least some Government members have acknowledged that. It has given new life to local authorities and made them viable by overcoming the debt structure they had been faced with.

Let us look at the grants that have been given direct to local authorities for capital expenditure on aged and disabled persons' homes. Queensland benefited to the tune of \$108,000 in 1974-75, compared with only \$38,000 three years earlier. An additional \$496,000 was given direct to local authorities last year for pre-school and child-care services, while \$1,853,000 was made available to them for Aboriginal advancement.

Much has been said by Government members against the Australian Government's Regional Employment Development Scheme. They have castigated it. I know there were things wrong with it. I would have preferred giving local authorities the right to hire and fire. I would rather have continuity in employment than have a fellow training in one project suddenly thrown out of work. I know there were problems in administration, but let us look at the amount of money that the State Government and local authorities received under the R.E.D. scheme—\$9,982,000. I did not hear the critics of the scheme say that we should give the money back. We didn't hear them say, "Oh, no, we would rather see the guys unemployed than have many of these important projects carried out."

Time and time again we have heard criticism of the scheme, yet time and time again, when the true facts are known, it is quite obvious that the Australian Government has done its bit. It has been determined to do that irrespective of the fact that the State Government has not been prepared to co-operate. Liberal Party and National Party members keep harking back to the pre-Labor era, but it is patently obvious that they did not do their homework. Had they done it, they would have realised that what I have said today is very true.

Indicative of what was done by the previous Liberal-Country Party Government, in comparison with what has been done in the last few years by the Labor Government, is the fact that in 1971-72 the total payment

from the Commonwealth Government to Queensland local authorities amounted to \$470,000. Just imagine it! That wouldn't even pay for the Premier's new aeroplane. What did the Labor Government give them? \$10,470,000. The total assistance granted to local authorities throughout the nation was \$55,234,000 of which Queensland received about 20 per cent. It did not stop there. The assistance was not only by way of direct grants.

Let me come back to the pass-on finance—the money given to the State to pass on to local authorities. The Australian Government provided \$973,000 for home-care services; \$124,000 for senior citizens' centres; \$41,000 for pre-school and child-care centres; \$350,000 for capital assistance for the provision of leisure facilities; \$2,500,000 for area-improvement programmes. The Australian Government's direct and indirect assistance to local authorities and therefore to the people of Queensland totals millions and millions of dollars.

**Mr. Doumany:** How much tax did they pay?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Let's not talk about the tax system! The Liberal-Country Party Government was there for 23 years and it did nothing about it. For 23 years it loafed on the Treasury benches. What did it do? How many times did Government members here raise the matter before the Labor Government got into power? It always amazes me how they never see the problem until their opponents occupy the Treasury benches and have the right or power to make the decisions. While their colleagues are in Government they say nothing, but the moment Labor gets into power they say that that Government is so terrible and so shocking.

The record of the Australian Government's assistance to Queensland in 1974-75 is something of which all Australians, especially Queenslanders, can be proud. I know that some cut-backs are planned for 1975-76; nevertheless the States of Australia, and Queensland in particular, have never had it so good.

**Mr. Frawley:** What rubbish!

**Mr. WRIGHT:** How often have we heard Government members standing up and repeating their cries of, "Centralism! State-bashing! Anti-federalism!"

**Government Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. WRIGHT:** They have endeavoured to hoodwink the people of Queensland.

**Government Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Mr. WRIGHT:** They have tried to convince the people of Queensland that they were better off under a Tory regime.

**Government Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**Government Members** interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have called "Order!" three times. I expect my request to be respected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. Government members are very aggressive this afternoon. I do not understand the reason.

**Mr. Frawley:** It's because you're not telling the truth.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Not telling the truth! This is on record. The honourable member can examine the statistics for himself—provided, of course, he can read. If he cannot, he should see the Minister for Education; that might help.

Whilst I make these claims as an individual, I can back up my comments by referring to the Financial Statement. The Treasurer has indicated that almost \$28,500,000 can be expected from the Commonwealth through the Schools Commission and that \$5,360,000 can be expected for technical and pre-school education. Let us add to those sums the millions upon millions of dollars that will be forthcoming for the non-Government school sector.

**Mr. Hartwig:** You were glad Whitlam didn't come up to Rockhampton during the last State election.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I beg your pardon?

**Mr. Hartwig:** During the last State election campaign, you said, "I'm glad Mr. Whitlam didn't come to Rockhampton."

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I don't apologise for that. I realised Mr. Whitlam was required elsewhere. And, as the honourable member for Callide well knows, we were quite capable of taking care of ourselves. I remind him of the statements made by Mr. John Moore to the effect that the first seat in Queensland to fall to the Government would be Rockhampton. Of course, it didn't fall, and the swing against me was less than 2 per cent. So let the member for Callide scream about that. In fact, he campaigned daily against me in my electorate. Time after time he pleaded with my constituents to get rid of me. Yet in terms of numbers my vote increased. I thank the member for Callide for having campaigned against me. In fact I ask him to please come back and fight against me again. In contrast, in the two areas of his electorate that I visited, one of which was Yeppoon, his vote went down. And one of his opponents was a woman.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Did he talk about swill feed?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No, he didn't; but he made some faux pas about parents feeding it to their children, and I do not think he will ever live that one down.

**Mr. Hartwig:** It's true.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I am glad the honourable member recorded that comment. It is a shocking statement for him to make, and one that reflects on the people. Fancy saying anyone would feed pigswill to his children.

**Mr. HARTWIG:** I rise to a point of order. I have never said that. I categorically deny the honourable member's allegations, and—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I have taken the honourable member's point of order. The honourable member for Rockhampton will withdraw the comment.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I accept the honourable member's explanation. It is just that, having read his comments in the Press and having heard his interjections, I thought I must have been right.

Although it may seem that I am trying to take all credit from the State Government, this is not so. In fact, I believe it has endeavoured to keep the wheels moving, and I give the Treasurer credit for having done a darned good job. I certainly do not envy him. I wonder how many other members would do so. I realise, of course, that several aspire to the position of Treasurer. Some of them, such as the honourable member for Chatsworth, at least have the capacity to handle the portfolio, but many others who aspire to holding it certainly have not the capacity to do so. As I say, I give him full credit for what he has tried to do, but I do not think he has been honest in failing to give credit to the Federal Government for the way it has helped him. It is a pity that he has played politics so much in presenting his Financial Statement.

I realise the difficulties inherent in our State's fiscal system, in which a Minister has to plan from within a 12-month period. It is extremely hard for the Minister for Works and Housing, for example, to plan what he would like to do, with the knowledge that he has got not 12 months but something like only 8 months in which to do it.

I have made the plea time and time again for programme budgeting. I do not have time today to pursue that matter, but I know that the Treasurer and many of his officials agree with me that if we are to be proper stewards of the finances of this State and if we are to determine special, specific and indeed general policies of philosophy in budgeting, we must change the budgeting programme.

I hope the time will come when we will take a leaf out of the book of the Greater London Council, and, for that matter, of Governments of other cities and States in other countries. It is so difficult to say, "Yes, we are planning for the progress and development of this State," when we have only eight or nine months of each year in which to do it. The time will come when there will have to be a change.

When Government members talk about the money required, they always tend to be two-faced about it. Time and again the Premier has said that the Federal Government has been spending too much; that too much money is being spent in the public sector. He has said, "Let us try to redirect the resources to the private sector. Let us cut down the expenditure in the public sector." Yet Government members—even the Treasurer himself—have said, "We are not getting enough money from the Federal Government for the public sector in Queensland." Government members cannot have it both ways. They cannot honestly say that the Federal Government should cut back expenditure when the Queensland Government is not prepared to do so.

At times hard decisions have to be made. If, in fact, there should be a change of Government in the Federal sphere, I wonder if the new Government will have the guts—and that is what it will take—to bring about these changes. It will be very difficult; it will be a hard decision to make, because it affects the lives of people. I am always amazed that, under such circumstances, the Premier should say to the Federal Government, "Give us more money and cut back your own expenditure." How ridiculous!

**Mr. Ahern:** The Federal Government would not cut back its expenditure but it wanted us to cut back ours.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** That is not so. I take that interjection. The trouble arises because the State Governments realise that under its new policies the Federal Government has been espousing direct assistance to semi-governmental authorities and local government bodies. In bypassing the States, it takes away the kudos from the States. That is what has got them up in arms. That is why the Minister for Justice is up in arms about the Australian Legal Aid Office. He wanted the money to be given to him. The talk about duplication is a joke.

**Mr. Knox:** It is because they can't get paid.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Oh, get out!

I should like to see any other Government in the Federal sphere try to do away with the Australian Legal Aid Office. When a survey was taken it was found, even amongst Liberal people, that support for this system ran at about 80 per cent. It has helped hundreds of thousands of people who certainly deserved help. It is passing strange that the Government's only reason for opposing something is that it is not getting the credit for it. It has happened time and time again in the spheres of health care, legal aid—

**Mr. Knox:** The money belongs to us.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Oh, get out! I shall talk about that in a moment when I deal with the proposed dual system of taxation.

**Mr. Kaus:** Have you had any queries in relation to the Defence Service Homes Scheme? A lot of people have approached me.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I have not, but the honourable member can tell us all about it. I am told that he does not have very much to do, and he might have followed this matter through.

I admit that the States always require increased finance. They have to maintain development and meet new demands for programmes which are put forward. They also have to meet unexpected commitments in the form of increased wages and capital expenditure. We know that the States and the nation have been beset by unprecedented rises in costs and unemployment. If there had been more co-operation between the States and the Federal Government, the effect of many of these problems could have been lessened and fewer people would have been hurt. But co-operation is unknown to this Government. That is a great pity because the Australian Government has tried to help. I admit that there are people (especially in the Public Service and Cabinet) who seek co-operation. I believe that the Minister for Transport is one of them.

The amount of money received by the State is never enough. It never will be enough. This will always be part of political life. However, I do not think the fact that it is not enough is a reason for not co-operating. If we want co-operation and continued assistance from the Federal Government by way of grants, let us do something about the ridiculous proposition of having a dual taxation system in Queensland. I was amazed to hear the Premier of Queensland (the Honourable Joh Bjelke-Petersen) and the Leader of the Liberal Party in the Federal sphere (Mr. Fraser) announce that the return of a Liberal Government in the Federal sphere would mean a dual tax system. That would turn the clock back 40 years. It is 25 years since the uniform tax case, but it is 40 years since we resolved this problem.

**Mr. Porter:** If your assumption is correct, you should want to let the people go to the polls to condemn us.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I take that point because this is one issue I will be fighting on. I know that people will overlook many issues, but I think this one will be very important. It has serious implications. It is all very well for the arch-conservative from Toowong to pursue this matter. He does not care what benefits there might be from co-operation between the Federal Government and the States. He is a State traditionalist, and I respect his views for it; but he goes over the fence sometimes.

If we accept the dual tax system, we will be saying goodbye to the special assistance that has been made available over many

years to the less populous States—Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland. A dual tax system will be ideal for New South Wales and Victoria, although I notice Mr. Wran has made his reservations known. It amazes me that it has been suggested, because actually it implies that a huge tax burden will be placed on the taxpayers of this State. It amazes me that it has been lauded by the Premier and by most State Government members.

I am pleased to note that it has been opposed by the member for Lilley (Mr. Cairns). It is the first time I have had the opportunity to agree with him, but I think that on this occasion he is spot on. It has been questioned by our own Treasurer. I have always held him in high regard for his expertise in this field, and I think he, too, is spot on. It needs to be questioned because of the effect it will have on Queensland.

But regardless, the Premier is determined to press ahead. I have heard him say he wants to be Treasurer. Maybe this is just a roundabout way of chopping off Sir Gordon Chalk's head. Maybe it is his own way of getting the Treasury portfolio. If that happens, the people of Queensland will suffer. They will be forced to pay something like three times the tax burden of their counterparts in New South Wales and Victoria. That is what it will mean. A State's revenue can be raised only from its own people, and the amount required will be divided by the number of taxpayers. On that basis it is easy to understand that we will be paying in the vicinity of three times our present tax bill.

Statements have appeared in the Press and been made many times in the Chamber about some type of equalisation scheme; but no details have been given. We have heard no details of how it would be balanced out. If it is to be balanced out, where will the money come from? Will a further separate tax of some sort be placed on the people of New South Wales and Victoria, to be shared by the poorer or the less populous States? Is that to be the system? No details have been given. We do not know. We have had only a blunt, straightforward statement by the Premier that he will pursue that policy—the policy of a dual tax system that Mr. Fraser is now bound to introduce. I believe it should be opposed by all thinking Queenslanders, because they will be the ones to suffer. The local authorities will suffer. They will not receive \$10,900,000 under a dual tax system.

**Mr. Ahern:** Mine got none.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** The honourable member is unlucky. Next time he should make better representations.

No money will be paid direct to local authorities, because there will be no pool to get it from. The Commonwealth will



say to them, "Get it from the State Governments. They are the ones who are raising the money now. It is up to them."

**Mr. Ahern:** Then it will be done equitably.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** What a shocker! I am amazed at the statement of the member for Landsborough. We all know what happened under the previous Liberal Government—the local authorities got \$470,000! I think that sum included all the assistance given for airports, health schemes and so on. \$470,000! What a shocking indictment! What a shocking indictment of a Government that is supposed to care for the people and be interested in the third level of government!

It will be the local authorities and the Queensland people who will suffer. Let us keep in mind what it will mean. It will result in six or seven taxation systems. That is really bureaucracy! The State will be setting up its bureaucratic system by having its own little taxation department. We will have more public servants—more costs. Again the people will pay. In spite of that, we have this ridiculous policy suggested.

I hope that there is an election on this issue. It is one we would certainly win. I hope all Queenslanders realise just what they will be doing if they support the Fraser-Anthony team on this issue. They will be burdening themselves with unprecedented taxes. It will be too late afterwards for them to say, "I didn't realise that. I wasn't aware of its ramifications." They have to realise now what the dual tax system will mean. It will mean less money for Queensland from the Commonwealth and more taxes for Queenslanders.

I made the point earlier of the need to determine exactly what this Budget has as its aim. For some days I went through it trying to ascertain what underlying philosophy it contained. The Treasurer said it was a "Press Ahead" Budget. I found great difficulty in detecting a specific philosophy, or even a general philosophy, except that it was to keep the show on the road. It may be that that is all that was possible under the economic circumstances he was faced with.

On the other hand, it is fairly easy to determine what this Budget isn't. I want to make it quite clear that it is certainly not a Budget for the promotion of balanced regional development. It is certainly not one for the development of decentralisation of this vast State. The ideal provision to refer to for support of that statement is the increase of 40 per cent in rail freights. I have heard country members speak about added costs for the producer. They do not bother to think of what freight increases mean not only to producers but to manufacturers and distributors, and, in particular,

consumers. It is the consumer who will be the bunny following this increase. He will have to pay for it.

Consider the people of Blackwater, for instance. I have noticed that the honourable member for Belyando has never bothered to raise this issue. People wrote to me on this matter only last week. In fact, the Central Queensland Consumers' Association met on it last Monday evening. Already the people in Blackwater are paying 24c for a bottle of milk, compared with 19c paid in Rockhampton. "The Sunday-Mail" costs 13c in Rockhampton and 22c in Blackwater. The Government is prepared to allow a massive increase in transport costs in this State knowing full well that it will be passed on to the consumer. The Government knows that it is those in rural and outback areas who will have to pay this increase. I am very pleased that the honourable member for Warrego and a few other members have made their views on this increase known in this Chamber, and have pointed out how detrimental it will be to Queensland people. It will, of course, increase the cost of all commodities.

Nothing positive has been done in the Budget to help decentralisation. If only Queensland would copy what New South Wales has done for decentralisation! A couple of Queensland Cabinet members have the expertise to handle a portfolio dealing with decentralisation. What a pity there is not a special section of Government devoted to decentralisation of this State! I know that both land and loans are being made available to industry through the Department of Commercial and Industrial Development, but decentralisation is not being promoted here as it is in New South Wales. I understand that in the first year approximately \$16,000,000 was spent in New South Wales in subsidies and assistance to encourage industries in Newcastle and Sydney to move into country areas. I am sure that if such a scheme were put to the Federal Government, some tax arrangement to encourage it could be made. We should have a definite policy for decentralisation; in fact, we do not have it.

I should like to see an increase of decentralisation in tourism. I spoke only recently of the value of the tourist industry to this State. I pointed out how many times money spent in the tourist industry turns over in the community, and how it flows on in the form of benefits for tourist areas. Yet there is such a poor approach to tourism. Tourist bureaus are understaffed and shockingly appointed. In some of the States brochures on Queensland are not available. One would have thought that at least tourist bureaus would be promoting this State. We should give close attention to tourist bureaus. I give full credit to the men and women who work in them, but they are seriously

handicapped by the policies of the Government. Queensland should be decentralised, and the tourist industry is one field in which that can be done.

There are many other features of the Budget on which I should like to speak, especially education, the need for greater community involvement and assistance for p. and c. associations. It amazes me that, in this day and age, p. and c. associations should still be regarded merely as fund raisers. It hurts me to think that this is the only form of recognition accorded those who are involved with such associations. It amazes me that they are allowed to incur debts of hundreds of thousands of dollars in providing assembly halls and other facilities for their schools. I should like to speak on that matter, but I have only a few minutes remaining of the time allotted to me.

I now raise a matter of vital importance.

**Mr. Moore:** You should have started with it.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No. I wanted to leave it till last, because I did not know how much time I would have left. I refer to a statement made on A.B.C. television last night, by tape and then by picture, and in "The Courier-Mail" this morning, by the Governor, Sir Colin Hannah. I am amazed and disgusted that Sir Colin Hannah has either allowed himself to be used or has himself inflicted his views on the people of Queensland. It was an unprecedented outburst and I am shocked by it. The motion before the Committee today deals with money for the Governor.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Criticism of the Governor or judges of the courts can only be permitted in this Chamber by way of a substantive motion. I ask the honourable member, therefore, to desist from his present line.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. I shall not speak specifically on Sir Colin Hannah. I shall talk about the role of governors as I see it. We put them on a pedestal. We say they are virtually non-political or apolitical.

**Mr. Lickiss:** Your policy is directed towards getting rid of the Governor.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Would you blame us after what has happened yesterday? Would you really blame anyone?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable gentleman said he would direct comments in broad terms towards the office and I am listening very carefully. He must not make direct criticism.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. I realise that the task before me is a difficult one, but I want to make the point that I

believe that any person who holds the position of Governor and uses that position to play politics is not only denigrating his office; he is denigrating Her Majesty the Queen.

**A Government Member:** What about a High Court judge?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No. Governors represent Her Majesty in the States of this nation. If the Queen herself became involved in politics, there would be a cry of outrage throughout the Commonwealth of Nations. She would not do it; we know she would not do it. We know she stands apart from politics, and surely every Governor should follow this example. Any Governor who breaks that rule and gets involved in politics and criticises any party or any Government should resign. He should stand down because he does not deserve the high and honourable position that he holds, because not only is he casting aspersions on a political party, on a people's Government democratically elected by the people but, I reiterate, he is denigrating the Queen. I think it is disgusting that this type of thing should happen.

**Mr. Moore:** What thing?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I think——

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable gentleman is now referring to something of a specific nature. I have already ruled that criticism of the Governor can only be made when speaking to a substantive motion before the Committee and I ask him again to respect that ruling; otherwise with some reluctance I will ask him to resume his seat.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I would hate that to happen. I was trying to generalise. I was trying to make the comment that, if this were to happen, my view would be that the person should resign, and I stand by that statement for the reasons I outlined.

I would like now to make some general comments on the Budget of this State. I think we have talked pretty well around it as to the Federal Government's involvement and the way this Financial Statement has been used to attack and abuse the Federal Government. But I think if the National Party members, and moreover the Liberal members who live in provincial areas, had gone through this Budget they would agree with me that it is a pro-metropolitan Budget. It surprises me that this is continuing. I mentioned before the need to decentralise. There are two ways of doing it. One is to improve the services in country areas so that people will be encouraged to go there, so that we have the infrastructure that is necessary for a decent standard of living, for the quality of life that we all espouse. Yet we see the

Royal Brisbane Hospital being developed like a monstrosity—duplicated and doubled again and again and again—and I think it is disgusting. I think it is wrong that this is happening in the metropolitan area. What about the people who live in Townsville, Rockhampton, Longreach and the other outside areas?

**Mr. Moore:** They've got hospitals.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I wish the honourable member had been in the Chamber yesterday to listen to the blast the honourable member for Flinders gave the health system and doctors in this State.

**Mr. Moore:** Make up your mind.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** No. The honourable member should know that there are many critics of the system. Admittedly, there is a concentration of people in Brisbane but it does not follow that more money should be spent here; but that is what is happening all the time—on roads, schools and medicare. Go through the Budget and the list of proposed expenditure. Time and time again the spending is metropolitan based. It is time the Government recognised that there are other people in the State. The Premier holds some Cabinet meetings away from Brisbane to give some recognition to country areas; but country people would rather have money, services and facilities than the Premier and his Kombi vanload of Ministers coming to their areas and meeting them socially. We are entitled to expect a definite policy on regional development in Queensland.

Let us have a look at the work that could be done in the field of housing, for instance. People in country areas need decent housing conditions, but where are the bulk of houses built? In the metropolitan area! This holds good for most of the services and the needs of the community.

So, while I accept many of the good points of the Budget and realise the difficulties that faced the Treasurer, I believe that the whole underlying philosophy has been wrong. It has been based on an attack on the Federal Government and on a total non-recognition of those areas outside the metropolitan region of Queensland.

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

**Mr. AHERN** (Landsborough) (2.15 p.m.): Members of the Australian Labor Party in this Chamber have had to be dragged into the Budget debate. I suppose that is understandable, because they are now totally demoralised.

The main feature of the economy at the moment, and therefore of this Budget, the Federal Budget and the budget of every local authority in Queensland and Australia, is inflation. There seems to be a general feeling in the community that the statistics

available indicate that inflation is running at about 17 per cent at the moment. The Treasurer's Financial Statement, which shows clearly that there has been a general increase of 30 per cent in the cost of government in the State of Queensland, indicates that that figure is unreal. The 30 per cent taken by the Treasurer is a more realistic figure relative to the cost of construction and many other items in the economy today. This Budget hedges against the cost of inflation and cost increases generally in an attempt to overcome the problem, but 30 per cent is a rather frightening figure.

Most economists in the free-enterprise world are unanimous in the view that the demand made by Governments on a nation's labour, capital and other resources usually should not exceed 25 per cent. If that figure is exceeded by any Government—I am speaking now of the three tiers of government in this country—inflation usually results and continuing unemployment is also a feature of life.

Towards the end of the reign of Liberal-Country Party Governments in Canberra in 1972, the cost of government had grown to more than 30 per cent in terms of pressure on the nation's resources. The figure has now increased to more than 50 per cent. Clearly, therefore, the nation is living beyond its resources and beyond its capacity to finance increases generally in the public services that all three levels of government in Australia are endeavouring to provide.

Some day an attempt must be made by all sections of government to cut back expenditure. That is why I welcome the initiative of the Federal Liberal Party in constituting a standing council of State Ministers and Federal authorities to endeavour to bring about some degree of consultation and co-operation on the matter.

I should say that the worst legacy that the Federal Labor Government will leave to this country—and we will look back, Mr. Miller, and see it as that—is a terrible social disease that I call "rich uncle" neurosis. I explain that by saying that there is an attitude in the minds of members of the public generally that there is a rich source of public money, and even Federal Government Ministers have encouraged people to demand their rights to benefits and services as Australian citizens. That "rich uncle" disease is at the root of Australia's present economic problems, and to encourage an attitude such as that is to encourage a complete misunderstanding of the financing of government.

Government is financed by the taxpayers generally, and people must understand that when Governments are asked to provide additional services, they have to find the money somewhere. It can be obtained only from the taxpayers.

The word "free" is the most abused word in the politician's language. Not even the politicians are free. The Federal Government embarked on a great variety of programmes that came generally under the heading "the Labor programme", as it has been referred to throughout the nation over the last two years. There are bands and armies of social workers, with myriad programmes unfolding every day in some area of the economy or community. That situation could not be any more than a temporary one. A nation just cannot live beyond its resources. The rich uncle is about to be pushed over the cliff. I think he was dead on his feet, anyway. At least he was dead broke.

The community has to know, understand and accept that Governments generally cannot expand the services they provide to the community by more than a set proportion each year. If they try to do everything at once, chronic, compound inflation and unemployment are the result.

In this country today the marginal tax rate for income tax purposes is 50 per cent for the average person. So for every extra dollar taxpayers earn they pay 50 per cent of it into the Federal Treasury. We have the highest tax structure in the world. It is stifling incentive and private enterprise. Indirect taxes are very high. We have had to increase some of them in the State Budget. Governments have overlooked the fact that they are overwhelming private enterprise. We have to look at cutting back at all levels. The pressure being put on private enterprise is going to leave us with a legacy of continued inflation and unemployment. Every citizen in the nation has to accept more reasonable goals in terms of increases in the services of his Governments and public servants. We must get the community back to thinking that we can embark on only those programmes that are within the community's capacity to pay.

I make those preparatory comments in the context of a massive increase in the State Budget. I qualify that at the outset by saying that in the present economic and political circumstances the State Treasurer had no alternative to introducing his "Press Ahead" Budget. But we cannot press ahead in this way for ever, so I welcome the announcement of a council of Ministers that will soon be established by the Federal Liberal and non-Labor State Governments in Australia to bring about co-operation and to get our feet back onto the ground.

Particularising about the general matters referred to in the Treasurer's Budget, I say it is obvious that the hospital programme is being financed very substantially out of the revenue account. Works of a capital nature are now being financed very heavily out of revenue. This is what has happened after the Medibank agreement. Provision has been made for a 42.8 per cent increase in expenditure on education—a dramatic increase. On

education we are now spending something like \$329,000,000 out of the Consolidated Revenue, plus \$52,000,000 on the capital works programme, which is giving an over-all effort in Queensland of \$381,000,000.

I welcome that expenditure, but without doubt the feeling coming to us from our electorates and through our party organisations is that the education authorities are going to have to give greater account for the massive amounts of public expenditure on education. The 42.8 per cent increase in expenditure on education sounds dramatic, but the inflation rate of 30 per cent—and in that area of Government activity it could be more—has a rather sobering effect.

Although the Government has again given education No. 1 priority, as it has done for a number of years, I make the point that, despite the fact that we have magnificent tertiary institutions and secondary schools of which we can be proud, a pioneering pre-school programme of the highest quality and first-rate primary school teacher programmes, the classroom accommodation in primary schools is not up to the desired standard and presents a problem.

The 30 per cent increase in construction costs renders our capital works programme unable to cope with the demand for four walls around our primary-school classes. I suggest that we might have to look at the possibility of financing some of this work from revenue, as is done with hospitals. We are not making enough headway in overcoming this problem. We simply are not coping with the increasing demand for primary classrooms. Our education and construction authorities must endeavour to contain the cost of structures generally, and they will have to consider the use on a much wider scale of modular accommodation in primary schools. They should also give consideration to cutting back the acquisition of land and to using Crown land wherever possible. Furthermore, the Vote for the provision of primary school classrooms must be increased.

Again I say that the community feels there is a need for greater accountability from education authorities. It expects the authorities to account for the huge sums of money that are spent on education institutions.

I welcome the scheme that will increase State subsidies to library services. The sum involved has risen from \$600,000 to \$1,500,000. The old subsidy programme was the subject of a speech I made previously in this Chamber. It was a grossly unsatisfactory scheme and it assisted the bigger areas to the detriment of smaller libraries in country centres. It was the subject of criticism at many local government conferences, and I agree with such criticism.

I suggest that public library services and those provided at high schools be shared by the community. This is worthy of examination on a more detailed plane. We seem to be providing each community with three separate library services, the first in the primary school, the second in the high school and the third in the community. I do not think this is an appropriate use of resources, and I suggest that we examine the possibility of encouraging community use of library facilities.

The elimination of State probate and succession duty on estates passing from spouse to spouse has been the subject of favourable comment in this debate. Such a step is innovative and pioneering, and is of course welcomed. I am sure the Treasurer would agree with me that a tremendous amount of probate and succession duty collected by the State is paid by the rural producers. It is a major factor in business on the land. No. 1 priority is given to keeping the farm in the family; this thought is uppermost in the minds of many of our country people. This task is always a major one. We should not try to discourage this by our legislative provisions and revenue-raising generally. In fact we should be encouraging farmers to impress upon their families the wisdom of staying on the land. In this way we can ensure that expertise is passed from father to son and so on. In the interests of good management we should encourage this practice.

In certain circumstances probate and succession duty almost rules that out. The spouse to spouse probate duty exemption will help tremendously. Exemption levels were set in the past, but they were eroded substantially by inflation, which increased substantially the value of rural estates. Keeping the farm in the family still has high priority in the minds of our rural people. I hope that eventually we will be able to phase out probate and succession duty because it encourages gross inefficiency in the use of rural resources in that rural

holdings become saddled with a very high debt repayment. Improvements that should be carried out in the interests of property efficiency are delayed by tens of years at a time. In this way families are loaded with debts, and gross inefficiency is built into the system. I repeat that I hope we may be able to abolish this impost. However we must realise that such a provision has to be phased out slowly. Even if the State tax is abolished, it is likely that the Federal probate and succession duty will still be with us. No-one knows how long it will apply in that sphere. I think that is realised generally in the community.

In the past, rural producers sought refuge from the incidence of probate and succession duty in family companies. Some time ago when I placed before the Treasurer the problems of rural producers as outlined by our party, he pointed out that many of the concessions sought by the party were such that they could be achieved easily by those who were interested in forming family companies. The Treasurer recognises that this device is available and that it should be used in a proper business context. In fact, it is being used very substantially.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Mr. Ahern—

**Mr. AHERN:** I do not intend to be diverted by the honourable member for Archerfield. I have some detailed matters to outline and I intend to press on.

There are substantial problems associated with forming family companies. A specific provision in the Land Tax Act provides that family companies—companies which are formed to encourage prudence in probate planning—are liable to land tax without the benefit of any exemption. That is a strong disincentive. In speaking to this provision, I seek leave of the Committee to have incorporated in "Hansard" a table showing "Land Tax (Queensland) in Relation to Concessions Granted to Farmers and Graziers 1969-70-1974-75".

(Leave granted.)

LAND TAX (QUEENSLAND) IN RELATION TO CONCESSIONS GRANTED TO FARMERS AND GRAZIERS 1969-70-1974-75

Year	Exemption Provided under Land Tax Act Section 11	Revenue Forgone by Exemption	Number of Persons enjoyed Exempt	Number of Persons Totally Exempt	Land Tax Receipts
	\$	\$			\$m
1969-70 ..	30,000	194,429	2,958	2,352	5.037
1970-71 ..	30,000	226,887	3,415	2,706	5.092
1971-72 ..	30,000	239,007	3,375	2,589	5.483
1972-73 ..	30,000	241,092	3,231	2,418	6.111
1973-74 ..	45,000	157,751	1,623	1,161	6.420
1974-75 ..	60,000	169,783	1,303	968	7.740
(Estimated)					
1975-76 ..	..	..	..	..	8.400

**Mr. AHERN:** I thank the Committee. The table I have prepared shows the exemptions provided under section 11 of the Land Tax Act. During the six years I have mentioned the exemption has risen from \$30,000 to \$60,000. The revenue that has been forgone through that exemption rose from \$194,000 in 1969-70 to a peak of \$241,000, but in 1974-75 it was only \$169,000. I have no estimate for 1975-76. The number of persons exempt rose from 2,958 to a peak of 3,415, but dropped to 1,303 for the 1974-75 year.

I realise that those figures do not take into account the lower level of exemption for which a taxpayer must lodge an assessment, which has been raised. That is a qualification that ought to be considered in any interpretation of the figures. The number of persons totally exempt increased from 2,352 to 2,706, but last year it was only 968. During that time land tax receipts have increased dramatically from \$5,037,000 in 1969-70 to an estimated \$8,400,000 for 1975-76. However, although the s.11 exemption level has risen in the same period from \$30,000 to \$60,000, the revenue forgone in 1974-75 was only \$170,000.

My next point relates to land tax paid by companies on rural land. As a proportion of the total land tax paid by them, their land tax on rural land rose from 6.7 per cent in 1969-70 to 10.5 per cent in 1974-75, the percentages for the individual years in this period being 6.7, 6.8, 7.5, 6.4, 7.9 and 10.5. One interpretation that can be placed on those figures is that there has been a tremendous increase in the value of rural estates. That increase has very substantially eroded the benefit gained from the increase in the exemption rate and, therefore, the benefit to the taxpayers generally. The number of persons enjoying the benefit of the exemption has dropped substantially, although that must be qualified by the matter I raised earlier.

Those figures indicate two things. Firstly, the level of exemption for primary producers under section 11 of the Land Tax Act has been made virtually useless through inflation and the use of family companies by rural producers. The Treasurer, I believe, should look at both those aspects. I wish to elaborate on the level of exemption. As I understand it, the policies of both parties state exemption from land tax for those in the business of primary production is appropriate. We would hope one day to eliminate the incidence and the impact of property taxation on rural estates. I point out to the Treasurer that inflation has substantially eroded the benefit of that exemption, and it is something that he should look at.

Secondly, I refer to the incentive to form family companies for probate purposes. The figures I have quoted show a dramatic increase in the number of rural companies presently

incorporated in Queensland. The increase in recent times has been dramatic. To a substantial degree primary-producing families are forming companies, with the result that the benefit of the exemption is being further eroded. In 1969-70 there were 5,488 companies generally in Queensland that were paying land tax. The number is now 9,083. I am not suggesting that all of those relate to country estates, but a number of them do. It is something that we should look at in providing specific exemption, under section 11 of the Land Tax Act, for family companies engaged specifically in primary production. I ask the Treasurer to give consideration to that situation.

As I have already said, family companies are a fact of life today in primary production, and their formation is one of the recommendations made by every accountant to clients in rural industry. I have strong reservations about their use, but, because of probate and succession duty, they are in operation. They certainly cause an increase in legal fees. They make estates very complex, and they make accounting a major task for rural producers. But they are an integral part of agri-business today, and I think the Treasurer should direct some attention to them. It will not cost him very much. If this is not done, there will be a very powerful disincentive under the Land Tax Act for people to take advantage of a planning method which the Treasurer says people should avail themselves of.

There are a couple of other points to which I want to make particular reference. There has been much controversy down the years on this Government's development of mineral resources. On the hustings during many election campaigns Opposition members have criticised the Government's strategy in coal and mineral development generally. The direct lie has been given to such Opposition claims by the statement in the Budget that the profit on the carriage of minerals on the railway system was \$37,000,000 during the last financial year, and mineral royalties brought in \$44,000,000. From those two areas of benefit alone—and there are many others—the State received \$81,000,000 which would not otherwise have been obtained. I am quite certain that this development has been worth while, and I know that it now has the support of the great majority of the people.

**Mr. Jones:** Only \$29,000,000 profit.

**Mr. AHERN:** The honourable member has no understanding of the Budget. If he does not believe that the sum of \$81,000,000 is profit, he does not understand the document.

The Treasurer went on to mention that there was a loss on railway operations of \$114,000,000. But that was the result of operations in other areas, not the carriage of minerals. The situation is of concern

to the Government, but transfer of the railways to the Federal Government is not the answer to the problem. How could there be any justification for handing the railways to the Federal Government in such a situation, when obviously the Federal Government wants them only in order to increase freights? If the Federal Government has \$114,000,000 to put into railways, let it give that amount to the State by way of a section 96 grant and tell us to spend it on the railways. The Federal Government is using the power of the purse, and that power alone.

The Budget also shows that almost half this State's finances are accounted for by grants under section 96. And what a very inefficient way this is of allocating money to the States! Whilst it places some areas of Government responsibility in a flush financial position, it starves others and opens the way for the Commonwealth Government to say, "We will help in these areas with further section 96 grants." But, of course, the Federal Labor Government—the outgoing Government—would not be happy until 100 per cent of the States' money was obtained by way of section 96 grants.

**Mr. Hanson:** Do you think the Treasurer should knock them back?

**Mr. AHERN:** No. He has no way of knocking them back. That is the ridiculous situation. The State is not in a position to knock back these moneys. I hope that section 96 grants are reduced to a minimum, in accordance with the spirit and original intention of the Constitution.

As to the interjection about the Grants Commission, I point out that it is a commission to which any claimant State may go to claim justice when it feels it has not had justice from a Federal Government. We have received our just rights recently, and over the past few years, when we have not had justice from a Federal administration. I am speaking of our rights, the rights denied this Government by, for that matter, respective Federal Governments.

I must set an example to Government members by restricting my contribution to the debate to half an hour. I say in conclusion that, in the political and economic climate in which we find ourselves today, the Treasurer had no alternative to introducing the present Budget strategy, and I congratulate him on it.

**Mr. LAMONT** (South Brisbane) (2.46 p.m.): In rising to speak in the Budget debate, I wish first of all to congratulate the Treasurer for bringing in what must have been a most difficult Budget because of the most difficult times we are encountering in Australia owing to the Canberra-induced recession that is afflicting our country. Unemployment is estimated to peak at something like 400,000. That figure was admitted by Senator James McClelland only a few

weeks ago, in Federal Parliament, and his is the party that says it is looking after the working class. Inflation is running at an all-time high, despite the promise made by the A.L.P. in 1972 that it would reduce inflation from 4 per cent. We have just had a most irresponsible Federal Budget brought down by Mr. Hayden, and, between the time when Mr. Hayden introduced his Budget in the Federal House and Sir Gordon Chalk introduced his Budget in this State, the Hayden Budget had already failed, and it was obvious that it had already failed. By now, October, it has lost all credibility. Expenditure, for example, for the first two months of this financial year—that is, expenditure for July and August 1975—was 48 per cent higher than for the first two months of the previous financial year. We thought that the Government's record in 1974 was disastrous, and yet expenditure has gone up by 48 per cent from that of the first two months of the previous financial year. This, I submit, is totally reprehensible if it is deliberate, and it is complete and utter ineptitude if in fact it is not deliberate.

I regret that the honourable member for Rockhampton is not in the Chamber. He always accuses me of attacking him behind his back, but I do not do that. If he is down in his room listening, he can come up before I finish. I was interested to note that he spent most of his speech before lunch praising the good work that he said Mr. Whitlam had done for Queensland and praising Mr. Hayden for consideration of this State in his Budget. Well, I cannot agree with the honourable member's statement today but I do agree with the statement he made to the Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin" of 11 December last year, reported as follows—

"He said too much preference was given to the southern States of New South Wales and Victoria. A suggestion that the Federal Government could be confined to that area would be bad government.

"He felt that the Government should give equal consideration to all States.

"He said that he agreed with Mr. Jack Egerton that when policy decisions were made in Canberra which affected Queensland, Queensland was not consulted." (I wonder what happened to that statement in his speech this morning.)

"Two examples he pointed out were the National Health Scheme and the National Compensation Act.

"He said the Government should realise that it was good government to find out the wants and needs of the people. This was something he had done in Central Queensland.

"I don't think Gough Whitlam should be going overseas," Mr. Wright said, "From a psychological point of view he should stay."

"Mr. Wright said that when a ship was in trouble the captain did not take two weeks' holiday.

"It is just not done!" he said.

"He said the first thing the Federal Government should do was to re-establish the Interstate Commission to discuss the individual problems of each State.

"This was provided for in the Constitution and would be a sounding board for the States' problems."

This is the A.L.P. member for Rockhampton saying quite clearly in "The Morning Bulletin" of his home town that the Whitlam Government has ignored Queensland. Today he stands up in this Chamber and tries to tell the State Treasurer, who has introduced a proper Budget, a very sound, justifiable and balanced Budget, that heavy increases in certain parts of it are the result of the State Government's not handling the economy properly, when in fact less than 12 months ago he admitted to the people of Queensland that it was the fault of the Whitlam A.L.P. Government—composed of members of the very party to which the honourable member for Rockhampton belongs.

The State Budget must be seen in its economic context, and one must ask, "Who sets the economic context?" Primarily, in these days, it is Governments that set the economic context, and in this country it is the Federal Government that plays the major role in that regard. This is not to say that private businesses, unions and the public do not do their share in setting the economic climate.

The velocity of circulation of money is what in fact causes inflation. The amount of money that Governments allow people to have is what causes inflation, and I will show you, Mr. Miller, and other members of this Assembly that it is in these two areas that the Federal Labor Government is completely reprehensible.

Today, because of inflation, private spending is high and the velocity of the money in circulation is very rapid. That is true for one reason—that it just is not worth holding onto money any more. If a person holds a dollar note for 12 months, it is not worth as much in real terms as it was at the beginning of the year. People can get value out of money today only by spending it. That is a profligate attitude to be breeding in people, but it is the only sensible economic attitude that the people of Australia can adopt when they have a Government that itself indulges in profligate spending.

In May 1974, Mr. Whitlam and his cronies—that ramshackle bunch of people in Canberra who call themselves a Government—sold, quite falsely, to the people of Australia the idea that inflation in this country was imported, that it was not something that their Government had introduced. That is utter

and arrant nonsense. Australia "exports" as much inflation as it imports. I will say that again, because I think honourable members opposite should take it back to their Federal colleagues. Australia "exports" as much inflation as it imports!

Let us have none of this nonsense that Australia imports inflation from overseas and that it is not home grown. This country has exported inflation to numerous countries through numerous unjustifiable, wrong-headed policies of the Labor Government. Ask the Japanese about the Australian inflation that has been exported to them through some of the policies of the Australian Government. Inflation in Australia is not imported. That may be an excuse for some countries—countries that have to import foodstuffs, countries that import all the rural produce that they require, or the greater part of it—but even then it would be only a partial excuse. For example, the United Kingdom imports most of the foodstuffs that it needs. It is not really a primary-producing country. Therefore, some of its inflation may be imported from places such as Australia. But it, too, has created most of its own inflation in the same way as inflation has been created in Australia—by having a socialist Government in power.

I remind the Committee that Australia exports 68 to 70 per cent of its rural products. For that very reason—because Australia can feed its people and have the greater part of its rural produce left over for export—this country should not have a problem of inflation. There is no way in the world that a primary-producing country should talk of importing inflation. The only other heavy primary-producing country that has this same trouble is New Zealand, and I remind the Committee that it inherited a Labor Government at the same time as Australia did and it now appears to be about to kick it out in roughly the same month as Australia will kick out the Government in Canberra.

As I said, Australia can feed its own people and have enough primary produce left over to export. Therefore, the Government should be able to cope. It should be able to find policies that regulate the economy to such an extent that this country does not have inflation running at 17 to 20 per cent. Instead, it goes on with what I call its mandate mania—spend, spend and continue spending.

In case honourable members opposite think I am making this up, I will back up what I have said about not importing inflation into Australia by quoting from a report from the International Monetary Fund Survey of 28 July 1975. I am sure no one would try to pretend that the International Monetary Fund is a stooge of the Liberal-National-Country Parties in this country. The International Monetary Fund Survey said—

"Like many other countries, Australia entered 1975 with the economy in deep recession combined with high inflation



rates. That should hardly seem surprising as many of the world's industrial economies are in a similar downturn, largely induced by the sharp hike in international oil prices in 1973. However, only part of the Australian economy's weakness can be attributed to external causes, such as the slump in wool prices in 1974 and the exclusion of Australian beef from its major markets—Japan, the United States, and the European Economic Community."

Now, here is the crunch—

"With about two thirds of its petroleum requirements covered by indigenous crude oil, the direct impact on the Australian economy of the oil price increases has been modest and in the medium and long term Australia stands to benefit from the energy crisis with its abundance of energy resources such as coal, natural gas and uranium. The origins of the Australian recession are therefore to be found in domestic developments."

I will repeat myself. That last sentence should be carried back to the colleagues of honourable members opposite. "The origins of the Australian recession are therefore to be found in domestic developments."

So much for the argument that inflation is imported! We do our fair share of exporting it, to the detriment of many of our trading partners. But let us have a look at the domestic developments that in fact brought about this inflation. Immediately after it came into office the Australian Labor Government increase in Government expenditure went up 20 per cent. I harken back to my earlier statement that the first two months of this financial year saw a 48 per cent increase in Government spending compared with a similar period in the previous financial year. That augurs very poorly for the future. It is condemnation of the Federal Budget, and conclusive evidence that that Budget has failed in the first two months of its 12 months' operation. When I say "12 months' operation" it is very possible that it will not last another month—I certainly hope it won't—because there will be a new Government bringing down a new interim Budget."

Professor Gifford, the man who held the chair of economics at the University of Queensland for so many years, agreed with Milton Friedman, the American economist who visited Australia recently, when he said, "The major factor that causes inflation is a massive increase in the money supply." Any child can see that the Federal Labor Government has brought about a massive increase in the money supply. It has brought this about by running high deficit Budgets and spending more than it obtains by taxation and through borrowing. No-one can do that. No family man can continually spend beyond what he brings home in his take-home pay (We know that the take-home pay is reducing all the time in proportion to what the man earns.) I repeat that no-one can constantly spend

more than he earns. People who do that, say, through abuse of credit cards, find themselves bankrupt. That is the way the Federal Government is heading. Spending in excess of legitimate income leads to one or two different consequences or options. Spending in excess of legitimate income leads to theft to make up the difference, to forgery so that one prints one's own money or to bankruptcy. I would charge that the Federal Labor Government is resorting to two of those and will soon find itself in the third difficulty. I would say that by spending more than it earns, and more than it brings in, the Federal A.L.P. Government is resorting to theft. It is doing that firstly by increasing taxation without ever in fact announcing it, because inflation pushes the middle-income earner into the high income-tax bracket. The middle-income earner, remaining at the middle income because the tide is simply rising for him, reaches a level of income tax which he was never intended to pay. So inflation is taxation by stealth. One way in which the Government has got around its spending more than it is earning is by thieving from the public.

Now let us have a look at Government loans. Mr. Hayden has come up with the brilliant new idea of floating a bigger loan because, he said, the previous one was so successful. You bet your life it was successful! It was a success for a very obvious reason. The Australian people invest in Mr. Hayden's loan at 7 or 8 per cent. (I do not know the interest rate that he is offering this time, but I think it was about that in the previous loan). So they invest in his loan and he gives them back 7 or 8 per cent for the use of their money. After tax they are left with about 5 or 6 per cent. However, the rate of inflation is racing away at 17 per cent or more, so they are being deprived of 11c in every dollar invested by them. By floating that loan and paying an interest rate lower than the inflation rate, Mr. Hayden is in fact charging the Australian people for the right of having their money used by the Australian Government in its loan. That is another form of theft, because we all know that the principle of loans is that a person gains interest—"gains interest" is the operative phrase—on his money used by someone else. Unfortunately, in our current economic system and with the present rate of inflation, a person who invests in Mr. Hayden's loan will lose 11c in every dollar for every year that that dollar is invested. He is paying for the privilege of funding Mr. Hayden's mad schemes. That is the other form of theft.

When the Federal Government spends in excess of its legitimate earnings it is perpetrating theft in two ways to cover its losses. The first is theft by taxation on the inflationary scale, the second is theft by floating loans at inadequate interest rates.

Now I come to the other way that a person can save himself if he spends more than he is earning. He can forge money. The Federal Labor Government is doing that. It is simply printing more money. Mr. Hayden has said that the deeper the Federal Government gets into debt, the more it will turn to the printing press and print more money.

Printing money out of proportion to the national wealth is as dishonest as someone taking paper and printing his own \$20 bills. The printing of money by the Federal Government is leading this country into bankruptcy. Printing money has the effect of taking the value out of the dollar. The money becomes worth less and less and less until it become absolutely worthless. The Federal Government is printing money to get out of the difficulties created by the huge deficit it is running, and this is tantamount to forgery.

We look forward—I do not mean that in any happy sense; perhaps I should say we are looking “towards”—a deficit this year of \$2,700 million. Many years ago a member of the British Labor Party said, “Money is a meaningless symbol to us socialists.” In Australia today money is fast becoming the meaningless symbol that that British socialist said it was. That is the meaning of deficit budgeting on the scale used by the A.L.P.

Federal spending continues to increase at an annual rate well in excess of 45 per cent. In other words, it is increasing by almost half its own cost every year. This is totally contrary to the Budget strategy outlined by Mr. Hayden only a few months ago, and this is the background to our Treasurer's dilemma.

Labor had “mandate mania”. It spent on education, which is good; it spent on free tertiary education, which is good; it spent on free hospitals, and that is good. The trouble is, however, that all this is not free; and that is the catch. We pay through the nose—we pay through our taxes.

Over-utilisation of these so-called free services adds further charges to the public. Milton Friedman, the great American economist who visited our country last year, said that one of the most common rules of life, and of economics, is that if people get something for nothing they value it as nothing and if something is available at no charge, people will consume it to the point at which it gives no value. That is what is going

to happen to our hospitals and what is starting to happen to our universities. In the future it could well happen in other areas that the Labor Party regards as essential to its grand plan for Australia.

**Mr. Kaus:** That is why so many fit people collect unemployment relief.

**Mr. LAMONT:** That is dead right. It is why so many shysters are shirking jobs and taking the unemployment benefits. They believe it is their right to do so.

We have induced in the people of Australia a most unhealthy, unsatisfactory and detrimental concept of the way a country should be governed and the way people in the community should act.

Governments spend money at this rate for two reasons. Firstly, they have not got to earn their income; they get it through taxes and other means. If the family man did not have to earn his income—if he could use somebody else's cheque book—he could spend in a profligate manner; he would over-spend. That is precisely what the A.L.P. Government is doing. Secondly, Governments do not have to face the same pressure of economy as private enterprise. Private businesses spend money only when they have to. Government departments do not face this pressure. Private business watches costs; public servants do not have to do that to anything like the same extent. Additional staff adds to the prestige of a senior public servant, but in business additional staff means added costs that the business has to bear directly. The key word is “directly”. The public servant does not have that worry.

The A.L.P. has the enormous gull to believe that it can spend our money more wisely than we can. That is not true. Because we earn our money, we are very careful how it passes from our pockets. The Labor Government does not earn its money: it gets it through taxation, stealth, theft and forgery—by printing more notes. It can thereby spend at will without being too concerned.

The Federal Government cries that it has a mandate—a mandate on Medibank, a mandate on education and a mandate on the media. The latter, of course, relates to a propaganda department. Let us call it what it is—a department of propaganda. Goebbels thought of the idea in the first place and now the Labor Government has perfected it. But it does not have these mandates. Even

if public pressure were for greater spending in all of these areas, it would be up to the Government to educate the people to reality, to say, "Look, this just cannot be done at this time, although we know you would like all these things." The Government's job is to educate people to the reality of economics by saying, "Restrain yourselves." It should not go along to a trade union conference and say, "Come on fellows; give us a hand; you are supposed to be on our side." It should show genuinely, by its own example, by its own budgeting, that it is prepared to apply the constraint that it is asking the workers of Australia to exercise.

Our State Treasurer has accepted constraint as a reality. It takes a great deal of intestinal fortitude to say, "The money that is being spent must be paid for." The Treasurer therefore said, "I shall present a balanced budget. I will have to make cuts somewhere and take money from some areas in order to provide for the necessary growth and progress in Queensland." He also accepted that he had to sell that idea to the public. He has drawn certain criticism from various areas, but his was a responsible approach to Government compared with the Labor approach of printing more money or thieving it in any way, without any announcement being made in the Budget.

I shall examine some of the charges levelled against the State Budget. One concerns the increase in the stamp duty on cheques by 4c, which increases the duty to 10c. Some people opposite have complained about that increase. The Labor Party's policy however, is that the user must pay; the user of cheques is now paying. The person who wants to trade in property is paying increased conveyancing fees. That is fair enough. The 4c increase in the stamp duty on cheques is as nothing compared with the Australian postage increases and we know very well that we use more stamps than cheques on any day of the week. The increase in rail freights and fares was realistic. The other day I sent a parcel to Roma. It cost me almost as little to send it all the way to Roma as it did to pay the surcharge on a letter that was returned to me; the person was no longer at the address and I had forgotten to put a stamp on the envelope or it had fallen off. I had to pay 36c surcharge on the letter, while it cost me only 50c to send the parcel to Roma. The comparison is ridiculous; it is ludicrous. The increases in rail freights and fares were justified. They had not been increased since 1966. It was time that they

were increased. The largest increase in the Budget occurred in that area. We had to be prepared for it. I am not saying that I do not believe we should subsidise services to country areas. In a country like Australia we have to do that. Nevertheless, when times are hard, charges have to be increased.

I commend the Treasurer on at least having the intestinal fortitude to say, "I intend to do this" rather than doing it by stealth, which is the Labor Government's way of increasing its income.

I fear that the increase in liquor licence fee for spirit merchants who serve, in what might be termed off-licence areas—that is, they are not attached to a hotel—is discriminatory. The tax on hotel and tavern licences is levied on the buying price. The levy on wine and spirit merchants is made on the selling price. Further, the increase on hotel and tavern licences was only one or two per cent; but the tax on wine and spirit merchants rose from 6 per cent to 15 per cent—and on the selling price to boot. The total increase on the buying price was 19 per cent.

I feel that that is discriminatory, particularly in the light of the following facts. First, the merchant offers a greater variety of table wines and spirits than does a hotel because more often than not the hotel is a "closed" shop that is trying to push a particular line. The "off-licence" merchant offers a wide variety of brands. Secondly, over 50 per cent of the customers who buy from wine and spirit merchants are women, who prefer going to what seems to be an ordinary supermarket for table wines to going to a public hotel. Thirdly, the rapid public acceptance of and increased demand for the sorts of wines that are stocked in "off licences" indicates a trend towards the more civilised practice of drinking at home, with the family around the table, rather than the idea of dad going up to the corner pub and staying away till closing time at 10 o'clock. It is a civilised trend, which is very evident in European countries, including England, and one that I think ought to be encouraged here. Finally, "off licences" have an effect on the drink-driving problem. It is a pity that the honourable member for Sandgate is not here. I am certain that he would agree with me. People should be encouraged to take their home supplies from wine and spirit merchants and drink at home. I feel that as a result of the discriminatory tax being levied, it is possible that some of the merchants will be driven out of business.

I hope that over the next 12 months the Treasurer will look at the problem with a view to giving some favourable consideration to relief in the future.

The bookmakers' turnover tax has been increased by 0.5 per cent. I cannot believe that that is crippling. I was told of one bookmaker who said that he used to make a \$2,000 donation to one of the coalition parties but that, because of this "terrible" increase in bookmakers' tax, next time he will give it to the A.L.P. Frankly, he will be paying for his own funeral in advance. It will be a case of "pay now; go later." If the A.L.P. is successful, people will be lucky to have enough money to go to book-makers at all.

I will now deal briefly with some of the credits in the Budget. I applaud the moves taken on death duties. I believe that death duties payable between spouses was the most iniquitous penalty that any Government could have invented. Sir Gordon Chalk, by removing that tax completely, is showing the way to the rest of Australia—a way that I hope the rest of the country will follow. I hope that in the next year consideration will be given to similar relief for dependent children of deceased persons.

I do not propose to say a great deal about education, as I hope to be able to speak more fully in the debate on that department's Estimates. I will however say this now: in the light of the Federal Government's assault on independent schools, it was encouraging to see them being given some incentive by Sir Gordon Chalk. Teaching strengths in all schools, State and independent, are to be increased by 11.5 per cent. Teacher aides and pre-school units are to be increased and, as the previous speaker said, one of the most laudable aspects of the Budget is the increased subsidy to library services. I will say more about those aspects, I hope, when the department's Estimates are considered.

I would like to comment at this stage, too, on the aspect of the scholarships to be given to independent schools. As I said, there has been a general assault by the Federal A.L.P. Government on independent schools. In particular, tax deduction allowances have been cut. That throws hardship not just on the parents of children attending independent schools but on the parents of all school-children. I invite any member of the Opposition to go to Myers and say, "I have a daughter in a secondary school. Tell me how much I need to clothe her and to

equip her with books for a 12-month period." It will be found that it is a lot more than the \$150 tax deduction that the Federal A.L.P. euphemistically calls an education allowance. It is a far greater amount.

I am very pleased to see that Sir Gordon Chalk has introduced a scheme to encourage the parents of Outback children to keep their children at school longer. I point out that the scholarship scheme will not assist the wealthy public schools, which seems to be the charge of the A.L.P. It will in fact assist the parents of children who attend boarding schools. I shall tell honourable members why. The scholarships are to be available for students in grades 11 and 12 only, not in their first years at the school. Now, in their first three years at boarding schools students develop strong friendships, loyalties and interests, and in many cases they are the ones who put pressure on their parents to keep them at their schools for grades 11 and 12. More often than not, their parents scrape and save to find the means of keeping them there, even if they feel that it is beyond their means. These 500 scholarships will therefore be a great boon to such parents. They will not encourage more people to send their children to boarding schools; they will simply provide relief to parents who have scraped and saved to keep their children there. It will now be easier for them to leave their children at boarding school than it was previously.

I see that I have now been speaking for half an hour, and I do not want to breach the gentlemen's agreement that we have made on speaking time. There are many other things that I should like to have dealt with. I have directed most of my comments to the economic parameter (or para-meter, as the Prime Minister would say) surrounding the Budget, and I think this was the wisest course. It is most important that the State Budget be seen in the context of the economic climate throughout Australia today. When the Housing Estimates are being debated, there are many things that I shall say about private housing and the terrible assault by the A.L.P. Federal Government policy in this field.

For now, I am happy to add my congratulations to the Treasurer to those that have already been given by others who have spoken on the Budget. I believe that Sir Gordon has brought down a strong and responsible Budget which I think augurs well for the State. I only hope that the economic

climate in the next few months will be greatly changed as the result of a Federal election which will sweep in a responsible Government in Canberra.

**Mr. JONES** (Cairns) (3.17 p.m.): One of the promises announced by the Premier and the Treasurer on behalf of the National and Liberal Parties at the last State election was that there would not be an increase in rail freights. That was stated by the Premier in November 1974 at Southport. I have vague recollections of a Cabinet meeting held in Mareeba at which the Premier, who was then a very junior member of Cabinet, made the proud boast that in the matter of rail freights he was the Lone Ranger in Cabinet. He was the only one in Cabinet to argue against an increase in rail freights to Far North Queensland.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** Who said that?

**Mr. JONES:** The Premier, in Mareeba. I do not know who was his mate Tonto, but the Premier said that he was the Lone Ranger. That was obviously when he was a very junior member of Cabinet, and he was well reported on that occasion.

The report in "The Cairns Post" of 11 July stated that Sir Gordon Chalk hoped to bring down a more palatable Budget. He was forced to make a rushed trip overseas to achieve it. Today the heaviest impost in the Budget introduced on 25 September, not a year after the election promise, is the increase of 40 per cent in rail freights and fares. Such a large increase is a complete contradiction of the Treasurer's announced policy at another time whilst holding another portfolio. He is on record as saying that if medicine is needed for ills of the administration or the application of unpalatable measures, the patient is not given the whole bottle at once; he is given the medicine by the teaspoon, in sips. I think that those were in effect his words on that occasion. If we apply that theory to the increase in rail fares and freights which has been proclaimed in this Budget I suppose in that context it is one of two things. Is it the whole bottle of medicine now, or is it a whacking great sip that we have just been administered? Can we expect more of these monumental sips? If we can, my diagnosis is that the patient is already suffering an overdose and in this condition cannot survive but will succumb to the treatment.

**Sir Gordon Chalk** interjected.

**Mr. JONES:** It won't be in sips. We understand, then, that we are going to get this 40 per cent increase in one dose of half a bottle of medicine; is that it?

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** No.

**Mr. JONES:** Every indication is that the 40 per cent increase is going to be imposed on an average and the people in my area are going to suffer. They will suffer the most from an increase in rail freights. Just to give an indication of what this will mean to Far North Queensland—and I will go into this a little more later—I will quote to honourable members the present contract rate, the amount of the increase based on 40 per cent, and the new rate from Roma Street to Cairns. For a wagon load of fruit and vegetables, the present rate is \$48.40 per tonne. The 40 per cent increase will amount to \$19.36 and the new rate will be \$67.76 per tonne. If the vegetables are sent separately the present rate is \$71.20, the 40 per cent increase will amount to \$28.48 and the new rate will be \$99.68. If fruit is sent separately—these are basic foods—the present rate is \$66.76 per tonne; the increase will amount to \$26.70 and the new rate will be \$93.46.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** You might be misleading the public.

**Mr. JONES:** I am just taking the average.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** I said it would be an average of 40 per cent. You wouldn't know what it is.

**Mr. JONES:** I want to emphasise by this table what the Government could be doing to Far North Queensland.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** It is no good saying what I could be doing.

**Mr. JONES:** All right. I am only taking an average. The Treasurer has not spelt out what it will be. I am spelling it out and now the Treasurer is taking exception to my doing that. This is an indication that this is a very ticklish area and that the Treasurer is a little sensitive, a little prickly, about this aspect of it. What I intend to point out to the Treasurer is going to mean a lot to people in Far North Queensland because these are the rates that they may be paying.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** You are only applying the average.

**Mr. JONES:** An "average", as it was stated in the Budget. It could be more than this because, if it is an average of 40 per cent

it could range between 10 per cent and 100 per cent. Who knows? We have not had any better definition than an average of 40 per cent, so I am taking an average of 40 per cent. A table containing the present rates, the increase and the new rates would look like this—

Goods Carried	Present Rate	Increase	New Rate
	\$	\$	\$
Store Goods .. .. .	47.25	18.90	66.15
Furniture Goods .. .. .	71.95	28.78	100.73
Electrical Goods .. .. .	73.00	25.20	88.20.

I will quote the ordinary rate that is presented to the ordinary fellow who wants to get his new car up to Cairns. At present he pays \$61.16 a tonne. A 40 per cent increase on that would be \$24.47 and the new rate would be \$85.63. He will probably pay \$120 to get his car to Cairns. That is a fair indication of what the 40 per cent increase will mean to the ordinary person in Cairns. These are the contract rates between Roma Street and Cairns. If a person lives in Weipa, Mt. Isa, Cooktown or on Thursday Island, he can just about double the rates that I have just mentioned. If a person cannot get contract rates, he can add another 50 per cent to those rates because in general terms they are flat rates given to a particular section of the community and not to the ordinary citizen. The table goes on—

Goods Carried	Present Rate	Increase	New Rate
	\$	\$	\$
Tractors and Agricultural Machinery .. .. .	47.40	18.96	66.36
Fertiliser—			
Bulk .. .. .	13.00	5.20	18.20
Bagged .. .. .	19.85	7.94	27.79
Cattle (one K Wagon)—			
Cloncurry—Stuart .. .. .	165.60	66.24	231.84
Einasseigh—Queerah .. .. .	101.60	40.64	142.24
Sugar—			
Babinda .. .. .	2.81	1.12	3.93
Gordonvale .. .. .	1.66	0.66	2.32
Hambledon Mill .. .. .	1.33	0.54	1.87

As I said earlier, the North will succumb if increases of that type are imposed. I cannot see how the ordinary people in Far North Queensland will be able to survive under the weight of impositions such as these.

The principal criticism of the last Labor Government in Queensland in the field of transport was that it increased rail freights and fares so many times in a number of years. The stumping theme of the Government parties from 1966 onwards was that Country Party-Liberal Governments had not taken similar action. Now we see, Mr. Hewitt, an economic prescription in the form of a thunderingly big increase of 40 per cent. I wonder whose theories will be accepted as being more correct and honest when assessments are made in the future. Surely the action now being taken by the Treasurer validates the policy of the A.L.P.

in Jack Duggan's time that the correct procedure is to apply proper measures at the appropriate time, not impose one large increase.

All the rail profits from mineral exports and secret freight deals have now come home to roost, and the Government expects a deficiency of \$41,000,000 in railway accounts this year. When a reassessment of freight rates is made, the Treasurer ought to give consideration to applying conditional rates in the Far North and other outlying areas of Queensland. Bulk rates, special rates, contract rates or concessional rates—call them what you like, Mr. Hewitt—should be available to all, not to only a few as they are at present.

The secret system that has been applied over the years since it was first introduced by the Government is inequitable, unfair and unjust to the ordinary citizens of Far North Queensland and has proved to be only an avenue of profit to the people who receive the contract rates. The benefits of it are not passed on to the consumer. What happens is that the profit is pocketed by those who receive the contract rates. The system falls down, and it has been exploited over the years. Tonnages have not increased in proportion to the rebate and shoppers in country and provincial areas are not benefiting from contract rates. Consumer goods are dearer, not cheaper, and everybody suffers. A person on the end of the line pays more out of his pocket for goods.

Competition has been stifled, and benefits seem to be accruing to the southern companies that come into the North with applied contract rates instead of to the northern and western consumers and the local small businessmen who do not have the benefit of contract rates. Housewives have to pay for it; farmers have to pay for it; townspeople have to pay for it and primary producers and working men have to pay for it. Railway losses continue to escalate. This year, on general operations, losses are expected to be of the order of \$93,000,000. With debt-servicing charges, the losses total a record \$144,000,000.

I will correct what the honourable member for Landsborough said about mineral profits by referring to page 3 of the Financial Statement, where the Treasurer said—

"It must be appreciated that the overall loss of the Railway Department is reduced very greatly by the profits on the mineral lines operations."

I interjected that that profit was \$29,000,000.

"In 1974-75 these mineral line profits amounted to some \$29,000,000."

Despite that mineral line profit of \$29,000,000, the railways suffered a record \$114,000,000 loss. The 40 per cent increase in fares and freights will return an additional \$24,300,000, but that still leaves a formidable \$90,000,000 loss.

We should be looking at some form of relief from rail freights for North Queensland and the outlying areas of the State. In "The Cairns Post" of 30 August 1975, the Premier was reported as saying that North Queensland was the chief victim of the Federal Budget. That can be applied to the State Budget with its 40 per cent increase in rail fares and freights. While we are looking at alternatives, we should be looking at alternative or competitive forms of transport.

On 9 September I asked the Minister for Transport a question about the proposal he put forward on 25 May that A.N.L. ships should be permitted to trade between Brisbane, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns. He said that he had met certain North Queensland businessmen and undertook to place the matter before Cabinet. In reply to a question without notice yesterday morning, the acting Minister for Transport said that he could not tell me what Cabinet's decision on the matter was. An A.N.L. shipping service to Far North Queensland is a matter that should be discussed in this debate. The use of A.N.L. ships for intrastate trading in Queensland in competition with the Queensland railways should be debated here because much has been said about it elsewhere. The history of the attempts to use A.N.L. ships for the Queensland coastal trade indicates an extreme small-mindedness, particularly on the part of the Premier. The A.N.L. searoad vessels "Brisbane Trader", "Sydney Trader" and "Townsville Trader" usually have 600-1 000 tonnes unused capacity each week when they sail from Brisbane to North Queensland ports. They trade to Port Alma, Townsville and Cairns. They are suitable for all types of general cargo, but at the present time there is no south-bound service from North Queensland ports. I understand that as far back as 1972 the Premier received a letter from the Prime Minister seeking concurrence to A.N.L. operating intrastate in Queensland as part of the general cargo services and that the matter was again under discussion between the Premier and the Prime Minister in March 1973. At that stage the matter was referred to an inter-departmental committee in Queensland. However, that committee seems to have become bogged down.

In 1973, after further correspondence in the interim, the Queensland Government still had not arrived at a decision on allowing A.N.L. to engage in intrastate trade. At one stage the Premier made a wild statement about the jobs of thousands of Queensland railwaymen being jeopardised. I think he quoted the number of employees who would be affected as being about 450,000 or some equally outlandish figure. The Premier has admitted that on some items the freight rates charged by A.N.L. would be as low as

40 per cent of those charged by the Queensland Railway Department. He objected to the proposal on the ground also that the revenue collected by A.N.L. would go to Canberra. This, too, was a fallacious argument. The Premier's talk of sackings in the railways is well beyond the pale.

During the 1974 State election campaign the A.L.P. promised that if it were elected it would allow A.N.L. to operate in the intrastate trade. The people of Townsville were in favour of the proposal, as were those in the Cairns area. The matter was raised in this Chamber by the honourable member for Townsville West and it has been canvassed at the Queensland Harbour Boards conference. It received the whole-hearted support of the chairman of the Cairns Harbour Board, Mr. Mick Borzi. In May this year the Minister for Transport went to Townsville to hear submissions put forward by businessmen who favoured the proposal, and he said that he would take the matter to Cabinet. So he seems to support it.

It appears that the only nigger in the woodpile, the Lone Ranger, is the Premier. He would deprive Far North Queensland of an alternative form of transport that would offer competitive rates. He has been the obstructionist.

**Mr. Houston:** He is totally obstructionist in every sense.

**Mr. JONES:** Quite true. If northbound A.N.L. ships were to carry a maximum of 1 000 tonnes of cargo each week, it would be equivalent to only one trainload of goods per week. Each week about 30 trains leave Brisbane for the Far North. Railway employees, particularly those in the depot in my electorate, have told me that train crews work six or seven days a week and would welcome one fewer trainload as they could then have a day off. The Queensland railways are carrying approximately 2 000 000 tonnes of general cargo each year, and if A.N.L. were to carry 1 000 tonnes of cargo each week it would mean that it would take from the railways a mere 50 000 tonnes annually—an insignificant amount.

The quantities of general merchandise carried by rail in Queensland have risen to a phenomenal level, by an increase of the order of 100 per cent. Whereas previously the railways carried only 1 000 tonnes of freight to North Queensland each week, they are now carrying as much as 2 000 tonnes.

The establishment of a regular shipping service from Brisbane to the Far North could make that part of the State more attractive to industry. It would provide additional employment, and I believe it would increase

the demand for rail services. The A.N.L. service is supported by all and sundry, including the North Queensland Chamber of Commerce. The Premier's argument ignores user benefits, that is, lower freight rates, which would make Queensland better off over all. A.N.L. is a commercial enterprise. Profits are used to finance the service and do not go to Canberra. I find the Premier's argument very hard to accept.

**Mr. Burns:** There are 30 seamen on each ship.

**Mr. JONES:** That is so, and they would be fully employed. I know many people in Cairns who work on these ships. Some of them are very good friends of mine.

**Mr. Hales:** They are very well paid, I might add.

**Mr. JONES:** And why not! Ship conditions are not the best in the world. A seaman's life, like a coal miner's life, is not easy. A seaman works to a pretty tight schedule and does a very difficult job. I have never had the ambition to be a seaman, and, after listening to the history of coal-mining in Wales as outlined by my grandfather, I never had an ambition to be a coal miner. Seamen have earned their conditions only after a long and hard struggle. They have done very well indeed, but their conditions should be used as a yardstick.

Railwaymen support my arguments in favour of allowing A.N.L. to engage in intrastate trade. I sincerely believe that it would create an increased demand for rail service. In this way the viability of the line to Far North Queensland would be improved, as would be feeder services. An A.N.L. service would not only help to contain freight increases, but would also improve road and rail transportation. For two or three years the Premier's arguments have deprived North Queensland of a very valuable service. Government members representing the Townsville area resent the Premier's attitude and I believe that they have been trying to influence him to change his mind. I do not know if they will be successful, but if my opinion as the Opposition spokesman on transport makes their representations stronger, that is all to the good. I hope that they achieve their ends.

It seems to me that the Premier is out to kill the railways. To say the least, he will cause sackings in the Railway Department if he does not realise how important to the Far North this service would be. If he should say that this service would be a threat to railwaymen's jobs, I point out that his record, as leader of the Government, of sacking railwaymen or reducing their number is such that he has a hell of a lot to answer for. I want an explanation of what he intends to do in the future to maintain and increase the number of railway jobs throughout Queensland and particularly Far

North Queensland. Since this Government came to power the number of employees has continually declined. I think this shows the complete hypocrisy of the Premier. The removal of road taxes will more than harrify the railways, if the Premier cares to apply his analogy to that.

Personally, I welcome the reduction in road tax because it will give some benefit to people in outlying areas. However, if he is going to argue that the introduction of an A.N.L. intrastate service will threaten the jobs of railwaymen, how can he justify a reduction in road tax? I cannot follow his reasoning. Support for a shipping service has come from all and sundry in Far North Queensland. The sooner Cabinet makes a decision on the matter, the better it will be for those living in my electorate and all others in Far North Queensland. I hope that, by stating clearly and concisely from the floor of the Chamber my attitude and that of the A.L.P., I have helped to clear the way for the introduction of a shipping service, and I urge Government members to make sure that the people of Cairns and Far North Queensland get justice.

I hope that the Treasurer will heed the call in Far North Queensland for the establishment of an institute of advanced education in Cairns. That is something that has the support of a number of very important and influential people and organisations in Far North Queensland. They include the Cairns Harbour Board, the Johnstone Shire Council, the Mareeba Shire Council, the North Queensland Federation of Chambers of Commerce, the Far North Queensland Development Bureau, the Innisfail District Chamber of Commerce and Industry and, I am sure, all State and Federal members of Parliament. I whole-heartedly support the call for a college of advanced education in Cairns. It is fully warranted.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** I think it is, too.

**Mr. JONES:** I am pleased to hear the Treasurer admit it. As I have his support, I will not take the matter further.

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** The people of Cairns need to be educated. Those who voted for you do, anyway.

**Mr. JONES:** The State makes the recommendations to the Australian commission on advanced education, but as yet there has been no recognition by the Queensland Government of the need for an institute in Far North Queensland. I am pleased to hear that the Treasurer supports my call.

Tertiary colleges have been established in Brisbane, Rockhampton and Toowoomba. They cover a variety of fields and are oriented towards specific training for industry. The courses appropriate to Far North Queensland would be agricultural science,



accountancy, architecture, building, commercial and business studies, engineering and technology, paramedical and surveying. If population is one of the criteria for determining the location of a college, I point out that Cairns would serve the Peninsula and Gulf areas. In certain fields—those not catered for at other centres—the Cairns institute could serve people as far south as Mackay and as far west as Mt. Isa. An institute of advanced education is needed in Cairns and I believe that the Government should be looking to the establishment of one there as quickly as possible.

In case I am misjudged, I cannot allow to pass unchallenged the very disparaging remarks made in this Chamber by the honourable member for Barron River about the Federal member for Leichhardt, Mr. Bill Fulton, a very fine man. He has served in the Federal Parliament since 1958, and in local government since his return from war service. The honourable member for Barron River is a new member, and it is a disappointment to me, as a fellow parliamentarian, to see him abusing parliamentary privilege by attacking a person who is unable to reply. He generally tends to misrepresent situations and shoot from the mouth, whereas he should first research a subject and then give correct information. He is starting to build up a reputation as a rat-bag politician, and he only discredits himself, his standing in the electorate and, I believe, even his own party. His colleagues, too, seem to be concerned about his behaviour. I have heard some pass uncomplimentary remarks about his performance.

I do not believe that he is helping himself by remarks such as those he made about the member for Leichhardt. I dissociate myself from what he said. He was gagging on, and I could not get in an interjection. He would not accept my advice to tell the truth. I want to make it very clear that I do not support his submissions. If he had done any research, he might or might not—I shall give him the benefit of the doubt—

**Mr. Lane:** Why don't you stop attacking a man who is not present?

**Mr. JONES:** I am sorry that he is not present.

**Mr. Lane:** He is with a deputation to the Premier.

**Mr. JONES:** The honourable member is quite wrong, because at the present moment the honourable member for Barron River is with the Minister for Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement on Palm Island.

**Mr. Lane:** Doing his job—and you are attacking him behind his back.

**Mr. JONES:** I think you are trying to mislead the Committee.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member for Cairns will direct his remarks to the Chair.

**Mr. JONES:** It was with some hesitation that I raised this matter in the absence of the honourable member for Barron River. But if he can attack the member for Leichhardt in his absence, I think it is only fair that he can be similarly attacked. In fact, I have been very reserved in my comments. There is much more that I could say. I do not have to worry about people saying that I am taking advantage of this cowards' castle, as Parliament has been described. The honourable member has the right to take me on at any time he likes over anything that has been said in this Chamber. In fact, I challenge him to do so.

What I have said this afternoon, I can justify. If he wants me to give names, I can do so. What irks me is that the honourable member for Barron River attacked a colleague of mine for whom I have a very high regard. During the previous week-end, that gentleman was in the hospital at Greenslopes seeking further advice on whether or not it was necessary to have a foot amputation.

**Mr. Moore:** I'd hate that to happen to me.

**Mr. JONES:** Yes. Government members may laugh. They would probably be classed with the honourable member for Barron River.

During the week-end before that, the Federal member for Leichhardt was at the Greenslopes Repatriation Hospital obtaining some advice about the wound he suffered as a Rat of Tobruk, when he was blown up with a mine.

I do not appreciate the politics of some Government members, and I am ashamed to be associated with statements of that kind. They will be dealt with in another place at another time—there is no doubt about that—and it will not be under privilege. I hope that the electorate will not be misled. Remarks of that kind should be looked at in the same light as the statements made by the honourable member for Barron River about a tunnel through the Kuranda Range to give access to the Mareeba international airport. I think his attempts to blame the Australian Government for that slip of the tongue should be considered in the same light as his attack on the Federal member for Leichhardt. I regret that the member for Barron River is not present today so that I

could castigate him further, but there is plenty of time. If he can spare the time, we might ask him a few more pertinent questions in relation to—

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

**Mr. JONES:** It has a lot to do with what is going on in this Committee. I advise the honourable member not to copy the contribution of the honourable member for Barron River if he wishes to remain in this place. If that honourable member wants to attack me in this place at some other time, he is quite at liberty to do so. I challenge him to do so! I might even divulge the contents of this photostat copy of a letter I have here. I had it copied in the expectation that he would be here, but it will keep. It will not go bad.

I shall revert now to the Budget itself. Going back a couple of weeks, the Leader of the Liberal Party in the Federal sphere said that we must give the States a fair programme for sharing and a new form of federalism whereby the Liberal and Country Parties will ensure that the States have permanent access to revenue raised from personal income tax. I believe a discussion of the dual system of taxation is pertinent to this debate. Those sentiments seem to be noble, until we get to the words following "federalism". Those high ideals do not sound as good when the proposals are read in toto. Translated into action, the plan—plausibly presented by the present Leader of the Opposition in the Federal sphere—for co-operative federalism would not give financial independence to the States. The dual system of taxation is a dangerous one—40 years out of date—and such a system will promote new inequalities for the State of Queensland.

I am sure that New South Wales and Victoria will smilingly welcome such a move and that their smiles will turn into raucous laughter as the proposal is implemented. If the Governments of Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia fall for it, they will be bigger fools than I take them for today. Only New South Wales and Victoria can profit by such a move. Because money will be made available on a per-capita basis, the less populous States should look round the corner and protect their position. The proposals are contradictory. The less populous States will go progressively further down as the scheme is implemented.

The proposal to convert general revenue grants to an equivalent share of personal income tax and to allow the States to apply surcharges or rebates is a "have" as far as I am concerned, and I go on record as saying so. In fact, it would ensure only that the States received what they were receiving, without any change, and distortion

of the uniform tax would only fatten the strong at the expense of the weak. On a per-capita basis, of course, Queensland is a weak State. There are no desirable horizons for Queensland in such a policy. The needs of this State have not been fully considered, and it will be deprived of the capital it will need to meet the expected rate of growth or any future developmental surge.

Different States have differing rates of growth—the pattern can never be the same—and Queensland would be the loser. The economy of this State is vastly different from that of other States and its taxing capacity is different. Take, for instance, the example of Queensland having to impose a higher rate of tax than New South Wales or Victoria. If money is to be allocated on a per-capita basis, simple mathematics show that Queensland will have to impose a higher rate of tax than either New South Wales or Victoria to get the same revenue yield.

Not one institution has heralded this scheme. Not one organisation in my area has come out in favour of it, and I have seen very little comment on it in North Queensland as a whole. Neither banking institutions nor insurance companies have praised it. I have never yet heard of taxpayers welcoming two taxing authorities where previously there was only one. Just imagine having to pay the piper twice, Mr. Hewitt, and everybody getting in for his cut on a per-capita basis. The people of Queensland would be the underdogs.

Just imagine for a moment the chaos that would result if the proposed new taxation scheme was imposed in today's economic climate. On the one hand, the Australian Government would be seeking restraint; on the other hand, each State Government would be going its own way, spending at will. There would be no complementary policies and no over-all control. At least a national economic policy is available to some extent at present, and it is essential. Co-operation is needed, but it is not forthcoming at the moment. What would happen if the positions were reversed, with a State Labor Government and a Liberal-Country Party Federal Government and each going its hardest in the field of taxation?

I ask Government members to put themselves in the position of having to go out this year and compete for votes in their electorates on the basis of taxation imposed by the Federal Government and taxation imposed by the State Government. I will argue that case with them on the hustings in the near future. If there are two systems of taxation, the State Government will run foul of the ordinary taxpayers, the ordinary voters and many others in the community about whom it is not worried at the moment. If the Queensland taxpayers fall for that sort of a scheme they will certainly suffer.

**Mrs. KIPPIN** (Mourilyan) (4.5 p.m.): As my contribution to this Budget debate, I intend to concentrate on parts of the Budget that will particularly affect country people and North Queenslanders. Undoubtedly the statement that was welcomed most by those people was that estates passing from spouse to spouse will be totally exempt from death duties. That will apply to the estates of people who die on or after 25 September 1975. Indeed, it will have the maximum impact in the area of greatest need. Country people have been wanting this for a long time as that tax burden has fallen unfairly for far too long on rural people. So often have we seen a widow's distress heightened considerably by severe financial problems created by the imposition of death duties on her late husband's estate. She loses her husband and is then faced with losing the family home because she does not have the liquid assets to pay death duties. Women have even had to seek social service benefits while estates have been frozen for assessment. Women work beside their husbands all their married lives but their contribution to their husbands' estate is seldom recognised.

A survey conducted in September last year showed the surprising contribution of the average housewife with three children carrying out normal household duties and working a 13-hour day. If she were paid at union rates, she would earn nearly \$10,000 a year. Country women who have normally been actively involved in working the farm would contribute much more than \$10,000 to the matrimonial estate.

Naturally the abolition of death duties will benefit a husband just as much as it will a wife, but in many cases the husband owns the estate and the wife has to find the death duties. Even if a house is in the name of both husband and wife, the furniture is deemed to belong to the husband unless the wife can prove that she has contributed finance to the purchase of the furniture. It is difficult to believe that any Government could have imposed this tax for so long.

Indeed, it is to be hoped that the Federal Government will now follow Queensland's lead and abolish succession duties at the earliest possible opportunity. Although the abolition of death duties on estates passing between spouses is the best place to start, the Government should look further and abolish this form of taxation, particularly on estates passing within families. As properties pass from one generation to another, they are gradually divided to provide each interested dependant with his or her share. In the past, primary industry was much more viable generally, and a property owner had a chance to accumulate or build up his estate in preparation for dividing it again among his descendants in the next generation. However, the changing economic situation will not now allow for worth-while estate planning. Most primary producers are having difficulties in increasing their incomes to keep pace with inflation and rising costs. I fear that in the

future many more estates will have to be cut up and a large proportion of them sold to pay death duties. That will eventually reduce the size of properties at a time when the economy of scale is crucial, and deny to young, experienced farmers the opportunity to own their own property. Those young people have earned their inheritance by physical labour throughout their childhood. They have been subjected to hardships through living in isolated areas. It is my hope that when a Liberal-National Country Party Government is returned to office in Canberra it will pass complementary legislation to abolish the federally imposed succession duty.

Inflation has aggravated the hardships caused by death duties. An estate valued at \$60,000 in 1942 would have attracted Federal death duty at the rate of 8 per cent. By 1972 inflation had increased the value of that estate to approximately \$220,000, and the duty paid on it at that time would have been just over 25 per cent. Until 1972 the tax schedules had remained unchanged for nearly 20 years.

For the present, the Federal Government will benefit financially from the Queensland Government's decision. In previous assessments, succession duty was calculated on the value of the estate after State probate duty had been paid. The Commonwealth will now assess succession duty on the whole of the estate and therefore the beneficiary will not receive the full benefit of the State move. To illustrate my point—if a husband had left his wife an estate valued at \$100,000, formerly she would have paid \$13,000 to the State and over \$4,000 to the Federal Government, whereas now the Federal death duties will be calculated on the total value of \$100,000 and she will pay additional duty to the Federal Government. To this extent she loses the benefit of the Queensland Government's move.

State duties were investigated by the Senate Finance and Government Corporation Committee between 1971 and 1973. Evidence put before the committee showed that the double tax system was administratively wasteful and costly. In 1972 each assessment of death duties cost over \$60, compared with the cost of assessment of \$7.90 for each income tax return. The system gave rise to anomalies and inequalities. For example, an estate in Queensland paid two duties—both State and Federal—whereas a similar estate in Canberra attracted only the Federal tax. The Senate committee decided that death duty in Australia had outlived its original purpose of preventing massive accumulations of wealth by a relatively few people. The idea that a death tax is an equity tax falling heavily on the rich is long outmoded. It is now inefficient and socially unacceptable. Most people have paid income tax and other taxes all their lives and as the result of thrift and hard work they have accumulated an estate. They like to be able to pass on their life's

savings to their descendants, who, in many instances, have helped them accumulate those savings.

The budgetary measure that causes most concern to country people is the increase in rail freights. We recognise the marvellous job done by the Government in pegging rail freights over the past nine years. When this Government came into office, it decided that instead of carrying out the electrification of the Brisbane suburban railway system it would embark upon a programme of dieselisation. This programme helped keep freight rates down in country areas, and this is greatly appreciated by country people. In the last few years of office of the State Labor Government, rail freights increased at a phenomenal rate and quite frequently. At that time, the road transport operators were forced to charge rates not less than those charged by the railways. In effect we saw the dog chasing its tail. The road hauliers were much more efficient than the railways, so they attracted more freight; the railways had to increase their freight rates to try to recoup their losses, and country people paid for this inefficiency. Fortunately, however, this nonsense was brought to a halt by the election to office of the Country-Liberal Party Government. However, today, cattlemen in our northern and western areas are anxiously waiting to see what increase will be imposed on the transport of cattle. It is common knowledge that the beef industry is in grave financial danger. It has little prospect of returning to a viable level in the next 12 months. Between July 1974 and September 1975 graziers received an average of approximately 9c a lb. for their stock. It is recognised that production costs range from 25 to 30c a lb. It is therefore obvious that graziers have been selling at between 30 and 40 per cent of production costs in the last 15 months. How many secondary industries could sustain selling at this rate for well over a financial year?

In 1972-73, the number of beef cattle transported by rail exceeded 1,000,000. In 1973-74 the number fell to 943,000. I am sure that the decrease could be attributed to the buoyancy of the industry at the time. The price of beef cattle began to rise early in 1974 and many graziers were able to turn to road transport as a quicker means of getting their cattle to market. Road transport was much more expensive than rail but profit margins were wide enough to cover the extra costs.

Later in 1974, prices dropped quite suddenly to a drastic level. Many graziers tried to withhold their stock until prices increased, but it soon became evident to all involved in the industry that the problem would not be short term. The graziers had commitments to meet and some began to sell cattle at very low prices. Many of their commitments such as rates, rents, interest and redemption payments were fixed and had to be met. There were few areas in which

they could economise to keep their properties. For many there was no alternative to selling more cattle.

When the report of the Commissioner for Railways is finally released and the closely guarded secret is revealed, I am sure we will find that the number of cattle transported by rail in Queensland has again increased considerably. I certainly hope that it will not be construed from the increase in the number of cattle turned off that the cattle industry is experiencing favourable times. It is true that the number of cattle sold this year has risen, and it is true that the amount of meat consumed in Australia has doubled, but when a business is selling at well below half-production costs, the economy of the operation must be extremely dubious irrespective of how much production is increased.

I cannot over-emphasise that the beef industry is in a very serious state. Even long-established graziers are beginning to reach the end of their liquidity and are looking for carry-on finance. The industry simply cannot stand any increases in costs.

A couple of weeks ago, when there was an increase in cattle prices, an air of almost hysterical elation swept the industry. Bullock prices had risen 50 per cent to \$15 per 100 lb. I must point out a sobering fact ignored by the media and graziers alike: the \$15 per 100 lb. is equal to only 50 per cent of production costs. However, this slight windfall collapsed amidst confusion when some meat-export companies misinterpreted a telex message from the Meat Board.

If the Treasurer cannot administratively avoid increasing cattle rail freights, he will have to look at another avenue of providing financial relief to the industry. While many producers are trying to weather the storm, they are suffering intolerable hardship. I know that the State Government has given considerable help already but more is needed to tide the industry over.

I must extend the gratitude of small businessmen and farmers for the special relief measure increasing the pay-roll tax exemption level from \$20,800 to \$41,600. I personally believe that this tax—which is a tax on initiative and enterprise—goes against the philosophies of our parties, particularly in the light of events in the last couple of years, when there has been such a marked change in the distribution of the national income. Wages have increased to such an extent that virtually all small businesses and farmers employing more than three men had moved into the category of pay-roll tax payment.

The Treasurer's action in this area contrasts sharply with the action of the Federal Government in its Budget. Sugar industry representatives had put to the Federal Minister for Agriculture a strong case for lifting the level of income above which taxation on the averaging principle does not apply.

\$16,000 is no longer a realistic figure. The sugar industry had requested the amount to be doubled to \$32,000. The Federal Government clearly indicated its attitude to rural industry by completely ignoring the plea.

I am sure that the sugar industry also appreciates the special grant to the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations being increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000 for 1975-76. With so much money being poured into the present expansion in the industry, it is imperative that scientific advancement keeps pace.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer on the way in which he has tackled the mammoth task of presenting the State Budget in the face of the adversity emanating from Canberra. No doubt he will have many headaches in the coming year in trying to keep his books balanced. I call on Queenslanders to strive to keep their State progressing, thus justifying the confidence he has placed in them.

**Mrs. KYBURZ** (Salisbury) (4.22 p.m.):  
Mr. Hewitt—

**Sir Gordon Chalk:** Now for the second division.

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** The Treasurer might not be quite as happy with this one as with the first division.

Mr. Hewitt, I rise to join in the Budget debate at a time which in retrospect will certainly prove to be one of the most turbulent in our history. Just as no decision can be popular with everyone, no Budget (be it Federal, State or household) can possibly please every sector of the community. Therefore, the Treasurer will surely realise that this Budget, while having many pleasing aspects, also has a few points calling for criticism.

I believe that it is primarily my duty to represent the 23,000-odd electors who are now on my roll. I shall therefore refer generally to some facets of the Budget and later relate them to my electorate.

As the Treasurer said, it is indeed unfortunate that in these times of severe economic crisis a very small amount of money has been made available for innovation. In fact, it is quite obvious that the unprecedented increase in costs in every sphere made the task of budgeting more than difficult.

It is probably in the field of education that the greatest advances have been made. One of the highlights is the provision for 2,000 additional teachers, which will mean a reduction in the student-teacher ratio. The State's pre-school policy is extremely important. Fortunately, it will surge ahead. Financial assistance to non-State schools has been substantially increased—from \$81 to \$111 for primary school students and from \$132 to \$177 for secondary school students. Fortunately, as kindergartens also have been affected by rapidly escalating costs, they, too, will attract larger subsidies.

The increased payments to be made to school transport operators will be warmly welcomed by parents, as will the scheme to virtually subsidise the fares of school-children who travel on Brisbane City Council buses before 8.30 a.m. I know that all school p. and c. associations will appreciate the general purpose grant of \$100 a school plus \$4 a student to all State primary schools to assist in the purchase of various items of equipment. At last many parents and citizens' associations will be able to concentrate more of their collective attention on issues other than fund-raising for yet another television set.

It is now generally realised that money alone is not the answer to all the education ills. As with all services provided by any Government from the public purse, a certain amount of funds will be wasted or, euphemistically speaking, ill spent. This occurs because there is always the human factor at every level of decision-making.

Some p. and c. associations are now applying themselves to planning and beautifying the total school environment. In fact, in my electorate I have two schools that are surrounded by large areas of natural bushland—quite a rarity in the city. Its use is being carefully planned by the staff and parents. Trees and plants are relatively cheap. In fact, one needs to have taught in the two extremes of ugliness and relative beauty in school surroundings to appreciate fully what shrubs and greenery can do for the school environment. Even a school which has limited playground space, much of which probably is asphalt, anyway, can be greatly enhanced by pot plants and small flower beds.

I mention one of the schools in my electorate as it is a very good example of the total co-operation of head-teacher, staff, pupils, groundsman, and p. and c. association. I speak of Coopers Plains primary school, which boasts shady trees, lovely lawns and shrubs and a greenhouse. In fact, that school presents a happy situation in which pupils can work and play—apart, of course, from the inconvenience of having to walk a long way to the toilets, particularly in wet weather. In summer, everyone is very happy that they are some distance away!

Parents and citizens' associations are now involving themselves more in the social climate of schools as well as the basic educational standards. Community involvement is fortunately now the in phrase. It is wise to physically care about a school and to be genuinely interested in a child's education if that child's potential is to be realised. A great deal of attention is now given to the many areas of special education, such as the teaching of migrants and deaf and handicapped children.

However, there are two areas to which I fear insufficient attention is being given. I refer to very bright children and

"emotionally at risk" children, both of which categories require a great deal of parental involvement.

Fortunately we can now look forward to a major impetus in the provision of health facilities in this State. The community health care programme will be further implemented, as will the vitally important school dental service.

At last stage 1 of the Mt. Gravatt Hospital will be commenced.

**Mr. Moore:** Give it to them!

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** It is jolly well time. As the land is in the Coopers Plains-Salisbury area, I wonder who lobbied so effectively to have it named the Mt. Gravatt Hospital.

Once again I urge the extension of the service provided by maternal and child welfare clinics. Perhaps greater ante-natal care could be given there. Many women now wish to learn the natural methods of childbirth and to have their husbands accompany them to some of the lessons.

**Mr. Moore:** Shame!

**Mrs. KYBURZ:** I pause in shame. I do not believe the honourable member could possibly have meant what he said. Females unite!

The clinics could also be used as vaccination centres for babies. They might also be used as a source of counselling for at-risk parents and baby-battering parents. This, of course, is one of our greatest social problems. Perhaps apart from education and mentality factors, a greater involvement of fathers in both ante-natal and post-natal stages might be envisaged at maternal and child welfare clinics. Surely fathers should at least always be able to be present at the birth of their children if they so wish.

The problems of public transport are vast indeed. The vicious circle of more people using private transport because of inadequate public transport has to be broken. Perhaps the time will come—I hope it will not be too far away—when we will question vast freeway expenditure at the cost of fast urban transport systems. Unfortunately, at present the motorists' lobby is a very large and strong one.

The Budget provides for some improvements in the transport area. Three new schemes of assistance to private metropolitan bus services will be introduced, not the least of which is the pensioner concession for urban private buses to the extent of 50 per cent of the adult fare.

A rise in train fares was probably inevitable as suburban rail fares were certainly cheap in comparison to the cost of running a vehicle. However, the total ugliness of some of the suburban railway stations disturbs and appals me. Perhaps, along with the park-and-ride plan presently being implemented, a beautification programme could be at least attempted. Even Moscow boasts an extremely

efficient suburban railway system and the stations are decorated with paintings, chandeliers and mosaics. Of course, I realise that the great pastime of the all-Australian vandal would not allow for such pretensions. However, the mottled walls of the toilets and waiting rooms at some of our suburban stations are quite amazing in a very mad sort of way. I suppose if one buries one's head in a newspaper many of these trivialities go unnoticed.

At last one of our most iniquitous taxes is being slightly eased in that no death duty will be payable on estates passing from husband to wife and vice versa. It must have been a foolish Government that introduced these damnable taxes and it has taken a Government which actually cares about people to lift them. Further reforms in this area, please, as it affects everyone. The present reforms are important for country women; they are equally important for city women and will be welcomed by all.

That valiant body of caring people, foster parents, has also been thought of in this Budget. Foster parents will now receive \$18 per child per week, and for children in the care of denominational homes the weekly allowance will increase from \$20 to \$26. Denominational homes provide a wonderful service and deserve our support at any expense. The increased number of children in care is perhaps a reflection of the fact that we all receive little life education, that is, education which qualifies us for the social and emotional stresses of our adult lives.

In closing, may I ask the Treasurer to reconsider the grant to the Royal Queensland Society for the Prevention of Cruelty. It is a pitiful \$2,500—admittedly, \$500 more than last year's grant. The worthiness of the society is beyond question. The services it provides are called upon by various Government departments, including the Police Department, the Health Department and the Department of Primary Industries. Efforts are still being made by this society to have riding schools registered and I believe that the Brisbane City Council should not delay. Perhaps we should so amend the Animals Protection Act.

The society also has the responsibility of policing that Act. And many people are still viciously cruel towards their finer friends. Unfortunately, in this very affluent society, it is still true that many animals die without hope and live without meaning.

**Mr. GLASSON (Gregory) (4.36 p.m.):** In making my contribution to the Budget debate, I join with other Government members in giving credit to the Treasurer for a job well done under the circumstances and within the limits in which he had to operate. Even some members of the Opposition were honest enough to give credit to the Treasurer for the job he has done.

However, I make it clear at the outset that, in fairness to the people of Gregory who elected me, I shall be offering some criticism.

Possibly I should begin by dealing with the parts of the Budget which, by way of services and financial aid, benefit the State as a whole in many different areas of the economy. The first is the reduction of 33½ per cent in road transport permit fees in Queensland. This is the first step to implement the electoral promise of the coalition parties at the 1974 election.

Just let me set one point straight, Mr. Hewitt. A statement was made by the honourable member for Cairns that I had welcomed the reduction because it would assist people in the far western areas. I remind him that permit fees do not operate in those areas, because in 80 per cent of the electorate that I represent no railway lines operate. A Roads (Contribution to Maintenance) tax is imposed under a Commonwealth-State agreement, but the State has no power to reduce the amount of that tax. I accept the reduction in road transport permit fees because it will be of benefit to the people of the areas in which it now operates.

**Mr. McKechnie:** Do you think that the attitude of the honourable member for Cairns is typical of the lack of knowledge that the A.L.P. has of western areas?

**Mr. GLASSON:** I do not completely agree with the honourable member for Carnarvon. It is true of a fair section of the A.L.P. The more frequently members of the A.L.P. go to these areas and have a look at them, the better the appreciation they will have of the problems.

The increase in the pay-roll tax exemption from \$20,000 to \$41,000 will definitely be of great assistance in local government areas, in the field of contracting and in the sheep and cattle industries. However, in my opinion it only brings the figure into line with the escalation in wages over a period. Although the increase is accepted gratefully, basically the position will be similar to that which existed before the escalation occurred. The tapering in the pay-roll tax between \$41,000 and \$72,000 will also be greatly appreciated by those who still have to pay it.

One of the most progressive steps in the Budget, and a major taxation reform, is the abolition of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. It has been said that Queensland now leads Australia in this field, and I hope that its lead will be followed by the other States and eventually by the Commonwealth. Death duty is the most iniquitous, unjust tax that was ever imposed on the population of any country. A person works and slaves all his life. Then, when he is put away in a box, no sooner are the nails down than the Government is after its share of what he has worked for to provide for his wife and family. It is very pleasing, therefore, to see that there will not now be any duty on estates passing from

spouse to spouse. I should like to think that, if the economy of the country improves, when a person leaves this earth after achieving his life's ambition, his family will not be robbed and left where he started perhaps 50 years earlier. In many instances, the valuation of an estate at the time of death has been so high that payment of probate has been impossible and the whole estate has been dissipated.

**Mr. Hanson** interjected.

**Mr. GLASSON:** It would not affect the honourable member for Port Curtis. He is in such a stable business that there is only one way the valuation of his estate could go after his death. Consequently the money would be there to meet the probate when it fell due. With the economic climate in all primary industries, a person can be caught at the bottom of the graph when required to pay death duties on an estate valued at the top of the graph immediately after the death of the testator.

A similar proposal in regard to gift duty is no doubt a very welcome move and one that should be appreciated by all. I give the Treasurer full marks for it.

Provision is made for an additional 2,000 teachers. That should reduce the pupil to teacher ratio to a marked degree. For a long time, that ratio has been out of proportion and has not enabled a teacher to devote sufficient attention to individual students. If classes can be divided into two categories, it will be beneficial to the brilliant or more scholastically able children and those who are less scholastically able. The appointment of 500 teaching aides will allow teachers to devote more time to the duties for which they were trained. They will be able to teach rather than type letters and supervise children in the grounds. It is a very forward step.

The honourable member for Rockhampton said that he could not see any forward thinking in the Budget. That was a very negative attitude to adopt. Certainly he could not have looked in any depth at what has been initiated by the Treasurer.

Provision has been made for 64 per cent of the over-all programme of pre-school facilities to be completed this financial year. Community kindergartens will receive assistance for their teachers at the rate of the annual salary paid a first-year State school teacher plus \$500. Three centres in my electorate are getting pre-schools. At one stage it would never have been imagined that pre-schools would be built in those centres. It is a commendable effort on the part of the Government.

Assistance to non-State schools will be increased from \$81 to \$111 per annum for primary students and from \$132 to \$177 per annum for secondary students. I give full credit for the job done by denominational schools throughout the State. But for the job done by the sisters in the Catholic

schools in the Gregory electorate and elsewhere in the State, the Government would have its education funds greatly depleted.

As an election promise, it was said that \$100 a child would be paid to hostels run by local authorities and the C.W.A.

In the western electorates, hostels are conducted by sisters of many orders, and the hostel in Longreach is conducted by the Roman Catholic dean; but for some peculiar reason these hostels are discriminated against by being classed as boarding schools. If a country child is educated in a town, I do not see that there is any difference between his boarding at a C.W.A. or local authority hostel on the one hand and a convent on the other. If there is any difference, I would like to know what it is. I say there is no difference; yet, in spite of that, the convents have been deprived of the payment of \$100 per child. I have fought hard on their behalf, and I do not intend to give up. In many instances the child is delivered to and from school on week-ends by his parents, who might drive 160 miles each way. If a child who returns home for the week-end can be said to be receiving his education in a boarding school, I'm a bushranger. There are, of course, boarding schools throughout the country areas of the State, such as Charters Towers. The point I am making is that the Catholic hostels in western areas provide the same service as that given by C.W.A. or local authority hostels.

The remote-area allowance is to be increased by 50 per cent. This will help cover the ever-escalating cost of education of children in isolated areas.

In addition the Treasurer has introduced one of the most forward-thinking measures imaginable. I refer to the new senior secondary scholarship scheme, under which 500 scholarships will be made available for grade 11 and 12 students in western and deprived areas. I mean by that areas that are suffering from the present economic decline in rural industry. Without such scholarships, many children in the West would be deprived of a secondary education. In my electorate there is only one high-school top, and that is at Longreach. In our present society, the chances for a child without a secondary education to do well are virtually nil.

The scholarships will be allotted to children who, firstly, are eligible to receive the remote-area allowance. Next, they will be awarded on the basis of scholastic ability. Furthermore, a means test is to be applied. In other words, the child of a parent who can afford to send his child to school will not qualify for the scholarship, nor will a child who is not eligible to receive the remote-area allowance.

The granting of these scholarships will assist both the children and the boarding schools. Many boarding schools throughout

the State are in dire straits and are contemplating closure. As an example, today's paper refers to the Moreton Bay College at Wynnum. Parents no longer can afford to send their children away to boarding school to receive a secondary education. As I say, the boarding schools as well as the children will benefit greatly from these scholarships. I pay a sincere tribute to the Minister for Education as well as to the Treasurer for having made these scholarships available.

The allowance paid to school-bus operators throughout the State is to be increased by 33½ per cent. How can anybody genuinely say that the cost of operating a school bus on the road to Windorah, in some of the most God-forsaken country in the world, is the same as the cost of operating on the perimeter of Brisbane? At Windorah fuel is \$1 a gallon, spare parts that are air freighted to get them there in a hurry cost three times as much as in Brisbane, and 50 per cent more if sent by rail, while tyres cost 60 per cent more than in the metropolitan area. Yet the poor fellow at Windorah is expected to run his bus at the same cost per mile as the metropolitan school bus. This is a serious injustice. I have asked many bus operators in my electorate if they can replace a bus with the money received from the department and still hope to have the same bank account balance as when they started. We all know that their answer could only be, "No." It is economically impossible. The life of a bus in that western area is about half that of a similar bus in the Brisbane area. In the near future, I should like consideration to be given to the allowance paid in different areas.

I appreciate the assistance given to the Blue Nursing Service. In western areas, where no other nursing service is available, these nurses do a marvellous job which is worthy of the highest praise. I am very pleased to see that the financial burden of the sisters who run the service is to be met by the State.

I am sure that all honourable members welcome the increase of 245 in Police Force numbers. While I am talking about police, I make a strong plea on behalf of the five-man police station at Quilpie. This is the last station before no-man's-land. Quilpie is on the direct route north from New South Wales, and on the western route. Any crook, murderer or other criminal who wants to get away from the police takes the back track through Quilpie. But the five-man station has only one short-wheelbase Toyota truck. The other day while travelling in it from Quilpie to Charleville, I said to the officers, "If you fellows ever set out to catch someone who is breaking the law, you will want certifying because you will only be signing your own death warrant." Police-men in Quilpie use their private vehicles in apprehending offenders in the town. I strongly recommend that they be given a police vehicle. The present situation is absolutely ridiculous.



The Treasurer told us that the 40 per cent increase in freight rates was to be State wide. This subject has been dealt with by most honourable members because it affects us all. If it is to be State wide, I should like to know if a special allowance is to be given to areas of the State where the economy is such that the increase cannot be met.

If there is to be any increase at all in the western areas, as there will be, the minimum increase should be placed on the consumer goods being spent out there. Consumer goods affect the cost of living of every person in the West. Let us take the cost of food. Some items in the West cost 80 to 90 per cent more than in Brisbane. No item costs less than 30 per cent more than the Brisbane price—not even a cake of soap. That is the cost at the railhead.

What about fuel? If there is a 40 per cent increase in the freight on fuel, the rate per mile of the mailman, contractor or carrier who picks up the fuel has to increase. Road permit fees do not affect those who are on the end of a 300-mile mail run. By the time we add all the freight components, the cost of the goods will be astronomical. The Treasurer has already acknowledged in the Budget that living costs will increase by a third, as he is proposing to raise the locality allowances paid to Crown employees living in high-cost areas by 33½ per cent. So the disadvantages suffered by people in the Outback are appreciated by the Treasurer himself. I appeal to him to ensure that consumer goods sent out attract only a minimum freight increase.

A 40 per cent freight increase on stock railed out of the western areas would have a tremendous impact. I will take three points in my electorate—Longreach, Winton and Quilpie. A "K" wagon carries an average of 20 head. Honourable members might not understand the position, but that load indicates an average bullock size of 550 lb. The present freight cost of a "K" from Longreach to Brisbane is \$223.10, or an average of \$11.16 a head. If the 40 per cent increase is applied to that, the cost of a "K" from Longreach to Brisbane will be lifted to \$312.34, or \$15.62 a head. The greater the number of cattle, the lower per head; but that is the average.

The member for Mourilyan spoke about getting one-third of the cost of production. That is a third of the price of a 550 lb. beast at the market. It costs one-third of that to get it to market! Never mind about production costs; never mind about mustering; never mind about road-freighting a beast a couple of hundred miles to the railhead—at present it costs a third of its value to get it from Longreach to Brisbane. The cost from Winton is approximately the same—\$237.70 for a "K" wagon, or an average cost per head of \$16.

Let us take Quilpie, at the end of the line, where an average of 47,000 cattle have been trucked per year for the last seven years.

These are fat cattle from the best natural fattening country in Australia, bar none. The cost of a "K" wagon from Quilpie to Brisbane at the moment is \$197.75. If the 40 per cent increase is applied to that, it will rise to \$274.05, and the cost per head, which is presently \$9.75, will rise to \$13.70.

What about sheep? An "N" van will load an average of 180 to 200 off-shears to six-months-wool sheep, which is about how they come to market. It costs \$225.29, or \$1.15 per head, to bring sheep from Longreach to Cannon Hill. That will rise to \$320.95 or \$1.60 per head, which is more than the sheep were bringing at Cannon Hill—and I am talking about mutton, not lamb. I know many people who sent sheep to Cannon Hill, and they sent 50c a head after them. Does anyone wonder then why I am worried about rail freights?

I turn now to the impact that rail freights have on the commodity that must surely be considered as essential anywhere in Australia today, namely, electricity. Increased rail freights, coupled with the Federal excise of \$2 a barrel on oil, will make tariffs even higher than they are now. I shall quote costs of electricity supplied by the Central Western Regional Electricity Board, which is the generating authority. I might add that a deputation came down from Central Queensland to put before the Government the impossible position of consumers in the C.W.R.E.B. area. I am happy to say that they received a sympathetic hearing, although no decision has yet been made. The Government is trying to do something to reduce these impossible costs.

For the first 30 kW hours a month, the costs in the various districts are as follows:—

Mackay .. .. .	11.37c
Townsville .. .. .	11.37c
Cairns .. .. .	11.37c
Capricornia .. .. .	10.75c
Wide Bay-Burnett .. .. .	11.37c

For consumers of C.W.R.E.B., the cost is 18.2c for the first 20 kW hours.

Turning now to the Southern Electric Authority, we find that the rate for the first 30 kW hours is 8.99c, and, in the case of the Brisbane City Council, it is 7.68c. It is said that there is concern over equalisation. It would take only 1.5c a unit to equalise the cost of electricity throughout the State of Queensland. An increase of 40 per cent in freight paid on the transport of fuel would mean that the cost of electricity in the C.W.R.E.B. area would be even more ridiculous in relation to the costs in other parts of the State.

For the next 150 kW hours, the costs are as follows in the various districts:—

Mackay .. .. .	4.30c
Townsville .. .. .	4.30c
Cairns .. .. .	4.30c
Capricornia .. .. .	4.50c
Wide-Bay Burnett .. .. .	4.22c

In the case of C.W.R.E.B., the next 30 after the first 20 costs 11.05c, and the next 150, 7.15c.

**Mr. Hartwig:** Too much.

**Mr. GLASSON:** Of course it is too much.

The other subject on which I wish to speak is health. I forget the correct figure mentioned in the Budget, but it runs into millions of dollars. The Minister for Health is having an investigation carried out into health facilities in rural areas. I cannot accept that complete centralisation of medical services is the answer. I agree whole-heartedly that in the larger centres, such as Longreach, there should be an increase in the facilities provided for the people there. I make particular reference to geriatrics and pathology.

**Mr. Hartwig:** You want to do something for them.

**Mr. GLASSON:** That is what I am trying to do. In the field of geriatrics, a start has been made on an aged persons home to house 45 that will cost \$800,000. That sounds a ridiculous figure, as indeed it is, but building costs in Longreach are 60 per cent greater than they are on the coast. This home will increase the necessity for a geriatric centre in Longreach. I appeal to the Government to give the fullest consideration to the provision of such a centre, and also pathology facilities for Longreach. If a person has a small lump removed from, say, the neck or any other part of the body, it is sent to Brisbane, and the patient waits hour by hour for the result of the test carried out on it. I know that everything possible is done to have such attention carried out just prior to the departure of an air service. After all, there are only four services a week to my area. I believe that facilities for carrying out such tests should be provided at Longreach.

I strongly oppose any plan to replace resident doctors in those towns that have doctors by what is in effect a pool system. It is intended to send doctors to Winton, Blackall and Barcaldine for three weeks and then bring them back to the pool and send other doctors out for the following three weeks. The family-doctor association, which is a tremendous benefit to people who are really sick, will be completely gone. The intention is to have a pool system and I will oppose it to the utmost because I do not believe that anything like this should be inflicted on any section of the community. I anticipate that the department will send out young single doctors to service these hospitals rather than have a doctor resident in the town. I ask the Health Department to give full consideration to my appeal. I wanted to speak at greater length about medicine but my agreed time has expired.

**Mr. MULLER** (Fassifern) (5.6 p.m.): As honourable members on this side of the Chamber might have anticipated, I, too,

wish to congratulate the Treasurer. This Budget must have been a very difficult one to prepare. Without doubt we have been going through one of the most difficult periods that Australia has known (at least in my experience) and the Treasurer and his officers are to be commended on coming up with such a good blueprint for the development of this State in the coming 12 months.

I was rather interested this morning in the dissertation of the honourable member for Rockhampton. He severely criticised members of the Government for having directed most of their remarks at the present Commonwealth Government. I have said in this Chamber on many occasions, and I wish to say it again, that if we are to solve a problem, we have to go to its source. Most of the problems confronting the people of this State, and of all the other States, can be laid fairly and squarely at the feet of the Commonwealth Government. It has been suggested on numerous occasions that the contributions of the Federal Government have been in the interests of the people. I have arrived at two conclusions, and I am not sure which one I believe. Either these people in Canberra are dishonest or they are complete idiots.

**Mr. Alison:** Both.

**Mr. MULLER:** I agree with the honourable member for Maryborough; they obviously must be both.

We have been launched on a philosophy that is directing us headlong into socialism. I do not believe for one moment that the people of Australia are prepared to accept socialism, but unless they realise now the immediate dangers it will be too late, and this is the reason for my comments—not that I anticipate that members of the Opposition will regard my remarks as being of a serious nature. They have not indicated on any previous occasion that they are prepared to do so. As I said a few moments ago, I am a little confused in my thinking because I am rapidly arriving at the conclusion that members of the Opposition are as desirous as Government members of seeing the Whitlam Government defeated.

**Mr. Hanson:** That's a shocking statement.

**Mr. MULLER:** It could well be.

We have reached the stage in our existence where we have to accept a rate of inflation of the order of 30 per cent annually, and in many instances it is much greater than that. I cite the building industry as an example. I think it would be reasonable to assume that the average annual rate of inflation in that industry is in excess of 40 per cent. If one takes several industries such as that, in conjunction with industries that are not affected so adversely, the average could well be 30 per cent.

All food lines involve primary production. During the past 12 months there has not

been any indication that primary products have contributed in any way to inflation. Therefore, if we analyse the position, we must arrive at the conclusion that increases in wages are having a very undesirable effect. I have listened many times to members of the Opposition telling me that wages and salaries have nothing to do with increases in the cost of living. That is obviously a ridiculous statement. A person has only to look at what is happening around him to see the results of wage increases.

I could continue for quite a long time on the theme of condemning the Federal Government. However, about 10,000,000 people in Australia are now condemning it, and I think they have a greater capacity to do it than I have, so I leave it to them. If at some time in the future Mr. Whitlam takes heed of the comments of these people, I suggest he will have to throw his hat into the ring and let the people be the judges. I am certain that the evidence that would then be revealed would be very enlightening—even to Mr. Whitlam.

There are one or two rather sensitive areas within my electorate that I would like to mention. It has not been my intention on any occasion on which I have spoken in this Chamber merely to commend the officers in Government departments for the excellent work they have done. As members of the Government, we expect that from them, and up to date they have carried out their duties admirably. However, in passing, I wish to make specific reference to the officers of the Treasury Department; and my comments are not made with tongue in cheek.

On several occasions I have found it necessary to get in touch with officers of the Treasury Department. They have at all times been very obliging—and the interesting thing is that they have at all times been helpful, and for this I think I owe them a debt of gratitude. In saying this, I have a very real purpose. The thought that is really motivating me is my hope that the happy atmosphere there will continue. It is as simple as that.

**Mr. Moore:** Taking out a bit of insurance?

**Mr. MULLER:** Yes. There is nothing like it.

I should say that many small businesses will be grateful to the Treasurer for affording some relief in pay-roll tax. The road transport concessions will also be appreciated. I was interested in the comments of the honourable member for Gregory a short while ago. He enlightened me that the Budget concession will not necessarily have an effect in his area similar to that which it is expected to have in areas closer to the capital city. This is one of the benefits to be derived from debates such as this. First-hand knowledge is conveyed to us by people who have practical experience in particular localities, and I think

that is all to the good. However, in my electorate and other areas in which there are railway lines, road transport concessions will be of great advantage.

I now wish to refer to another important concession announced by the Treasurer in the field of gift duty and death duty. As you know, Mr. Hewitt, this has been one of my hobby-horses for some time, and I am very grateful to the Treasurer for abolishing death duty and gift duty between spouse and spouse. I may be cynical in saying that, if anything, it is perhaps a little too late. The way the present Federal Labor Government has administered the finances of the nation, very few people will have to pay death duties because very little money will be left to anybody by the time the Federal Treasurer has finished. A similar comment could be made about gift duty. People will have nothing to give away before they die. Be that as it may, I commend the Treasurer for having taken this action.

The Government is spending enormous sums on education. The general principle behind this expenditure is an excellent one. This year there will be an increase of more than 40 per cent in spending on education. That expenditure is being very well received. It has been requested by many parents.

Sometimes I wonder whether we are getting full value for money. As a Government member, I feel that I should make that statement. At times I look at what is happening in the field of education in my own area. During the parliamentary recess I visited many schools. In some instances I was very impressed. I will now make a statement which will not do me a scrap of good politically. I say that 80 per cent of school teachers are persons with whom I would be glad to be associated. They are doing an excellent job and are dedicated people, and I commend them for their work. Plucking a figure out of the air, I say that possibly 20 per cent of teachers are doing one heck of a lot to destroy what is being built up by others. At some time somebody has to take action to try to clean up this rather sticky mess.

On the principle of receiving value for money, I make other observations. In many instances school equipment and teaching aids, such as TV sets, projectors and tape recorders, have reached the maximum. Teachers have referred to that fact. At some schools they are now embarrassed by not having sufficient storage space for equipment. I know that sounds silly but I have observed it. I am talking about the expenditure of approximately one-third of the total amount provided for the management of the State this financial year. If we feel that we can indicate where perhaps some saving can be made without the entire education system being disadvantaged, I think we should do so.

If we wish to gain the maximum benefit from our financial resources, I feel that

Department of Education officers and Treasury officers should do more planning and make provision for school reserves in areas that are developing rapidly. Population explosions are occurring in a number of localities, but adequate provision is not made early enough for the essential facilities to educate young people. I would be very happy to refer to specific areas where I know this is occurring. I am not blaming either the planners or any other group of officers in a specific department. What I am saying is that there is insufficient co-ordination among those persons who are charged with the future planning of a locality. I have experience of this lack of co-ordination at the present time.

My electorate extends into the fringes of the cities of Brisbane and Ipswich, and I think it is fair to say that a population explosion has occurred in this region. My electorate, of course, is not the only one in which we have seen such a vast increase in population. The area represented by my electoral neighbour, the honourable member for Salisbury, faces similar difficulties. Both she and I are concerned for the people. We have their interests at heart.

Our education system must be planned in such a way as to ensure that our young children become worth-while and useful citizens of tomorrow. The planning is, of course, the responsibility of the experts, but that planning can be carried out only if adequate provision is made for it. This is essential. Correct planning will go a long way towards solving some of our difficulties.

I turn now to health. I am delighted to note the considerable expansion that will occur over the next 12 months in our health programme. I am also delighted to see that the Ipswich Hospitals Board has at long last decided to complete the new hospital in Boonah, which is my home town. The hospital was commenced two years ago, when one small wing was erected. It was left at that. The people of Boonah have become greatly disturbed at the situation and, to say the least, my life has not been made very comfortable.

As recently as yesterday I spoke to the Minister for Health about this matter in words to the effect that if the hospital did not become a reality within 12 months, I would be making a submission to him in which I would demand that he request the resignation of each and every member of the Ipswich Hospitals Board. The Minister gave me his assurance that this would not be necessary, because, he said, this hospital—which, incidentally, was promised as long ago as 1949—would become a reality in 1975. I commend the person responsible for arriving at this decision—belated as it may be.

To revert to regional development—groups of planners are considering all sorts of things. As I said before, the fringe areas of Brisbane are expanding rapidly, and they

are the only areas in the vicinity of Brisbane where large-scale development can occur. Co-ordination between Government departments is essential. The Housing Commission is acquiring areas of land in my electorate and erecting homes; and we are very happy to get them. I receive hundreds of requests for Housing Commission homes, many of which are being erected in my locality. However, by the increased number of Housing Commission homes, local authorities become embarrassed in that they cannot provide adequate water and sewerage facilities for the people who live in their areas. Sewerage schemes can be planned but water cannot be stored without proper facilities.

In this context I refer specifically to one of the difficulties experienced in the Redbank Plains, Camira, and Carole Park areas, which have all developed rapidly. Thousands of people have moved in. The Moreton Shire Council, in attempting to meet their water requirements, provided pipes and other equipment, but it has no proper water-storage facility. The Moreton Shire councillors are not foolish people and I am not attacking them. They provided a reticulation system to cope with anticipated normal expansion, but the Housing Commission moved in and built homes by the hundred. I do not know how to tell the story properly. Perhaps I could do so by telling honourable members that on many occasions I have picked up my phone at about midnight and been told that a man who finished work at 5 o'clock was still waiting to have a shower. Although the tap had been turned on for many hours, no water was coming through the pipes. I think that explains the difficulties confronting people in many fringe areas. With proper planning—and it would not take a lot of planning—many problems could be overcome.

I have been told often that the worst problem confronting a State the size of Queensland is transport. Queensland is a tremendously large State. Although the roads in the south-east region are criticised by many people, I believe that they are reasonably good. But beyond this area there are difficulties. Proper planning is essential. We should try to plan properly for future transport needs in all fringe areas. Recently we experienced difficulties in the inner city area and in certain suburbs when many people had to leave their homes after their land was resumed for freeway construction. Persons involved in land resumptions are always liable to be criticised. But much criticism could be avoided if areas of land were reserved or resumed in the initial stages so that the transport facilities could be provided when necessary without disturbing people as badly as some in the city area were.

I believe also that with the expansion that is occurring in Brisbane we will have to think more seriously about the problems

in this field and concentrate on rail transport. I doubt very much whether future freeways will adequately meet the needs of a rapidly expanding population. We have to think seriously about making greater provision for rail services in and around the city of Brisbane.

I am right behind the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads in his desire to rebuild the railway line to the Gold Coast. That is absolutely essential. I would like to think that, when it is rebuilt, it will provide a service for people on the southern fringe area of this great city of Brisbane and also those in Ipswich.

If the line started at Churchill, the terminus of the Ipswich line, and ran through the southern part of Raceview, Redbank Plains, Camira and Carole Park and linked up with the other line somewhere in the vicinity of Archerfield, the people of the State would have a service that they would be proud to use. I believe that at some time in the future we will have to make provision for that important facility.

Whilst I am on the subject of the railways and the cost of rail freights, I think perhaps I should make some further brief comments. I know that any increases in charges, regardless of how or where they are applied, are never really acceptable to the public. That is human nature. I see the Treasurer's point of view. Rail freights have not been increased since 1966. In that period salaries and wages have increased by 183 per cent. The Treasurer and his senior officers are charged not merely with running a service but also with controlling the State's finances. As I see it, the costs of the service provided by the Railway Department were such that it showed a loss of some \$64,000,000. Had it not been for mineral freights, beyond a doubt there would have been a loss of some \$94,000,000. That is the predicament facing the Treasurer. If we are to continue to provide a service—and in my opinion that is absolutely essential—is it fair that, where applicable, the people who derive the maximum benefit should make some additional contribution?

I regret that there are some shortcomings in that philosophy, if it may be so termed. I refer to people in Western Queensland, particularly the graziers, who have without doubt experienced great difficulties during the last 12 months. Because of the long distances involved, increases in freight rates will make their position even more difficult. I realise that the Treasurer has his problems, but I would like to think that some adjustment could be made so that people adversely affected by either seasonal conditions or declining markets could be given special consideration.

I hope that in my reading of the Financial Statement I have not misinterpreted this passage, but the indications are that there will be an increase of 40 per cent. I do not know if a 40 per cent increase across

the board is intended, or if that is to be the average increase. If it is the average, it could well be that some freights or fares will increase by much more than 40 per cent, whilst others will increase by far less. My suggestion to the Treasurer, for what it is worth, is that he give consideration to those people in areas that have meant very much to the State in general.

During the past six days the document we refer to as the Budget has been fairly well canvassed. I have referred only briefly to some of the sensitive areas that affect my electorate. I do this in the interests of the people whom I have the privilege to represent.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD** (Toowoomba North) (5.36 p.m.): In rising to speak in this Budget debate, I am reminded of the way in which the Treasurer's Budget for 1974-75 was hailed throughout Australia by the various States as a brilliant Budget brought down in a time of great difficulty.

**Mr. Moore:** By a great economist.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Yes, indeed. The Treasurer was charged with the responsibility of bringing down a balanced Budget for this State. He tried to do this by increasing the revenue obtained from mining, of both coal and ore, and the haulage of coal and ore in projects that the State had developed over the years. In his previous Budget the Treasurer provided for expected wage increases of 15 per cent. Great as that Budget was, it same unstuck when wages hit a 22 per cent increase and material costs increased by 30 per cent during the financial year. I cite those figures to show how the best State Budget that any Treasurer could bring down can easily be wrecked by the tool of the socialists—inflation. The socialists do their best to strain Queensland's Budget by wage demands, strikes that reduce profitability, and pressure generally on the economy.

This year the Treasurer, who has once again been acclaimed for bringing down a Budget that has been widely accepted as sound and sensible, has provided \$260,000,000 for the effects of inflation on wages and material costs alone. We should not pass lightly over the fact that so much has to be set aside because of inflation. The Federal Treasurer hopes, as he has said in Canberra, that inflation will again be 22 per cent this year. I do not know whether in saying that he was glad that it was not 44 per cent, but certainly he did not say that he wished it was 11 per cent. He simply hopes that it will continue at 22 per cent. It is the fanning of inflation that has done so much damage to the State.

What could be done with \$260,000,000? It is a considerable sum, and not one to be dismissed lightly. It would build 2 600 kilometres of very good double highway in hilly country. It would catch up in this financial year half the total housing lag in this State. That is the effect of inflation;

it makes us do without something that otherwise we could have. While the unions continue with perpetual demands for wage rises—the last increase is not good enough—we will have inflation with us. I wonder, and perhaps we might one day find out, how much of this push for wages is made by the union members and how much of it comes down in an envelope from the top—"Go for more wages." We have seen strikes organised to further hamper the economy. We have seen deliberate huge Budget deficits and over-spending by the Commonwealth and everyone should be acutely aware that while the Commonwealth can do this, no State Government can continually get away with a Budget deficit.

**Mr. Wright:** How many increases have doctors had in the last five years?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I don't know, but I'll bet you do. We are still lagging far behind what some of your fellow unionists get.

Workers are being taxed out of industry. As their wages rise, they are forced out of their jobs, and this is what the socialists are about. They are wrecking the economy. We have more and more people on the dole being supported by fewer and fewer workers. One thing the workers of this country object to is seeing so many of their fellows on the dole when they do not wish to be. The A.L.P. fails to recognise this and that is why there are so few of its members on the other side of the Chamber.

We have seen the economy of Australia further disturbed by a flood of imports. This country, which is one of the greatest in the world, is now importing food. This country helped get food to a great many countries after the Second World War—

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kaus):** Order! There is far too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Now we are importing fish, frozen vegetables and meat. We have seen clothing and even furniture coming into this country—products of which we are quite capable of making all we need. Where does it lead? It leads to unionists being put out of jobs by the fellows at the top in Canberra. Honourable members say, "How can they do this to the Labor Party?" I will tell them. The Labor Party is not representing the workers any more; it is in the grip of some of the very richest people in this country. Honourable members should look around to see who benefited from the cheap imports from Taiwan. Where do we find them? We find them in a store! Before the 1972 Federal election we said, "Why is a man with a name like Myer coming out so strongly in favour of Labor? A big businessman backing the Labor machine!" We thought, "This does not sound right. Could it be that Labor is the true salvation?" The next thing we see our workers are out of

jobs and on the dole or are asking to be retrained under the N.E.A.T. scheme. And what do we see in the big syndicated stores? We have this flood of junky stuff from Taiwan. If one tugs at it, it comes apart. It is made of synthetics. It is not made of wool; it is not even made of cotton: it is synthetic stuff that falls apart. And what do they do in the store? They put a tremendous mark-up on it!

**Mr. Chinchin:** Ken Myer was taken to China by the Labor Party.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Of course he was. It is a put-up job and is all part of a scheme on which I will elaborate later.

So here we have the greatest country in the world going broke. We are spending our foreign exchange to buy clothes and furniture and to buy food when we are dumping the food we produce here. This country has got to take account once and for all of the financial policies that are inflicted upon us from Canberra. Recently we had the Federal Government telling workers that they cannot apply for any more wage increases because, if they are granted, it will put them out of a job, yet this same Government is now telling us that it cannot afford the unemployment cheques for 500,000 unemployed.

**Mr. Moore:** \$39,000,000 a month.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It is a tremendous sum—\$39,000,000 a month. There are 12 months in a year, although it would be 13 if we were unlucky enough to have these A.L.P. fellows with us much longer.

The country has had the R.E.D. scheme inflicted upon it. The A.L.P. came in with promises, promises, promises. A.L.P. advocates ran wild throughout Australia saying, "This is the way to get everything you want done." The R.E.D. scheme has come; the R.E.D. scheme has gone. The Australian Assistance Plan has come, it will go, too. The Australian Government has announced that it cannot afford these schemes.

We had a great scandal in Canberra about an alleged attempt to raise a \$4,000 million loan and persistent stories are circulating that an attempt has been made to raise yet another \$4,000 million. What is the money to be used for? It is to be used to finance the expected Budget deficit.

Let me take some of the Federal Budget figures. I will quote from a document headed "Table 1—Australian Government Budget Sector Outlays and Receipts 1965-66 to 1974-75 and 1975-76 Estimated", which appears at page 132 of the Budget papers. In 1965-66 the total Budget receipts were \$4,744 million, and the deficit under the coalition Liberal-Country Party Government, to help correct conditions prevalent at the time, was \$255,000,000, or 5 per cent of the Budget. In those days a 5 per cent deficit was considered to be very inflationary,

but it was budgeted for to aid and encourage production and industry and to create more jobs.

In 1970-71, again under a coalition Government, the Budget receipts had increased to \$8,098 million, and the deficit—and here is the lulu; it is something of which all the makeshift economists with the big degrees, the tentative creatures of this earth, should take note—was \$10,000,000, or 0.12 per cent of the total Budget. That was brought down by the Liberal-Country Party coalition Government of which it was said by the A.L.P., "It's time to go. They don't know how to govern the country."

The people of Australia, not having seen a Labor Government for 22 years, did not know what sort of horrors it had left in its cupboard to be brought out. Labor had spent 22 years plotting. It had Bills stacked up that were musty and dusty. The moment it came to office, it began bringing those Bills out. This is what happened to the Budgets. A flurry of things were introduced under the two-man Government. It was, if you like, a split-personality dictatorship. One of those men has been replaced. The by-election showed what the people of Tasmania thought of the Whitlam-Barnard two-man Government of Australia.

In the 1972-73 Budget—

**Mr. Wright** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member for Rockhampton does not know what the Government in Canberra is spending. The Budget receipts in 1972-73 were \$9,483 million, with a deficit—here it comes!—of \$709,000,000, or 7 per cent. In 1974-75 the Labor Government got into stride with its policies and implemented them under the law, spending money like water. Nobody could grow trees fast enough to produce all the paper needed to print the money. It brought down a Budget in which the receipts were \$15,264 million with a deficit leading to \$2,567 million, or 16 per cent.

Politicians who were allegedly brilliant economists—Dr. Cairns, for example—said that they did not think that deficits of that size were inflationary. What Dr. Cairns meant was that he did not think it was inflationary enough to suit the socialists. The socialists want to see inflation hit an all-time high. They are happy when it gets up to 80, 90 or 100 per cent. It destroys all property; it destroys all ownership; it destroys all industry and it creates a situation ripe for revolution.

The next Budget was going to fix everything. The 1975-76 Budget totalled \$19,117 million with an anticipated deficit of \$2,798 million. Already that deficit is expected to top the \$4,000 million mark. It could even hit the \$8,000 million mark. Who knows? The Government doesn't know itself. It does not know the cost of any of its schemes. It has never done its homework. It has never researched the cost of Medibank. It

is getting its eyes wiped daily because of the amount of money that is going through on Medibank. Certainly the deficit will be over 22 per cent—perhaps 30 or even 40 per cent—of the total Federal Budget. That is where the taxpayers' money is going. Whatever a person has in the bank or has put away for a rainy day is being whittled away by the Federal Government. It is not just the little old widows or the rich old men who are feeling the pinch. The worker who is putting something away for a house is being diddled left, right and centre by Canberra.

The State Budget has to be a responsible Budget. Sir Gordon is not allowed to print Sir Gordon dollars. He can't put out a Queensland note; he can't make rash promises about money and expect to keep them. His Budget makes provision for the expenditure of \$1,081 million—money that will be well spent.

For all of the Federal Government's huge Budget, with an enormous deficit that could be four or five times the entire Queensland Budget, it is creating unemployment which is now approaching the 400,000 mark. We could have gone into airy-fairy schemes and built new social service empires in the Queensland Budget, but no, the Queensland Budget plans for the expenditure of money where it will create jobs and guarantee employment. I must admit quite frankly that I was terrified for the people in regular Government jobs in this State. I felt sure that a great many of them would get notices saying, "We are sorry to say that people who have been working for us for only two or three years will have to go." But no, this State, a responsible State with a great deal of feeling for its employees and the services they render to the State, has increased the number. We are to have 2,000 more teachers, whereas I felt sure that many teachers would be put off. We are to have 500 more teaching aides and 2,000 more nurses—certainly they are sorely needed—plus 245 more police. I congratulate the Treasurer on behalf of those public servants, who have had their employment continued. Everyone should really take note that the State Budget creates employment but the massive Federal Budget is creating unemployment. That is the name of the game—*inflation and unemployment.*

**Mr. Houston** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** He wouldn't know anything.

**Mr. Houston:** No wonder you had to come into Parliament to earn a quid.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member for Bulimba wouldn't know what I gave up to crush the socialists in Toowoomba. The people up there respect me for it. I am still receiving congratulations and good wishes to carry on the work. I will continue it. I will denounce socialism wherever it is. If any A.L.P. members meet any of their

friends—probably they have three or four of them in the Opposition rooms—they might ask them what happened to Ray Bousen and all the other fellows who followed the party line. They went down the drain because they completely ignored workers, their finances and their housing.

**Mr. Houston:** You'd better make the most of your time here. You won't be back.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** Ray won't be back, either. I have looked up his birthday. He is too old. Unless the A.L.P. changes its constitution, he won't be back.

**Mr. Burns:** You won't be back.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I'll put \$10,000 on it. No takers yet?

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kars:** Order!

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** They wouldn't know. If the Commissioner for Taxation told them how much I earned, they would be surprised and would come and apologise to me.

I have received a letter from the Queensland Graingrowers Association, whose members are genuinely concerned about the effects of inflation, in which it refers to the support given by the Government to graingrowers over the last nine years. They appreciate the relief given to them by way of concessions on rail freights. Rail freights have not risen over the last nine years. In times of drought and rural recession this fact has been greatly appreciated by the rural sector. The Government's support to primary producers has, of course, been a great boon to country towns.

Rail freight concessions will continue to be granted. It must be borne in mind that of the profit of \$29,000,000 from the haulage of coal and ores, one half has been expended on salary and wage increases of railway employees. The payment of subsidies accounts for \$93,000,000. The average increase in rail freights of 40 per cent comes at a time when wages have increased by 153 per cent.

**Mr. Houston:** How much did your charges rise?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member can work that out for himself. He knows what they were nine years ago. He should do a little mathematical calculation.

The increase in rail freights will bring added revenue to the Railway Department amounting to \$24,000,000. In spite of that, the department expects to incur a deficit of \$23,000,000. It is quite clear that, in order to break even, the Railway Department would have to increase fares and freights by 80 per cent.

**Mr. Houston:** You want 80 per cent now?

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member cannot do a simple mathematical calculation. The Treasurer deserves thanks for

subsidising railway freights to the tune of \$23,000,000. Without such generous assistance, the people in western Queensland would suffer greatly.

The allocation to education has risen by approximately 42 per cent, showing that the Government regards education as a matter of top priority. The provision of \$329,000,000 will allow, among other things, for an increase in the number of teachers and teacher aides. It will also enable remedial and special education programmes to be implemented. Moreover, the extremely popular pre-school programme is to be expanded, to the benefit of all sections of the electorate.

I look forward to the time when, upon the completion of the pre-school programme, the Education Department can channel more funds into the erection of high schools. This will allow a number of the demountable buildings that are scattered throughout the State to be dismantled. There is, of course, a need to develop new primary and secondary schools, particularly in developing areas. The Education Department should set aside areas of land on which, in time, high schools can be established. Such foresight would ensure that the ridiculously high enrolments at secondary schools now will not continue. Some high schools have enrolments of 1,000 and even 2,000 students. I suggest that, once a high school enrolment passes a certain figure, the only new buildings erected within the school complex should be those of prefabricated, demountable design. When the time comes that those new buildings are fully occupied, a new permanent school, constructed of brick, steel and mortar, could be established and the students accommodated in the temporary buildings could be transferred to it. Some of our high schools are veritable cities. The Government has done almost as much as could be expected of it in the field of education.

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

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** During the past three years we have seen a flurry of people seeking higher educational qualifications so that they may be more readily acceptable in employment, particularly in the Commonwealth sphere. It is fitting that people should be properly educated for these positions. Although the Commonwealth has insisted on higher educational qualifications, it has done the rural section of the Australian community a great disservice by reducing tax deductions for education when rural areas are severely depressed by climatic and market problems. It was left to the Queensland Government to see that children of the people in the West were, to some measure, able to continue their education and so become better equipped for a wider range of jobs.

In the last two years the budget for the Main Roads Department has been increased from \$126,000,000 to \$152,000,000—an increase of only 16 per cent despite inflation which, compounded over two years,



approaches 40 per cent. Inflation has resulted in rougher roads, fewer new roads and, in the latter half of this financial year, a curtailment of a great number of Main Roads Department projects with the laying off of many men. Private hauliers in particular have approached me to see if more work could be made available for them, but none has been forthcoming. The budget of the Department of Works and Housing has not kept pace with inflation and in May and June of this year many workers were laid off. There was simply no money left after the 22 per cent wage increase and the 30 per cent rise in building material costs. It is to be hoped that increased wages and cost pushes will not use up so much of the Budget as to cause a cessation of work next March.

The Australian Government had reduced the sum available for welfare housing. It is interesting to note that on 20 July 1975, the Federal Minister for Housing (Mr. Riordan) said that no less money would be available than in the previous financial year. But the amount was cut to shreds in the Federal Budget, which reduced the allocation by \$13,000,000, or 30 per cent. That led to a net 50 per cent reduction in Housing Commission homes in Queensland. All this came at a time of unemployment, rural recession and migration of people to the larger cities in search of employment. A tremendous demand has been created for welfare housing. The Federal Government rejected that demand out of hand. It rejected the worker and the man who was out of work. It does not care if people are forced to sleep on the ground or in concrete pipes.

"The Courier-Mail" of 5 December 1974 published a comment that is worth quoting. As honourable members may recall, that was the eve of the election when that great champion and winner of fights for the A.L.P., Gough Whitlam, came to Queensland and cruelled it for so many Labor Party members. It was in these terms—

"For welfare housing, the Queensland Premier was assured of a blank cheque by me at the Premiers' Conference in June. I told him that we would pay for every Housing Commission house for which the Queensland Government could let a contract."

That promise was not worth the paper it was written on. Nothing the man says is worth anything unless it is embodied in a signed, sealed and delivered contract, taken through the High Court and the Privy Council and reinforced by a judgment. The Prime Minister cannot say that his Ministers misled him on this issue. He said it and it was a deliberate lie.

I invite Opposition members to tell Queensland how many houses Queensland will get from the Australian Housing Corporation this

year. Not one! The corporation is an empire-building stunt. There will not be one house built.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dean): Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** It is a curious thing that, since the Labor Party came to power in Canberra, the need for welfare housing has increased by 20 per cent. At the present rate of funding by the Commonwealth Government, it will take nine years to build houses for which there are already applications. The Australian Government have turned their backs on the people who need welfare. They have turned their backs on the homeless. They have encouraged strikes in the building industry. They have singled out the building industry as the means by which the country's economy can be altered. Building is proceeding at only 60 per cent of the industry's capacity. We all know builders who are out of work or who have very little work for their employees. Builders are moving from place to place. The one means by which the country's economy can be boosted is the implementation of a realistic housing programme. Unemployment could be ended overnight; factories could be at full swing; the housing problems of this nation could be solved in two years—there are plenty of raw materials—but that is not the plan of the Labor Party. It doesn't want that.

For two years the Australian Capital Territory has exercised rental controls. The A.L.P. holds that out as a panacea for all housing problems. There is no fair rent on a house that doesn't exist. Since rental controls were implemented in Canberra, the house-building industry has slumped. There is a great demand for housing in Canberra. People are moving there in ever-increasing numbers. In the last three or four years, the population has grown by 50,000. Well-paid public servants who move there from other places cannot get a house. Because of that Labor Party policy the situation in Canberra is worse than it was four years ago.

**Mr. Jones** interjected.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** The honourable member is lucky that Cairns is in Queensland.

**Mr. Jones:** There are 300 people in Cairns who cannot get a house.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** There are 50,000 who have gone to Canberra who are in a much worse position.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is too much cross-firing in the Chamber. The distraction is uncomfortable.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** There is no confidence in the industry and very little capital available. Slums exist. The A.L.P. say that that

is because somebody is charging an unfair rent. I know of slums where no rent is collected at all. Some people have nowhere to go.

Let the A.L.P. members jump up one by one and say where they stand on this one, and I call on their Federal colleagues to do the same. I am speaking about the rental potential tax. A man could work till he has a home and, if it is worth \$25,000, he would have \$1,875 added to his annual income for taxation purposes. The average Queenslander today would pay \$7 a week tax to the Federal Government for the privilege of owning his own home. It is getting pretty close to a breathing tax if ever there was one.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I rise to a point of order. The statement of the member for Toowoomba North is totally untrue. It has been refuted a dozen times by the Federal Housing Minister. I believe that the honourable member for Toowoomba North is abusing the privilege of the Parliament by making untrue statements in the Chamber.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** I am not aware of any denial of that rental potential tax from Canberra.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Dean): Order! I am finding it very difficult to hear the honourable member for Toowoomba North.

**Mr. Jones:** We don't want to hear him.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** But I do.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** One wonders how the A.L.P. could put forward such a policy. It was housing, and the difficulty of obtaining finance for it, that was responsible for tossing out so many former Labor members. Workers came to me in droves and complained bitterly about the great increases in the cost of housing. They had the capacity to pay off their homes, but because of days off work and the closing down of industries in Toowoomba, which has always been a very stable city, they found that they were unable to meet their repayments. When interest rates increased, they found themselves in effect looking straight down the barrel. Many have been pushed out of their homes and never again will they vote for the Labor Party. Labor members cannot see these things, nor do they want to see them. But some of the former friends of Labor members know very well who put them in their present position.

**Mr. Wright:** It is the State Government that controls the building of houses.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** We are not talking about building. We are talking about money, inflation, and the reckless fiscal policies of the Federal Government. Schemes such as I have mentioned compare with the iniquitous proposal to impose a capital gains tax on

a person's estate the day he dies. That proposal has been withdrawn in Canberra, and not before time. There are many schemes that the Labor Party thought up during its 22 years in opposition which I am sure, should they ever gain a Senate majority, will again be brought out of the cupboard.

All of these things have had a tremendous effect on every State Budget. One after the other State Premiers and Treasurers have reeled from the effects of inflation at a rate of 20 per cent and more. They have seen their Budgets torn to shreds. I dare say that Queensland will have a great deal of trouble in keeping to this Budget. It has been hailed as a good one just as last year's Budget was, but, as the Treasurer finds ways of making money and helping the State, the Federal boys will troop up here and take it away. Connor came up here, and from the way he went on one would think that he was the first to discover coal. He rushed back to Canberra and dreamed up iniquitous schemes to cut Queensland's revenue.

**Mr. Hartwig:** The \$6 a tonne tax.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** That is right. He reminds me of the Russian, Popov, who invented everything from the steam engine to the potato.

**Mr. Wright:** Are we supposed to laugh?

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN:** Order! There is too much audible conversation on my left.

**Dr. LOCKWOOD:** There was an attack on smoking and drinking by the Federal Minister of Health and, when the Federal Treasurer looked in those directions, one could sense that they were going for a hike in the Federal Budget, as they did.

I submit that Queensland's is an extremely responsible Budget. It is very popular, as people appreciate that stern measures have had to be taken. I would prefer to see any railway freight increases that may be necessary imposed twice a year, and perhaps the Government could then consider ways and means of subsidising those who suffer the most. It is a sensible Budget and the best that anyone could possibly bring down in the present economic climate in this country.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT** (Chatsworth) (7.29 p.m.): We have been told with almost monotonous regularity that this is the 10th Budget that the Treasurer has brought down. He is to be congratulated not only on presenting 10 successive Budgets but on his political longevity. One who has survived in this place for so long and presented so many Budgets has had a career that is deserving of recognition.

But if it is the 10th Chalk Budget, it is the 19th Budget to be introduced in this Chamber since the Government came to office in 1957, and Sir Gordon is only the second Treasurer in that span of time. The other was his, and my, distinguished predecessor, Sir Thomas Hiley.

If I may speak in a party-political context for a fleeting moment, I take personal pride that Liberals have been entrusted with this portfolio for the long life of this Government. When people try to denigrate my Party and its relationship in this coalition, I refer constantly to the roles its members have played in many portfolios, but particularly in this important portfolio of Treasury. It is because of their very successful husbanding of resources that this State faces such a low deficit and has its finances in such a healthy condition. I believe that as long as this coalition continues—and that will be many, many years yet—by right while Liberals are the junior partner they should continue to hold the Treasury portfolio.

I suppose if one looked at the Budget and tried to present it in a potted form, one could say it presents record income, record expenditure, growth in the sensitive areas of education and health and desirable reform in pay-roll tax and spouse-to-spouse probate.

**Mr. Jones** interjected.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** And just to satisfy my loquacious friend from Cairns—it also includes a 40-per-cent hike in freight rates. I now hope he is well satisfied and that honour is duly preserved. If one can reflect upon the inflationary times in which we live, it is a startling comment upon the Budget that the Treasurer can double the pay-roll tax exemption but still anticipate a growth of \$32,100,000 in this tax for the year that lies ahead, and he can exempt spouse-to-spouse estate duty and still anticipate a very nominal decline of \$500,000; so, while the reforms are very welcome indeed, inflation will more than offset the concessions that are given and, indeed, on that basis small businesses should be able to anticipate further relief when the Treasurer presents his 11th Budget.

If I may be allowed to enjoy the luxury of criticising the Budget for a moment, I suppose that my criticism could be summarised in these terms: there is too much buried in the postage, incidentals and miscellaneous expenditure categories; there is no apparent economic strategy beyond one year; there is no apparent provision for seasonal fluctuation and there are no definitive statements on optimum Public Service growth. I would like to direct some comments to each of these in turn. The first, of course, is self-explanatory. If we embrace the concept of open government, then we are entitled to more detail than merely seeing many hundreds of thousands of dollars embodied under this one category of postage, incidentals and miscellaneous expenditure.

**Mr. Chinchen:** And contingencies.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** And contingencies, as my friend from Mt. Gravatt rightly points out. We are entitled to better than that.

The second category is one the honourable member for Rockhampton touched upon this morning, and by way of private conversation

on past occasions we share an area of agreement on this matter—the question of economic strategy beyond one year. I have always thought that the Budget papers that are presented to us do not throw us far enough into the future; they do not tell us where the Government plans to see this State in five years' time or 10 years' time. I know the Education Department in particular has a research sector which is constantly throwing projections many years forward indicating the obligation of the State in this sensitive area. But I believe there should be similar projections available for all of the areas of government—

**Mr. Chinchen:** Main Roads were doing it until the Federal Government came in with priorities.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** I did not know that. If the Main Roads Department was doing it, that is good and that department in particular should be doing it. But I do not believe that these things should be done in an inflexible fashion or in such a fashion that a Government is permanently committed to them. There should be guide-lines, to show us where the Government hopes to take us, further ahead than merely the year under review.

My third criticism was “no apparent provision for seasonal fluctuations”, and I play the old record once again. Those of us who are of the 1966 vintage—the Minister for Local Government and Main Roads is one—came here and the underlying theme of about the first five Budgets that we heard in this Chamber was that seven-letter word “drought”. Drought was the reason why our finances were in bad shape, why we could not do the things we wanted to do, why primary industry was devastated and why it was making such a slow recovery. It has always been a matter of concern and mystery to me that we can so totally forget the ravages of drought as soon as we enjoy a few good seasons, Mr. Dean, and I firmly believe that the better and more lush the season is, the more we should talk about drought, because the coming of another drought is as certain as the rising of the sun in the east tomorrow. As soon as the rains come, that seven-letter word disappears from our vocabulary once again.

The beef industry is presently depressed. It will come good again, but in the fullness of time it will again be devastated by drought. Even in these trying times, there remain primary industries which, although viable, are continually threatened by the potentially bad season, and I firmly believe that budgetary provisions should be made to encourage primary producers to provide for their own bad seasons. Of course, the Government shared that sentiment in 1966 when it commissioned an inquiry into drought mitigation. Those new members of this Assembly who have arrived from country areas in recent months should familiarise themselves with the documents. They should

look particularly at the sweeping recommendations that were forthcoming and occasionally, even if to the possible embarrassment of a Minister of the day, they should ask questions about them. I believe that when drought does come, the relief and the sustenance that is forthcoming from Governments should be in direct relationship to what the man on the land has been able to do for himself in the good seasons.

Now, of course, it is the easiest thing in the world to indulge in sweeping generalities and, as I have been told on past occasions, it is very easy indeed for a member representing a city electorate to do that. I have been patronised a little on occasions because I have put forward these sentiments, but I believe that there would be some sense of responsiveness from members who have seen the harshness of drought and who agree that the time to talk about it is in the lush seasons. Indeed, I am encouraged by the look on the face of my friend from Gregory. So I labour the point, as I have laboured it many times in the past, that we should look constantly at drought in a State that always faces the threat of drought, and that we should be making continual budgetary provision for it and encouraging the man on the land to make provision for it.

**Mr. Chinchon:** What about fire?

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** One cannot predict fire with the same certainty.

Another criticism that I touched upon was that there were no definitive statements on the optimum growth of the Public Service. Again I treat a theme that I have mentioned before. To the unversed it would seem that the Public Service grows like Topsy. The number of Crown employees has increased from 68,892 in 1965 to 84,260 in 1974—an increase of 15,368. I anticipate the argument of those who will say, “Oh, but there is a big component of school teachers in that”, by pointing out that an increase of 8,660 is attributable to the Education Department. I do not argue against the necessity for growth in the Public Service but I ask: what are the criteria? How is the growth of the Public Service determined? Is an over-all ceiling determined year by year? Is there departmental limitation? Is the size of the Public Service related to population or some other criteria? We don't know, and I believe we should. In the work by Knight and Wiltshire, “The Growth of Public Services in Australia”, the growth is looked at critically in each of the States and in the Commonwealth, and some very revealing figures are given for the years between 1960 and 1970. The growth in the Commonwealth was 41.8 per cent, or 3.5 per cent a year. One is bound to interpose that that study was cut off at 1970. The growth in the last few years would have been enormous, and I will be very interested in the latest figures when they are forthcoming.

**Mr. Chinchon** interjected.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** My friend from Mt. Gravatt tells me that the increase was 12 per cent last year. The growth in New South Wales was 68 per cent, or 5.3 per cent a year; in Victoria it was 34.6 per cent, or 3 per cent a year; in Queensland it was 77.8 per cent, or 5.9 per cent a year. The conclusions of Knight and Wiltshire were—

“The Queensland Public Service, then, has displayed the highest growth rate overall—and this is also true for the longer period to 1971. However, Queensland has been the least consistent State in terms of the change in public service employment each year, growth during the period under review having occurred in fits and starts. The annual fluctuations in the pattern of growth are so wide that effective departmental planning and realistic recruitment projections must have been very difficult to achieve.”

Why were they difficult to achieve? What have been the criteria on which Public Service recruitment has taken place in all of those years, and indeed in the years up to date? It is not unreal to ask why.

The last time the Queensland Public Service was looked at critically was in 1915—60 years ago. In that intervening period, at various times the Commonwealth and every other State have instituted inquiries into the structure of their Public Service, its function, its recruitment and everything else about it. It would be timely for this Government to also look critically at its Public Service—not in any sense of a witch-hunt but to satisfy the Government that it was working effectively and efficiently, that recruitment was taking place along proper lines, that there were proper opportunities for promotion and all the other things of vital concern to the Queensland Public Service.

I was enormously attracted to the inquiry that the Wilson Government commissioned in the House of Commons about 1970. One thing that particularly appealed to me was the provision for the exchange between the Public Service and the private sector so that, by secondment or agreement, public servants would go out into that great big, wide, wonderful world for a determined period and get experience in private enterprise in a like discipline, and conversely people from private enterprise for a while would go into a department of the Public Service to broaden their experience and, also, I would hope, in the process learn a little bit about the functions of the Public Service and probably extend a greater degree of tolerance and compassion towards it. I believe that it would be of enormous benefit to both sides to have that exchange, or, if I may use the popular or in word of the moment, “cross-fertilisation”. Those are things that should be looked at.

I believe the Government would do itself a good turn if it looked critically at all

those aspects of the Public Service. Certainly the Public Service has gained some leavening in the last few years from overseas travel. The latest report from the Public Service Board shows that in the year then under review 101 public servants made overseas trips for departmental reasons and that in the previous year 68 public servants went overseas. I do not know the reason, but it is only in the last two years that such details have been published in the report.

Moving away from those comments yet staying close to a subject related to the Public Service, might I remind the Treasurer of the reason why the man who is now Chairman of the Public Service Board made his overseas trip. It is germane to note that he visited the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America to investigate audit laws and procedures together with modern practices and procedures for Treasury control and the statutory basis thereof in those countries. The man who is now the Auditor-General, Mr. Sewell, made a similar trip for similar reasons. I would emphasise that the purpose of the trips was the investigation of audit laws. Mr. Sewell apparently is less than happy with the audit law that he presently administers. In the last few reports he has pointed out its deficiencies and asked that the Act be rewritten. When we remind ourselves that the Audit Act in this State was first written in 1874, we realise that it is not unreasonable to ask for a new Audit Act.

The Audit Act is described as the Audit Act 1874-1968. In 1968 the Act was amended to include provisions covering the auditing of Government stores and others giving an auditor the right to exempt certain areas from audit and to make others subject merely to spot audits. On other occasions the Act was amended to provide upward variations of the Auditor-General's salary. Apart from that, however, the guts of the Act, if I might use the vernacular, is that part of it which was written in 1874. In the intervening 100 years we have seen computerisation and all types of modern techniques made available to the Public Service. Obviously an Act that was written as long ago as that is no longer completely appropriate. As two senior public servants have travelled overseas to study audit provisions, it is about time we asked them what their recommendations are. I strongly believe that their recommendations have already been forthcoming, and it is of great importance that we act upon them.

The last thing I wish to do in this very brief dissertation—

**Mr. Lamont:** But talented.

**Mr. W. D. HEWITT:** Who am I to disagree? Modesty was never one of my strong virtues. As I say, the last thing I wish to do is refer to the argument that has developed in this Chamber with regard to tax laws and to the suggestion that tax laws flow back to the State. Honourable members will know that my party federally has promised

that taxing laws will be returned to the States. This is a field that is open to misinterpretation and distortion as well as to disbelief and to argument along such lines as anyone cares to choose. It is easy to say that there will be duplicated returns, a higher level of taxation and confusion. I do not think that those general arguments are sufficient. What is needed is a detailed study of the proposals to see if they are applicable to our situation and to resolve whether in fact Queenslanders will be advantaged or disadvantaged.

The important thing is to look at the underlying philosophy. This matter is a simple one to resolve. The questions are merely these: should a sovereign Government be in charge of its own taxing rights? Should it be not merely in charge of them but also have the obligation and responsibility of raising its own moneys? If it is going to spend the moneys, shouldn't it have to raise them and shouldn't it have to tell the people the rate of tax they have to pay and accept the approbation or condemnation that stems from it? Unless a person was a most ardent centralist, he would have to concede the validity of that argument as a broad principle. Putting that aside—people are susceptible to argument and they will have strong reservations if it can be shown that they will be disadvantaged.

In putting this argument forward, our party colleagues probably did the case a little less than justice by not explaining sufficiently the proposition on equalisation. It still has not been spelt out as definitively as I would want it to be. As I understood it, the proposition was that no people would be worse off if taxing powers were returned to the States; that the financial relationship that existed between the States when the powers were returned to them would be preserved and that any shortfall would be made up by way of equalisation grants. It is totally untrue to suggest that there would be two returns. It is also quite untrue to suggest that there need necessarily be great complications.

For those avid readers of "Hansard" who seriously and assiduously follow arguments through its pages and try to draw their own conclusions, I think it is important that there be put in "Hansard" at least the policy that my party has put forward, so that whether they agree or disagree with it they will at least understand it. With the indulgence of the Committee, I shall read these proposals. Reference is made first to—

#### "Revenue-sharing Proposals

"(i) Permanent share of income tax—

"The Liberal and National Country Parties propose to ensure the States permanent access to revenue—raising through personal income tax. In so doing, the existing rights of the less-populous States will be fully protected. No State will be disadvantaged and the relative positions of the States will be preserved.

"The Commonwealth will be the sole collecting agency. There will be a standard tax form, embracing uniform concessional allowances. Commonwealth and State taxes will be separately identified on one assessment so that the taxpayer can see the amount being levied by each form of Government.

"The new system is intended to ensure that the States will have substantially the financial capacity to meet their responsibilities. In exercising their revenue raising powers the States will be expected to accept responsibility to work in parallel with and not in negation of the overall economic management policies of the Commonwealth.

"(ii) Transition of Flexibility—

"A transition period will be provided, involving two main stages:

"Stage I: a calculation will be made of the percentage which in the previous year general revenue grants to the States bore to total personal income tax collections in that year. That percentage will be used to ascertain the share of personal income tax to the States in Year 1, and will also take into account the transfer of such Section 96 grants as should be absorbed into this base figure. In so doing, the relativities of the equalisation grants to the less populous States will be preserved.

"Stage II: In order to increase the budgetary independence, responsibility and flexibility of the States, it is proposed that as soon as possible each State Government will have discretion to impose a surcharge or allow a rebate on the total personal income tax of that State."

There are other headings concerning "Economic Management" and "Local Government" that I shall not labour at this time, but, finally, I think I should put in the record one sentence about "Equalisation Grants", which reads—

"It is intended that the principle of equalisation and the current advantages accruing to the less populous States vis-a-vis New South Wales and Victoria shall be sustained at all stages."

There would be enormous problems in the initial stage in making this transition and the States would have to demonstrate a greater spirit of co-operation than they have hitherto. We would all recall that the Menzies Government on one occasion, when it was under some attack, offered to return taxing powers to the States, and the States, having their bluff called, refused to accept them. We recall that on another occasion the Menzies Government instituted an inquiry as to the grounds on which taxing powers could be returned to the States. The rock on which we then foundered was the matter of corporation taxation. The committee could not satisfactorily resolve whether corporation taxation should be

extracted at the place where it was earned or at the place to which it went—namely, the head office. I believe that all these years later that argument remains substantially unresolved and all the experts I have been able to consult on the matter seem to concede that corporation tax would have to remain vested in the Commonwealth. That could well be the lucrative field that the Commonwealth would continue to enjoy exclusively, on the basis that at least there was some sharing of personal taxation.

I repeat that the problems are not easy to overcome; but, given good will and co-operation on all sides, certainly the solutions can come. There are any number of works on the subject. The most penetrating are probably those put forward by Mathews from the Centre for Research on Federal Financial Relations. The book that I hold up for the Committee's inspection refers to "Fiscal Equalisation in the Federal System". Mathews, of course, has made extensive inquiries and investigations into the taxing fields enjoyed by federal systems overseas. He draws correlation between those systems and our own. He tries to draw what is best from those and tries to leave behind those that he believes do not work in the best interests of those federations.

Certainly taxation remains as the most sensitive issue in our contemporary society. With a proposal now to return taxing powers to the States, I imagine that there will be some disputation about it. But returning to the philosophy that a sovereign Government should be substantially responsible for its own fund-raising, I believe that the basic proposition should be accepted.

Having said that, Mr. Dean, I say that it has been a pleasure to be associated with the Budget debate. Though my comments have been a little more critical than those of some of my colleagues, the Treasurer will know that they are put forward in a sense of good will and active co-operation, and I am sturdy in the knowledge that those on my side of politics can occasionally give the gentle nudge without any fear of retribution.

**Mr. GOLEBY (Redlands) (7.59 p.m.):** By way of introduction to my speech in the Budget debate, I join with other speakers in paying tribute to the Treasurer. I pay tribute not only to him but to the man who preceded him as Treasurer in the coalition Government. I refer to Sir Thomas Hiley. He and Sir Gordon Chalk are the only Treasurers this Government has known since it assumed office in 1957. Both have been duly honoured by Her Majesty for their services to the State.

I would call this a "Look Ahead" Budget. In the main it has catered for all sections of the community. Admittedly, it has some shortcomings and, to some of our electors, some disappointments; but over all it will be for the benefit of most Queenslanders. It gives the lead for return of confidence

to business generally and, in particular, small business. In the State sphere, it has given impetus to the creation of an atmosphere for work, and an incentive to get on with the job. Today, unfortunately, the Federal Government has cultivated the attitude that work is a dirty word. So many are now out of work, and there are also so many who do not wish to work.

I am sure that the Budget has given hope to all Queenslanders who treasure our way of life and the living standards that we enjoy in this State. It has been brought down in a time of difficulties, with inflation running at a high level. Inflation and unemployment have affected all sections of the community, not only the man in the street but all from labourers to those in professional fields. We are all well aware of the way in which business has been affected, together with everyone down the line through the worker to the housewife and the children of the community.

We are going to pay, and pay dearly, for the downturn in the economic life of this nation. When one looks around the community, particularly in the business field, one finds that many businesses have been forced to close and many others have been driven into bankruptcy. We all know that more than 3,000 businesses went to the wall in Australia last year, and unfortunately 700 of them were in Queensland. In engineering, and the professional fields generally, there is tremendous unemployment. What a state of affairs it is when the leaders in these fields find that, because of the business downturn, their services are no longer required! If one walks into the drafting rooms of large engineering consultants today, one sees empty benches everywhere. Very few people are at work, and when one speaks with the leaders in these fields one finds that they do not know where their next jobs are coming from.

I appeal to the State Government not to overlook in its planning of State projects the expertise that is available but at present unused. I feel that it is our duty as a Government not only to employ those with professional expertise in our own Government departments but also to consider private professional practitioners in order to get the very best advice available. When the new port of Brisbane, for which plans have been drawn up, is to be constructed in Moreton Bay, I hope that the Government will make use of private practitioners in this field as well as departmental officers.

High taxation is one of the problems crippling this State. In bringing down his Budget, the Treasurer has virtually had to compete against the Federal Treasurer in attempting to raise revenue for the State. We all know that the sources of tax revenue open to States have been eroded by the Federal Government, and the recent Budget of the Federal Treasurer made the formulation of the State Budget all the more difficult. But the State Government has shown that it is

prepared to battle on and push ahead, and to strive to retain for its people the way of life that they enjoy and to which they are entitled. The State has had to make these efforts against the pressures of those in Canberra who are attempting in every way to push us into socialism.

Time is running out for Mr. Whitlam and his bunglers. The period 1972-75 will be recorded in the history of this nation as the years in which the socialist plague struck Australia. I know that the young people of this land, those in my age group and younger who prior to 1972 knew nothing of Labor Governments, will remember these three dismal years and carry the recollection of them right through their lives. I am quite sure that never again will they return a Labor Government to Canberra. They have learned in three short years what socialism and the socialistic ideas of the Whitlam Government can do to what was once a very prosperous nation.

I would also like to deal with the rural industries of Queensland. In the main the rural industries in this great State have been wrecked. I am not going to use my time tonight to discuss the beef industry. There are others in this Committee more capable than I of explaining the problems of that industry, and we all know just what a torrid time it is going through. But it is not the only primary industry that has been affected by the economic bungling in Canberra.

I would like to refer briefly to the vegetable industry. We all know the problems that confront that industry at the present time because of imports from many different countries, some in the Communist bloc—I should say many from the Communist bloc—and some in other parts of the world. We live in a nation which could feed not only its own people, but also, if given the opportunity, a large proportion of the world's population, and yet the industry has lost its incentive. It has lost the initiative and now it has had taken away from it the very market which it enjoyed locally. I refer to the huge potato imports and various vegetable imports from China, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other Communist countries. There are farmers close to Brisbane who have lost their very livelihood. They have lost their contracts to supply local canneries with gherkins and cucumbers, only to find that enormous quantities have been imported from Poland and Czechoslovakia. This is the type of Government we have in Canberra. Only a week ago industry leaders here in this State and I were told quite bluntly that, while the Whitlam Government exists in Canberra, it is its policy to let people trade wherever they choose and purchase what they wish, and if the local industries cannot compete, they had better revise their economics of production or else go out of business. It is only interested in the citizens of Australia getting cheaper food. It pays no regard whatever to the

plight of those people who have supplied the food needs of this nation for generations.

I mention the passionfruit industry, which plays a very large part in the economy of my electorate. I have mentioned to this Committee before, and I will mention it again, that in the past 12 months the importation of passionfruit and their by-products has increased by 154 per cent. I think today the future of this industry is virtually at a standstill and the farmers are likely to be forced out of business. The only things we have seen prosper in the past three years under the Whitlam Government have been inflation and unemployment. In contrast, this Government will go down in history as the crusaders from the North who set about to regain and maintain stable and sensible government, giving a lead to this nation, and this has been borne out over the past three years. I am sure in the near future we are again going to see the situation of this State playing a very vital role in bringing stable government back to this great nation. I congratulate the Premier and the Treasurer for the lead which they have given in this field.

It must be remembered that a Federal Labor Government has never survived more than one term, except by arrangement during wartime, and I am sure that the reign of the theorists and economic bunglers in Canberra is fast coming to an end and that it will be many, many decades before we will see a similar Government in power.

Dealing with education, I congratulate not only the Treasurer but the Minister for Education on their foresight in providing an increase in expenditure of over 42 per cent for this very vital social need in our community. The provision of 2,000 additional teachers, together with 500 teacher aides, will play a big part in improving the education of the children of this State.

Queensland has led Australia in pre-school education and the establishment of pre-school centres. As the representative of the Redlands electorate, I thank the Minister for Education for providing two new pre-school centres, an opportunity school and a new State school in my electorate this year. Redlands is one of the fastest-growing electorates in the State, with a population exceeding 60,000 and a voting strength of over 25,000.

The increase of 33½ per cent in payments to school bus operators will guarantee their continued operation in that field. Many school bus operators who were travelling over difficult terrain were finding it almost impossible to continue operating, and I am pleased that the Treasurer has heard of their need and seen fit to assist them.

I mentioned earlier the fast growth of the Redlands electorate. I wish to remind the Committee, and in particular the Treasurer and the Minister for Education, of the need for additional high schools. Although the electorate has a population of over 60,000,

at this stage it has only one high school. I think that is deplorable. The Minister for Education has indicated that it is hoped to have a new high school built at Springwood by 1977, and I thank him for that. But there is a problem of similar magnitude at Capalaba. Through no fault of their own, children in that area are forced to travel in one of five different directions—to Cleveland, to various parts of Brisbane, or to Wynnum—to receive their secondary education. Anyone who knows how scattered the population of the area is will quickly realise the difficulties the children face in finding adequate transport to the various high schools. I appeal to the Treasurer and to the Minister for Education to make funds available for a high school at Capalaba. I understand that if a school were built there immediately, more than 600 children in the area would be eligible to attend it.

Much has been said about the hospital system in this State, and down through the years one has constantly heard the cry that a National-Liberal Government would do away with free hospitalisation. In fact, the Government has improved Queensland's free hospitals. Although there is still a long way to go, for many years the free hospital system in this State has been the envy of our southern friends.

I stress the need, as the honourable member for Wynnum did earlier in the debate, for a major hospital to be erected to serve the community in the Wynnum-Redlands area, which is one of the largest sections of population in the State not catered for in any way by a public hospital.

I have seen the Minister for Health on many occasions about the provision of an outpatient clinic for the bay islands. I refer to the islands that have received so much publicity and become notorious because of the tremendous amount of subdivision that has been carried out on them in recent years. In all, Russell, Macleay, Lamb and Karra-garra Islands have 18,000 allotments on them and an increasing population. The people who live there are completely isolated from any medical services. The people of Stradbroke Island have the benefit of an outpatient clinic, and I think it is the duty of the Government to provide a similar service for the people of the bay islands to which I have referred.

I compliment the Treasurer for recognising the service given to the community over many years by the Blue Nursing Service and kindred organisations. The Blue Nursing Service has operated completely as a charitable organisation, raising its funds by an annual door-knock appeal. Like all other charitable organisations and the community generally, it has suffered from inflation. It was found in many centres that, unless help was forthcoming, the organisation would have to close or curtail its service to the community. Anyone who has had any connection with the Blue Nursing Service will know what a wonderful organisation it is and



the service it has rendered to all sections of the community over many years. I compliment the Treasurer for his support in that field.

From time to time the Police Force has been criticised on many fronts. My greatest criticism is that there are insufficient men to carry out the demands placed upon the force. I am pleased that the Police Force is to be increased and that the beat policeman is to be reintroduced in thickly populated areas in provincial cities and towns.

The need for police in the Redlands electorate is acute. I refer in particular to the Redland Shire, with a population of 30,000 of which about 28,000 live on the mainland. Those 28,000 people have a police strength of only 12, which includes the two C.I.B. staff. At least one officer is always away on annual leave, and one quite often on study leave so that reduces the active force in the field to eight, which is a totally inadequate number to give protection to the area. I appeal to the Minister for Police to have a second look at the police strength required at Cleveland. I remind him that other centres with a population less than half that number have a police strength over 50 per cent greater. I feel that the present strength is inadequate in view of the crime rate in the area, particularly breakings and enterings. As a bayside area, the district seems to attract at night the sort of louts that usually are found around the streets of Brisbane. Only last week-end, in the one area at night, two police cars were smashed and rendered useless by two accidents involving hoodlums who, as far as the police were aware, were foreign to the shire. Police protection on the bay islands should be increased. I appeal to the Minister to give serious consideration to establishing a one-man station there to give the islanders some protection. I have already approached the Minister about putting in a suburban man similar to the provision at Jindalee. The densely populated Springwood-Rochedale area has no police station at all. The area is serviced from Woodridge. A population of 20,000 has no local policeman. I suggest that the Minister take a second look at the requirements of that area and consider stationing a community policeman in that area, as has been done at Jindalee.

A thickly populated area such as the Redlands electorate needs police coverage 24 hours a day. I hope the time will not be too far distant when the Minister will have sufficient police staff available to provide that much needed amenity in my electorate.

In 1961 the railway line into the Redlands electorate was removed. Since then we have seen the population explosion that one would expect in a bayside suburb. I strongly urge that consideration be given to the restoration of the rail service to the area. Fortunately, because of the foresight of the then member for Logan, Councillor Wood, in retaining as vacant land the entire 10 miles along which the line was laid, no resumptions

would be necessary to restore the line. In the light of the increase in the area's population, I urge the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer to examine this matter.

**Mr. Moore:** From where would the line run?

**Mr. GOLEBY:** From Lota to Cleveland, as it did previously.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** Why did your Government pull it up?

**Mr. GOLEBY:** I was not a member of the Government then. Ask those members who were. The line was removed at a time when the area had only 5,000 residents. It was scarcely used. Today, however, the population of Redlands is 30,000 and it is increasing rapidly. This justifies the re-laying of the line and also its electrification.

The removal of death duties from estates passing from spouse to spouse is long overdue. I compliment the Treasurer on this forward-thinking move. The imposition of death duties affects every section of the community. With the current rate of inflation, a person's assets increase in value, but the purchasing power of his money remains the same. Under the old system, the estate of almost anyone who owned a home attracted considerable death duties. These are to be completely removed from estates passing from spouse to spouse. Queensland has given a lead, and we must insist that it is followed by the Government in Canberra.

As to local authorities—the increase in the limit on loan borrowings to \$700,000 will be of tremendous aid to local government. Our present financial structure has placed considerable burdens on local authorities that have been unable to borrow sufficient money to provide essential services.

There is a need for additional finance to be made available to local authorities. Nobody understands the needs of a community more than members of local councils.

Members on both sides of the Chamber have referred to the R.E.D. scheme. Whilst I do not decry the purpose for which the scheme was introduced—namely, to reduce unemployment—I am certainly critical of the method by which funds were made available under the scheme. Strings were attached to them and in many instances the obstructions that were put in the way of local authorities meant that they were not receiving full value for their money.

I should like to see local authorities exempted from pay-roll tax. It imposes a heavy burden on local government. Although the exemption level has been doubled—and the Treasurer is to be commended for this—the burden on local authorities is still a heavy one. The doubling of the level of exemption, to \$46,000, will be of great benefit to the small businessman—the man who has a small work-force and who previously was levied with this iniquitous tax.

I now wish to comment on the growth studies being carried out in the Moreton region. Much time and effort are being put into them but, unfortunately, from my observation, many of the vital statistics that should be used in calculating future population growth have been ignored. I was rather amazed to find that the growth rate being used on this occasion relates to the census figures between 1961 and 1971. As all honourable members realise the major growth in the Moreton region (in which a study is under way) took place later than 1971. If we are to get an accurate assessment of the requirements of this area in the future, those responsible for the study will have to look at later census figures.

From information I received when I was on a deputation to Mr. Stephens, I understand that the planned growth rate for the Redlands Shire by the year 2000 is for a population of 32,000. I had to remind the gentleman concerned that the present population is close to 30,000. I do not know what will happen in the next 25 years but there will certainly be an increase of more than 2,000.

**Mr. K. J. Hooper:** You will be long gone by then.

**Mr. GOLEBY:** I will be representing the Redlands electorate for many years to come; the honourable member need not worry about that. I shall see many come and go. My record of serving the people began 15 years ago and I have no intention of curtailing it.

The basis on which the study is being carried out is the belief that people will travel only 10 kilometres to work. Unfortunately, no traffic corridors are being provided in an easterly direction. Unless they are provided, the electorates of Wynnum and Redlands will be seriously disadvantaged. There are corridors to the north and the south but as yet the statistics and figures on which the so-called experts are working make no provision for the eastern freeway. I appeal to the Committee and to the Minister concerned to have a second look at the strategic plan being drawn up. People will live where they want to live; they will not be told where to live. Ours is a free society and no-one can tell me that it is not better to live in the bayside areas with their beauty, charm and climate (with lower temperatures in the summer time) than 20 to 30 miles from the coast.

One thing that concerns me—and I hope all honourable members irrespective of party—is the downturn in Christian standards and morals that is taking place all around us. It is up to each of us as politicians representing the people of the State to see that those principles for which we stand—and for which our forebears stood—are not eroded away, but that we may leave behind us a heritage for our children and a State of which they can be thoroughly proud. It is essential that we use every opportunity to uphold the principles of Christian teaching.

On every hand let us speak out against those who would seek to remove Christianity from our country.

I am pleased to have had this opportunity to speak in this debate. I congratulate the Treasurer on his Budget presentation and I hope that many of the matters I have brought to the notice of the Committee will receive due recognition in the year ahead.

**Mr. LINDSAY (Everton) (8.30 p.m.):** In rising to speak in the Budget debate, on behalf of the silent majority of the Everton electorate I congratulate Sir Gordon Chalk on this his 10th Budget—a record for a Treasurer of this State. Sir Gordon is known in the Everton electorate as the economic wizard of Australian politics. I believe that the title is well deserved.

I will first concentrate my remarks on the Budget and then, if time permits, make some remarks on Queensland's security, both internally and externally, because without that security financial security is literally not worth the paper on which it is written.

The national level of unemployment is one of the most distressing aspects of current economic conditions. At the end of August 1975, 4.6 per cent of the Queensland work-force, or 39,037 persons, could not obtain work. It is interesting that in Australian political history, whenever unemployment has risen over 2 per cent, the electorate blames the party that has failed to supply jobs and throws it out of office. That is why a year ago the Queensland electorate correctly blamed the A.L.P. for the unemployment of over 2 per cent. and gave us the marvellous opportunity to develop what I believe will be a truly democratic Parliament.

The high inflation rate is of equal concern. Australians are presently in the process of pricing themselves out of world markets. Unless we revert to the concept of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, combined with a belief in the dignity of work, as opposed to the trendy notion that Australia owes us a living, we as a nation can forget about what used to be every Australian's right—his own home on his own block of dirt.

In any Budget discussion, it must first be realised that the Government made its Budget decisions on the broad principles that—

- (a) existing State services would not be cut;
- (b) continued impetus would be given to State education services;
- (c) major rebuilding and re-equipping of hospital services would be carried out;
- (d) emphasis would be placed on high-employment capital expenditures such as the new Block 7 at Royal Brisbane Hospital;
- (e) police strength would be increased to include a return to foot patrols;

(f) State taxes for 1975-76 would be increased generally but to a level no higher than the 1974-75 rates in other States;

(Is it any wonder that in recent years Queensland's rate of population increase has been double the Australian average? Queensland, of course, is where the opportunities are.)

(g) The Budget would be virtually balanced.

(Compare that with the money printers—Crean, Cairns and Hayden—who have had a bash at Australia's printing presses over the past three years to the nation's disadvantage.)

It should be realised by the silent majority that State Budgets, because they rely for a substantial part of their revenue on fixed fees and charges, have enormous problems when inflation rages as it presently is raging. In that context, let us consider the enormous impact of the increase to the 18c stamp. The nation has yet to realise the impact and repercussions that will follow the tremendous magnitude of the postal increases. When the A.L.P. came to office only three years ago what now requires an 18c stamp called for a 4c stamp.

The problems of State Budgets are compounded because wages predominate and they have increased faster than any commodity. A few years ago the rate of escalation allowed on the general contingency vote of departments was about 5 per cent. This year, because of inflation, Sir Gordon Chalk and his hard-working and hard-pressed Treasury staff have had to think in terms of an average increase of 30 per cent. What is presently saving Queensland is our Government's foresight in the development of Queensland's fantastic natural resources.

Provided the export coal industry is not subjected to major industrial disruption, record shipments should provide a royalty return to the State Treasury in 1975-76 in excess of \$43,750,000. It should be remembered, of course, that this figure takes account of the effect of the newly announced Commonwealth tax of \$6 a tonne on exported coal, which will cost the State about \$3,000,000 in royalties in 1975-76 and \$5,000,000 in a full year at present production rates.

**Mr. Lester:** And the Federal boys put very little money back in those towns.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** That is true.

**Mr. Lester:** Three per cent in Blackwater.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** The increase in stamp duty on cheques from 6c to 10c comes at a time when the Bankcard system is being introduced throughout Australia. I believe that this system is highly inflationary with Christmas almost upon us. Who will pay the bills after Christmas when the impulse purchases have to be paid for in cold, hard cash? Certainly the State is entitled to the 10c that would normally have been received from each cheque, and I hope that the

Treasurer is successful in the negotiations that, as he indicated in answer to a question without notice that I asked him this morning, he has presently in hand.

The area of education is, of course, vital to all children, parents, and indeed the nation as a whole. I understand that each child at a primary State school costs the taxpayer \$540 a year. After visiting all schools in my electorate on a number of occasions and watching the children at close quarters, I say that if ever \$540 of taxpayers' money was spent in a worth-while way it is on each child in our schools. Each is worth every cent of that sum.

This year's Budget takes a significant step in reducing the student-to-teacher ratio in schools. There is to be an increase of 2,024 teachers by February next. My concern at the practice of importing the North American culture by bringing to Queensland numerous American and Canadian teachers has been expressed before. In my view, we get enough of this culture already through the all-pervasive and very sophisticated medium of television, especially now that it is in colour. I am pleased that the additional teachers who will enter the education system next year will be our own people.

I again advance the proposition that there is a great need in the education system for an understanding of Asia, and sympathy with it. There is therefore a vital need, particularly at the teachers' colleges, for intelligent and articulate Asians. I suggest that there should be in each college one Indian, one Chinese, one Vietnamese and perhaps one Malay, and at least a sprinkling of Asians throughout schools. We are, after all, training children for the 21st century, and I believe that it will see an increasing relationship between Australia and Asia. What better way to bring about a successful relationship than to give our students an early understanding of Asian culture?

Another point on education generally is that we as political leaders should support, and show our interest in, not only pupils but also teachers, for in their hands, even more than in ours, lies the future of this State.

The Budget allows for the continuation of the State's pre-school education policy, and by the end of this year it is expected that 350 units will have been provided, staffed and equipped. Recent research has shown that attendance at pre-school during the fourth and fifth years of age can materially improve a child's I.Q. At older ages, the I.Q. tends to have been formed. This is all-important, particularly in the lower socio-economic areas, where, if we can get young children to pre-schools, we can improve their I.Q. and they can progress materially and benefit as a result. The emphasis, therefore, I would suggest, in pre-school training should be concentrated on the lower socio-economic areas. The present economic conditions in Australia have accelerated the need for pre-schools in our society with the explosion in

the numbers of working mothers. Having visited the excellent pre-school recently constructed at Enoggera, and the equally excellent pre-school at Mitchelton I can say that the money spent in this area is very worth while indeed. It is unfortunate that to date the extent of the Commonwealth subsidy to community kindergartens is not known; these wonderful examples of community initiative and service should know where they are going and be able to plan for 1976. I am pleased that this Budget gives an assurance that the State Government will continue to provide money towards their support.

All members of Parliament who know and work in their electorates would share my gratitude for the excellent work done by those parents who give time, effort and support to the various school committees. I am pleased that this Budget makes provision for a general purpose grant to all primary schools to assist in the provision of items of equipment and miscellaneous services that at present are not made from school committee funds.

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

**Mr. LINDSAY:** Payment will be made on the basis of \$100 per school plus \$4 per student per annum. Equally, it is pleasing to see that provision has been made for the full cost of education services for handicapped children, which will considerably help their hard-pressed families.

The advances in public health, so obvious in the Budget, are due undoubtedly in no small way to the rational arguments presented by the Minister for Health, Dr. Edwards, whose meteoric rise in Queensland politics surely must give a measure of the man's ability and an indication that our Liberal Party supports the truly Australian concept of equality of opportunity.

Expenditure on hospitals this year will increase by 65 per cent in addition to the further \$50,000,000 from the Commonwealth Medibank scheme. The State will provide from its own resources an increase of 36 per cent over last year's expenditure. Staff increases will be approximately 10.4 per cent. Initiatives designed to reduce the waiting time for outpatients in the outpatient and casualty departments will be greatly appreciated.

Subsidies for furnishings in homes for the aged will be increased by 50 per cent as from 1 July 1975. The aged, and in particular the increase in the ratio of aged in the community and the proportion of aged females to aged males, pose one of the most rapidly mounting problems in our Western society. We need to look to an increase in the provision of facilities for the aged and

to educating young people to have compassion and respect for their elders. Certainly we have a vested interest in this subject as we all hope to grow old eventually.

Law and order is an issue which concerns me terribly. I am just not sure where Australia is going in this matter. The offence of breaking and entering, for example, is increasing in plague proportions. I believe that it is the duty of this Government to provide as far as possible for the peace and security of all Queenslanders. Because of this, on 26 August last I asked the Minister for Police—

"In what ways can I and the 'silent majority' of the Everton electorate show our support and appreciation to the vast majority of the Police Force for their past and continuing contribution to the happiness and security of citizens?"

His remarks in answer were pertinent, and I particularly support these—

"Crime is a social problem, not just a police problem that should be everyone's concern . . . Too much is expected of police and until as much is expected of the courts, the schools, the home situation, and the prisons, as is now expected of the police, crime will probably continue to rise."

Honourable members can check my facts, but I understand that 80 per cent of those who are now in prison at Boggo Road are there for the third time. So it would appear that what we are doing at present is developing and enlarging a criminal element by virtue of experience at Boggo Road.

In the light of that, the recent construction of the prison at Woodford is encouraging, because I understand that teenagers—certainly those under 21—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask for the co-operation of the Committee. There is too much audible conversation.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Hewitt. The construction of the Woodford prison will alleviate the problem to some degree, because teenagers, no matter how bad their criminal record, having served a certain period in Boggo Road, will be removed to Woodford to serve the remainder of their term.

I again emphasise the point that at present over 80 per cent of the inmates at Boggo Road are men or women who are there for at least the third time. The problem is enormous, and a criminal element is developing in Queensland in much the same way as it developed in London before the convicts were brought to Australia in the first fleet.

I think it is obvious that the silent majority need to show more support for the Police Force.

**Mr. Wright** interjected.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** I must say that, as a new member, I thought I was blowing into the wind when, in what my sparring mate the honourable member for Rockhampton has referred to as a great maiden speech, I said—

“We need more police, and the police need to relate as individuals with the public. As I walked through Papua New Guinea, through Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam, and more recently on door-knocks in the Everton electorate, I became convinced that the way to identify with the public at large, to become known and trusted, is to walk among them.

“London police still walk, and so should ours. This is not to deny the use of modern technological equipment or the vital necessity for quick methods of transport. Prevention of crime can best be done by combining all available operative techniques; walking is one of these techniques.”

It is very pleasing, therefore, to see that this Budget allows for the recruitment of an additional 315 police officers, together with the reintroduction of police foot patrols in the central city, Valley and South Brisbane areas, as well as in the major provincial centres. I think that the major shopping centres, railway stations, trains and buses would be areas in which the presence of a man in uniform could materially assist in the prevention of crime, and I will continue to lobby accordingly.

I am sure it is of tremendous personal concern to each and every member of this Parliament to see that election promises are kept. I refer honourable members to my question to the Treasurer on 12 March this year about the promise made in his policy speech at the Brisbane City Hall on 14 November 1974. That promise was that parents of students who had to travel on council buses before 8.30 a.m. would be subsidised so that the children could still travel at concessional student rates. In his answer, the Treasurer indicated that I could be assured that the scheme would be implemented within a reasonable period. The Treasurer is a man of his word, and it is pleasing to see that he has honoured that election promise in this Budget.

Inflation has made it difficult for parents and citizens' associations to finalise their plans for swimming pools. The regrettable situation was developing that State schools were being divided into the haves and the have-nots in this regard. My submissions on this subject include those recorded in “Hansard” on 17 and 19 September 1975. It was pleasing to have this Budget increase the maximum subsidy payable on a \$ for \$ basis on expenditure by parents and citizens' associations on approved school projects.

The subsidy for primary school swimming pools has been increased from \$30,000 to \$42,000. The direct result of that, from the point of view of the Everton electorate, is

that the Grovely State School and its hard-working committee—teachers, pupils and parents—are now well on the way to obtaining a pool, as have the Everton Park and Enoggera schools. Equally pleasing was the subsidy increase from \$60,000 to \$84,000 for high school assembly halls. The hard-working committee, students and staff at the Mitchelton High School now have the way cleared for progress with the proposed assembly hall.

My last point on the Budget is a reference to the lifting of death duties on estates passing from spouse to spouse. To the silent majority it would be the most outstanding benefit in the Budget. In our society we have the problem of the aged and ailing mother who is nursed for years by one of her sons or daughters who, as a direct or indirect result, remains unmarried. It would seem unfair if such sons and daughters were further penalised by having to pay death duties on the parent's estate. I ask the Treasurer to add those persons to those entitled to exemption.

I think it is fair to say that there will be those who will feel themselves disadvantaged by the Budget. But in the main, considering the circumstances, it will prove to be a good Budget. Certainly I feel that the silent majority of the Everton electorate will thank God that they are Queenslanders and thank God for Sir Gordon Chalk.

**An Opposition Member:** Who are the silent majority?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I would like a little silence in the Committee.

**Mr. LINDSAY:** My attention now swings to the latest Federal political situation. I preface my remarks by saying that after 16 years in the defence forces of this country, plus two years as a member of the Shop Assistants' Union whilst on the staff of Woolworths and two years as a teacher, I am an Australian first, a parliamentarian second and a member of the Liberal Party third. In the difficult days that lie ahead in the constitutional crisis in which our country finds itself, I make a call to all Australians to remember that we are all Australians first. Certainly both sides of the political spectrum should and must argue its case to the best advantage. As a Liberal let me say that I am extremely proud that it is my side that wants to have the crisis decided by the people. If we are wrong, then let the people say so through the ballot-box.

History shows that extremists on both sides—Left and Right—thrive on similar situations. Throughout history the extremists on both sides have shown a capacity to generate hatred—between father and son, and brother and brother. As politicians we fool ourselves if we think that the silent majority of the Australian people want to be whipped up into a frenzy of hatred just

to support a political viewpoint. All the average Australian wants to do is live in peace and harmony with his mates in this wonderful country. Thousands of us have spent years in the service of this country; thousands more have made the supreme sacrifice to ensure that others could continue to live in freedom and happiness. They should not have made that sacrifice in vain. Let us, the politicians, argue our case to the best of our ability, but let us remember that we are Australians first, last and always.

I am a little concerned about how, in recent weeks, what I have regarded as a traditional Australian institution has been totally eroded. I refer, of course, to the statement made by the Federal Minister for Defence that the cadet system will terminate in December this year. I feel that I should say something about that because, perhaps more than most, I owe a tremendous debt to the Australian cadet system. The cadets started me on my passage through life in that after three years in my school cadet unit I went to Duntroon.

I shall give the Committee a brief outline of the history of cadets in Queensland. The Brisbane Grammar School formed the first cadet unit in 1870, and it was followed in 1876 by Toowoomba Grammar School and in 1890 by Ipswich Grammar School. Drills were held twice weekly, and shoots on Saturdays. There were occasional spells of outpost duty at Fort Lytton. The lightweight from Lytton might be interested to learn this. They also had some interschool exercises.

In 1890 the revised primary school syllabus provided for military training. An Army drill instructor was engaged to train State school teachers so that they could take the pupils in drill and physical exercise. In 1893 the Teachers' Volunteer Corps was formed.

The first State school cadet corps was established in December 1889 at Indooroopilly State School. Miniature rifle ranges were constructed in about 30 schools throughout Queensland. Under Lt-Col. W. H. Halstead, the headmaster of the large East Brisbane State School, as commandant, the Queensland State school cadet establishment rose to more than 5,000. Teachers were trained at special Army camps. Inspectors took the title of colonel or lieutenant-colonel. Head-teachers of schools with more than 30 cadets were entitled to an honorary commission.

Cadets were drilled after school and instructed in rifle shooting, and, when the teacher was keen, given some theoretical instruction in military tactics. Compulsory cadet training was introduced in 1911.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I rise to a point of order. I seek your ruling, Mr. Hewitt. As the member for Everton is reading from a Government publication, shouldn't he acknowledge it, otherwise people who read his speech later on will think he made it all up?

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

**Mr. LINDSAY:** As I was saying, compulsory cadet training was introduced in 1911 for all medically fit boys from 12 to 14 years of age as junior cadets and from 14 to 18 years of age as senior cadets. The primary school curriculum was broadened to provide five subjects: drill, rifle practice, first aid, organised games and swimming. Schools had to choose three of these activities, so it was possible for a school to cut out military training altogether.

Old soldiers objected that the training of the corps was being watered down. In practice it meant that even the smallest school could organise useful teaching in first aid, swimming and physical education.

That is the background to our present cadet scheme. I turn now to the reasons given by the Federal Government for doing away with this truly great Australian tradition, after it has been in existence for over 100 years.

The first reason given is that the level of training given to school cadets brings them up to the stage of only three weeks military training as a regular soldier. Members can either agree or disagree that within about 15 years this country will be threatened again, but in this space age and jet age, all would have to agree that if we are threatened, we will not have three weeks in which to train anyone. It would seem that if cadets bring a boy to the standard of three weeks' military training—remember that at 18 years of age he drinks, drives, votes and bets—that training will be vital in the space age.

The next argument put forward is that the cadet system is not relevant to the defence of Australia. I will not bore honourable members with the details, but I am one person who would never have gone into the Army and remained in it for 16 years if it had not been for the cadets. In my Duntroon class of '58, 46 of the 48 boys had had previous cadet training.

Another argument put forward is that cadets cost the Defence Vote \$9,000,000, and the Federal Government is not prepared to waste such a sum of money. In other words, to save 50c in every \$100, the Federal Government proposes to scrap the cadets.

Another argument is that the 335 soldiers involved in the training of cadets will be able to return to their units. Most of them are older men who, in many cases, suffer from medical disabilities. Many of them were field force men—they are not in that category now—who were seriously injured while performing courageously. They are very experienced and skilful instructors. Although they made an enormous contribution to cadets, I doubt whether in view of their disabilities they will be able to make such a satisfactory personal contribution to the Regular Army.

It is suggested that only 33,000 of the total population of 630,000 in this age group are affected. Throughout recorded history there have always been men, both young and old, prepared to train, fight and die in the defence of their country, their mothers and sisters and the mothers and sisters of men not prepared or able to do that. It is therefore obvious that a voluntary system like the school cadets is a good idea. At some time in Australia's future somebody will have to protect not only his mother and sister, but also the mothers and sisters of those who are unable or not prepared to do so.

It is a valid point that those who are interested, and who believe that the concept is noble, should be given an opportunity to train. It has been argued that only 16 per cent of schools are involved with cadets. It was never intended—and it should not be—that cadet training should be compulsory in every school. Many schools could not cope. As a matter of fact many schools cannot cope now with disciplinary problems in the classroom. Every day the tendency more and more is to follow the American trend. In schools in America guards patrol the corridors, yet the rape and killing rate at schools is on the increase.

In recent years the cadet corps has been encouraged to dissociate itself from training in the military arts. My generation of cadets learned not only to handle weapons but also to respect them. The increase in violent crimes involving the use of weapons and in accidental deaths caused by weapons indicates a greater need in our society to train young people to both use and respect weapons. Last year, by using what I describe as a very "naughty" trick—

**Mr. Jones:** A naughty trick!

**Mr. LINDSAY:** I am trying to keep the tone down. We have to try to be friendly until we get over this political crisis.

By means of a very shabby trick it was suggested that schools should concentrate on adventure training, and that rifles would not be needed. Their rifles were then taken away from them. This year the Federal Government announced that the cadet corps would be disbanded because cadet training had no relevance to the defence of Australia. That was a shabby trick. Many of the principals who went along with it are now regretting that they did.

It was well known that within a very short space of time after the Liberal-National Country Party Government is returned in the Federal sphere on 6 December it will reintroduce the cadet system. I recommend that far from concentrating on some form of adventure training, we should be considering a quite considerable increase in military training for young men in this age group who wish to volunteer for the cadet corps of schools that wish to participate. My reason for saying that—and I am harking back in

history—is that our forefathers were concerned about Asia. They became almost fanatical about it—and that fanaticism was shown to be totally justified when Japan made its sudden attack. The situation to be considered in Australia today is that with air travel Asia has become closer, as it were, than ever.

Reverting to the Budget—it seems to me that we could incur considerable expense in future years if we do not take very great care about the standards of hygiene in the North. I refer specifically to the problem of controlling malaria. It should be understood that one can be on Saibai airstrip in the morning, be bitten by a mosquito, and be walking in Queen Street in the afternoon, having had no medical check in the meantime. There is a very real chance that malaria will enter Australia. Since 1884 Queensland has had some sort of administrative and medical control of Papua New Guinea. We no longer have that control.

I will give honourable members an idea of the change that has taken place. Twelve years ago I was on the island of Daru, which is at the mouth of the Fly River. It is an island of Papua New Guinea. At that time there were about 4,000 natives on the island. The hospital had three doctors and two nursing sisters—all Australians. It even had white sheets. It was a typical country-town hospital. About two months ago or a bit longer the sheets were grey. There was one doctor. She was a 26-year-old Filipino who was about to return home because her husband had not been able to obtain work in Daru. The population had increased from 4,000 to 8,000. The total number of Torres Strait Islanders, incidentally, is 8,000, but they are spread throughout about 60 islands in the Torres Strait. The Daru hospital has one doctor and a 23-year-old Bougainville girl as matron. In view of the recent secessionist activities in Bougainville, I do not know what has happened to her.

Where do we go and what do we do in relation to the newly declared independence of Papua New Guinea? For many years I have been a "Domesdayist" about the future of that country. However, I pay tribute to my old mate Julius Chan (Finance Minister), Michael Somare (Chief Minister), and their dedicated group of parliamentary representatives for the success of the independence celebrations.

I feel that we have a problem in that area. At a time when Papua New Guinea and Asia are closer to our borders than ever before, it is totally inopportune that we should scrub our cadets and think that we are living in a garden of roses.

I have probably detained the Committee for too long, but I conclude with the acknowledgment that the Budget as presented is a very fine document in the circumstances, and I again congratulate Sir Gordon and his staff on its preparation.

Progress reported.

## JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL

## COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 6, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—Register of justices—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (9.11 p.m.): During the second reading I commented on the power given to the registrar to decide whether or not a person any longer desires to be or is capable of being a justice. I ask honourable members to refer to page 3 of the Bill, lines 5 to 8.

I fully accept that some type of registration is needed and I therefore feel that some type of certificate of registration should be given. It will be seen on reference to clauses 11 and 12 that a registration fee is to be prescribed. I question whether a registrar has the capacity to make such an objective decision. On what basis is it to be made? Is the registrar to write to the justice in question and ask him if he wishes to continue? Because a person is no longer registered, after two or three years is he to be struck off? I think that some explanation is needed.

After all, for what reason is a person to be considered not capable of being a justice? We see, of course, that he can be removed from his office if he comes within the provisions of clause 14. We know, for instance, that mental illness is covered. I think everyone would agree that if a justice becomes mentally ill or bankrupt, or if he is convicted of an indictable offence, he should not continue as a justice. That position is clearly covered. But the other part of the clause has me wondering what is meant by "no longer capable of being a justice." Moreover, how will the registrar be able to make such an assessment? The Minister no doubt has some views on this matter, and I should like to hear them.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.12 p.m.): People who are justices of the peace already indicate from time to time that they do not wish to continue in that office. As honourable members know, a person who is made a justice retains that office for the remainder of his life, or until he commits an offence that warrants removal from office or indicates of his own volition that he no longer wishes to be a justice.

A person can relinquish the office for a number of reasons. The duties, for instance, may interfere with other arrangements that he has made. He could be leaving the country or the State permanently. His physical condition could be such that he no longer wishes to be involved in any exacting duties. He may simply want to relinquish the office for personal reasons that are not generally made known. It is open to justices

now to have themselves removed from the list. When that occurs in the future, in due course they will be removed from the register.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (9.14 p.m.): I accept the Minister's explanation. However, if that is the case shouldn't there be an addition, such as "if so advised", in line 8? Otherwise we put the total responsibility for such a decision on the registrar. The Minister has, of course, made a very good point, because if a person says, "I no longer want to be a justice. I no longer feel capable of doing the job because of incapacity," or if he is leaving the State or if he does not want to continue for any other reason, he should be taken off the list. But if honourable members look closely, they will see that the clause reads—

"Provided, however, that an entry shall not be so made and a certificate of registration shall not be so issued in any case where the registrar is satisfied that any such person is no longer desirous or capable of being a justice."

I think that is too open. I realise that this is a late stage to move any amendments, so perhaps the Minister will look at this at a later stage. I certainly do not want the registrar having this total power simply to decide this matter without a justice being involved in discussions or in fact making application to be removed from the register. I realise that it is difficult to do anything at this stage but I feel that the provision is too open-ended.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8, as read, agreed to.

Clause 9—Justices by virtue of office—

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.16 p.m.): Honourable members might recall that the honourable member for Rockhampton indicated that he wished to move an amendment in relation to members of the Legislature automatically becoming justices of the peace. I said in the debate on the second reading that I would have to consider that proposal in the light of his submission as I had not done so prior to that time. This has been done and I indicate to him now that I am not in a position to accept his amendment.

At the same time the question arises regarding the automatic acceptance of chairmen, mayors and lord mayors of local authorities as justices of the peace. No doubt the honourable member is aware of the history of these matters. Presumably back in the dim ages of history the chairmen of local authorities were more or less kings in their own domain. There was then no universal franchise, and very often their positions were almost hereditary in England. This system has been more or less handed down over the years.



Legislation in a number of other States provides that chairmen of local authorities are automatically justices of the peace. I am sure that most of the chairmen of local authorities in this State are not aware that they are justices of the peace. A number of them, if not a large number of them, would in fact have been justices of the peace in their own right prior to going into local government and most of them would qualify in that category. If it is reasonable that members of the Legislature should not automatically become justices of the peace, it is equally reasonable that political heads of local government should be in a like category, and that is the view of the Government on the matter.

I propose to move the related amendments that I have circulated, and presumably I will have to move them separately.

**The CHAIRMAN:** That is correct.

**Mr. KNOX:** Therefore I move the following amendment—

“On page 3, omit all words in line 35.”

**Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (9.18 p.m.):** The Minister did give some notice of his concern about this matter. Even though we realised that there would be difficulties with chairmen, mayors and lord mayors of local authorities, I had hoped that the Minister, instead of being somewhat negative and deleting a provision that already exists and has caused no trouble—I do not think it has because I have never heard any complaints about shire chairmen doing anything wrong or breaking the Justices Act—

**Mr. Moore:** Most of them don't know.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Maybe that's right, and I take the point. It was also made by the Minister. I think we all agree that most of them might not know. But there have never been any problems and possibly we are using a sledge-hammer to crack a nut. Maybe this is the problem. Let us go back to the reasons why these persons hold these positions. The Minister explained the history to us, but I think there is perhaps this business of availability—

**Mr. Moore:** They might not pass the test, anyway.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Maybe so, but there is this aspect of availability. Chairmen of shires are extremely well known. We accept that at the grassroots level they are known by everybody. Mayors, too, probably are better known than many members of Parliament. From what the Minister said, I think it is possible that people do not know that the chairman of a shire is a justice of the peace. In spite of that, they would get in touch with him and say, “Look, I need this document witnessed,” and he would say, “I can do it”, or, “I will arrange for it to be done.”

I am at a bit of a loss to know why the Minister has moved the amendment. I am wondering whether in fact it is to negate the argument for the amendment that I intended to move, because admittedly I was basing my amendment on the fact that clause 9 included chairmen, mayors, lord mayors, and so on. It is, of course, a matter of numbers but I wonder whether the Minister has made a valid point.

**Mr. Moore:** It is another way of doing it.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I ask the honourable member to wait a minute.

What the Minister is saying is that a chairman of a shire council or a mayor should not be a justice of the peace, while a simple “clerk employed as an officer of the Public Service of Queensland in an office of the Supreme Court, a District Court or a Magistrates Court” should automatically be a justice of the peace by virtue of his office. I wonder whether there is a real balance here.

**Mr. Burns:** The clerk of the court?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** We are not talking now about the clerk of the court or the registrar of the Magistrates Court but about a clerk—a person employed in the Public Service. If we are going to say that a clerk should hold this office and act in this capacity but that a lord mayor or a mayor should not and that a member of Parliament should not—

**Mr. Knox:** We are not saying that.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** You are virtually saying it.

**Mr. Knox:** No. It is quite a different situation.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I suggest that the Minister should make that point clear. The effect of the Minister's amendment is to prevent these particular categories in the community—civic leaders, democratically elected by the people, who have majority support—from becoming justices of the peace by virtue of their office but to say that a clerk who is an officer of the court should be a justice of the peace.

I should like to hear the views of other honourable members on this matter because I am not sure that it is a wise move. I think that the Minister should have gone the other way and increased the categories of people in this clause by adding members of the Legislative Assembly. I hope that other honourable members will express their views.

**Mr. FRAWLEY (Murrumba) (9.22 p.m.):** I support the amendment proposed by the Minister because I do not believe that members of Parliament should be justices of the peace simply by virtue of their election to this Assembly.

**Mr. Wright interjected.**

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I know what the amendment is. I do not believe that anyone who is elected either as a member of a local authority or as a member of Parliament should automatically become a justice of the peace by virtue of his office. I have always held that belief. If it is good enough for an ordinary member of the public to be investigated to ensure that his character is exemplary and that he is fit to be a justice of the peace, I think it is also good enough for mayors and shire chairmen to be investigated.

I do not want to point the finger at anybody in particular, but I recall that in Cairns some time ago the chairman of the local council was thrown out of office for malpractice. That is just one case in point. It could happen again.

**Mr. Burns:** Many clerks are sacked, too.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I know. But I believe that chairmen of shire councils and mayors should be prepared to undergo the same investigation that an ordinary member of the public has to undergo to become a justice of the peace. I cannot see anything wrong with that. If they are prepared to accept the office of chairman or mayor, they should be prepared to undergo such an investigation. They are placed there because the public has confidence in them. If they want to become justices of the peace, they should be prepared to undergo investigation in the same way as anyone else.

**Mr. Wright:** What about an ordinary clerk?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** This is the clerk of the court.

**Mr. Wright:** It is not the clerk of the court. Have a look at the amendment.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I support the amendment moved by the Minister. I think it is a very good one. I have always believed that everyone should be in the same category.

**Mr. JONES (Cairns) (9.24 p.m.):** I oppose the amendment principally because a chairman of a shire or mayor is readily available. He is an elected representative of the people. He stands for office and is judged on his performance. In fact, a mayor would probably be better known and more closely judged than quite a number of other elected representatives. He is available at all times and is performing public duties day by day. His is a public office and he is probably more available than the average justice of the peace.

If carried, the amendment could cast some aspersions on the office of mayor. The honourable member for Murrumba mentioned the particular instance of a mayor of Cairns who was convicted of an indictable offence. If he were a J.P. by virtue of his office, the fact that he was convicted of an indictable offence would automatically disqualify

him. I think it would be agreed that most holders of mayoral office are held in high esteem. The amendment, which the Minister has introduced at short notice and without prior circulation of it in local government circles to obtain opinions on its desirability, denigrates the office of mayor and reduces its status. The amendment has not been canvassed widely. All in all I believe that agreement to the amendment would create a dangerous precedent. I feel that the matter should be deferred until such action is taken.

**Mr. GIBBS (Albert) (9.27 p.m.):** I support the amendment. I do not believe many mayors know that by virtue of their office they are automatically J.P.s. In any event, I do not think the amendment casts any aspersions on their ability or anything else. No doubt the present mayors will be informed of what has happened and will be given an opportunity to be nominated for the office of J.P. If they can stand up to the same rigid screening that others have to go through to become a J.P., they would be entitled to become one. Because they do not want the extra work, many of them do not want to be a J.P.

**Mr. Wright:** What about the "clerk employed . . .?"

**Mr. GIBBS:** No doubt the Minister will explain that in due course and it will be quite clear. The clerk in the courts is doing a service to the public. I am talking about line 35 at present, and I am satisfied that the amendment is desirable.

**Mr. GYGAR (Stafford) (9.29 p.m.):** I support the amendment. This is not a downgrading in any way of elected representatives. All we are doing here is recognising a fact that has existed ever since the office of J.P. was created, that is, that it is a quasi-judicial, semi-judicial type of function. What we are providing is that certain people will be granted that power and responsibility by virtue of their office. If any other person wants to be a justice of the peace, he should face the normal screening, whether he is elected to local government, State Government or anything else. As to clerks—it is quite clear that in the nature and the execution of their duties, clerks of the court exercise a judicial type of office. It is a delegated office whereby, working in conjunction with the courts, they are exercising a judicial function and power in certain of the things they do. The amendment is a rationalisation of the appointment of justices of the peace by virtue of office down to that category of person. It is quite logical and it is perhaps something that should have been done before. What we are doing is recognising the office and bringing it into line with what we have done all the way down the line, so that only these officials are granted this power by virtue of their office.

**Mr. JENSEN** (Bundaberg) (9.31 p.m.): I am not satisfied with the amendment. I should like the Minister to make it clear. His amendment is that we omit from line 37 the words "clerk of the court, chairman, mayor or lord mayor", and substitute the words "or clerk of the court".

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member is moving onto the next amendment. At the moment the Committee is discussing the amendment that all the words appearing in line 35 be omitted.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Is the Committee discussing only line 35?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Yes. I will reserve to the honourable member the right to speak to the second amendment.

**Mr. JENSEN:** Can't we discuss line 33?

**The CHAIRMAN:** No. The Committee is debating the amendment to omit all words in line 35. The discussion at the moment is confined to that.

**Mr. JENSEN:** It is ridiculous to omit all words appearing in line 35 while retaining the words appearing in line 33 and in other lines.

**Mr. Wright:** You can refer to line 33.

**Mr. JENSEN:** I am doing that. At line 33 we see "clerk employed as an officer of the Public Service of Queensland in an office of the Supreme Court, a District Court or a Magistrates Court". What I want cleared up is whether the "clerk of the court" referred to is the officer appointed as clerk of the court or any clerk at all who is employed in the court. I should like the Minister to clear that up, or the whole amendment is ridiculous.

**Mr. BURNS** (Lytton—Leader of the Opposition) (9.32 p.m.): I oppose the amendment.

**Mr. Frawley:** Why?

**Mr. BURNS:** Because the positions of "chairman, mayor or lord mayor of a local authority" are ones whose occupants have been granted the right to be justices of the peace. I have not heard any explanation as to why this line should be taken out. It is not good enough to say that it has been in there for quite some time and that we are now going to remove it. After all, the Minister's committee has examined the Bill and it has been printed. Tonight, out of the blue, the Minister decides that, because it has been suggested that members of Parliament should automatically be appointed justices of the peace, instead of appointing them as justices by virtue of their office he will remove from the Bill the right of appointment of other elected persons. As justification, apparently, he says they should face up to the same test as anyone else.

The honourable member for Stafford spoke about the semi-judicial and quasi-judicial functions of a justice of the peace. As I see the position, a justice is a commissioner of oaths. All he does in most circumstances is witness someone's signature.

I have commended the Minister for having stressed that people should be able to find justices of the peace. It seems that those persons who apply for appointment as justices move around a lot. In a country town, for example, the local bank manager, Primary's agent or Dalgety's agent applies to be appointed as a justice of the peace and, having been appointed, moves on to another town. The man who replaces him in his position applies for appointment, and so it goes on. They apply because their position and employment demand that they be justices of the peace.

Most people who come to me say that they want to be justices of the peace because they need to be justices in their work. My argument has been that, instead of appointing all sorts of persons because they find it convenient in their employment to be justices of the peace, we should appoint persons who hold certain positions. For example, each headmaster of a State primary school or of a State secondary school should be a justice of the peace. He should be able to attest oaths. Another standard should be set for those persons who will sit on the bench. At this stage I am talking about witnessing signatures which, as I see it, is 80 per cent of the work of justices. Comment has been made on the number of justices who serve on the bench, but I do not know too many of them. How many justices of the peace do honourable members know in their areas who do that? I travel around the State on occasions and I have not seen many of them.

**Mr. Goleby:** My father did.

**Mr. BURNS:** That may be so. We hear some wonderful stories about the bush lawyers who have been put onto the bench and the rulings that they have given.

**Mr. Moore:** Are you talking about Nugget Jesson?

**Mr. BURNS:** I could talk about a number of people.

One of the best yarns in this context relates to the two J.P.s who tried each other for drunken-driving. The first sentenced the other to a month's imprisonment and fined him \$500. The second imposed a sentence of six months with a fine of \$1,000. When the second J.P. was asked, "Why did you hit me so hard?", he said, "This is the second such offence this morning. We have to try to stamp it out. It's becoming too prevalent." We hear many similar yarns.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The honourable member is getting away from line 35.

**Mr. BURNS:** I am not.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I am saying that the honourable member is.

**Mr. BURNS:** I shall not argue with you, Mr. Hewitt.

I make the point that instead of taking the opportunity away from these people by deleting line 35, we should retain the provision, extend it further and make appointment automatic for certain positions.

Whilst I have read with some interest the Minister's suggestion that J.P.s are to be indicated on the electoral rolls and that a list is to be produced, the Minister knows that it is very difficult to obtain an electoral roll. At the same time, it is very hard for me to find J.P.s in my own area, let alone in another area. All the proposals in the world about signs, stamping on the forehead and so on, which we have heard about in this debate, could be avoided if we adopted the far more simple proposal of adding other positions, such as head-masters of secondary and primary schools. People in a town could be told, "If you want to get a signature witnessed, go to the head-master, the shire chairman," and so on. Maybe we should change the whole principle of calling them justices of the peace. All that the Minister is doing—and without justification—is taking this right from people who have had it for years.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.38 p.m.): So that members will understand the philosophy of these appointments, I think I should refer to the earlier debate. It may be recalled that when the honourable member for Rockhampton first proposed that members of the Legislature should automatically become justices of the peace, I pointed out that it is easier to be eligible as a candidate for membership of the Legislative Assembly than it is to be eligible as a nominee for appointment as justice of the peace.

**Mr. Jensen:** In what way?

**Mr. KNOX:** It is easier because the qualifications for appointment as a justice of the peace are very much higher than those required of a person who may be a candidate for the Legislature.

It is true that political parties and the electorate sort out a number of candidates. Those who are less socially attractive do not get endorsed by the political parties and do not get elected. I know, as I am sure all honourable members do, of candidates who, because of their background, have been rejected as justices of the peace. But they are on the roll and have done nothing to preclude them from being members of this Assembly. In the past some people who were elected to this Parliament—I am not saying this about any member who is currently a member of this Chamber—would never have been appointed justices of the peace. It seems to me that it is no skin off anybody's nose in this or any future Parliament that a

member of Parliament wishing to become a justice of the peace has to observe the same rules as any other person in the community. His mere election on a popular vote should not be regarded as giving him a privilege which the community at large does not have. I think there is merit in that view and that is why I have repeated what I said earlier. I am a justice of the peace of many years' standing, as quite a number of other honourable members are. I am sure most, if not all, members would have no difficulty at all in becoming justices of the peace.

**Mr. Jensen:** What about the clerk of the court? You are automatically make him a J.P.

**Mr. KNOX:** Let us have a look at that position. That has been raised by two members of the Opposition. The situation is presently that all clerks in the court—not clerks of the court—regardless of their status in the courts are made justices of the peace. That is the situation now. It has been the situation for many years. Sooner or later—it is very often sooner that later—these men and women in the various courthouses in the State find themselves obliged to witness documents or to carry out court functions either in an acting capacity or in some other way.

**Mr. Burns:** If a clerk was convicted of drunken driving, would he still be employed?

**Mr. KNOX:** As a clerk, yes. He could become a magistrate.

**Mr. Burns:** But if you applied to be a J.P. and had a conviction for drunken driving, you would not be appointed.

**Mr. KNOX:** Not necessarily. Not automatically. It depends on the frequency of offences and that sort of thing—the whole traffic record.

**Mr. Burns:** This clerk would be treated differently.

**Mr. KNOX:** A public servant in this field who had a very bad traffic record would be well advised to get out of the court system and into some other part of the Public Service, because his chances of promotion would be very slim. That is a different situation altogether. His chances of becoming a justice of the peace could also be slim.

**Mr. Burns:** He gets it because of his job.

**Mr. KNOX:** He could have his commission revoked by the Governor in Council.

**Mr. Burns:** Have you ever revoked any?

**Mr. KNOX:** Not to my knowledge. It may have happened in the last 100 years but certainly not in my time. Nevertheless, I personally know of two or three clerks in the court who, because of the background of their driving offences, have not been justices of the peace. However, because this happened back in their youth, they would not be ineligible ultimately to become magistrates.

**Mr. Burns:** They are treated differently from the ordinary member of the public.

**Mr. KNOX:** This is their career. They are setting out to become magistrates. They hope to become magistrates. Whether they will, we don't know. They are working in the courts and sitting for examinations with a view to becoming magistrates. I am quite sure that many legal people who committed social indiscretions in their student days have ended up as judges—in the Supreme and District Courts and the county courts of this nation. I will not say in the High Court, as that is a delicate area.

**Mr. Burns:** What about bushrangers?

**Mr. KNOX:** There are also some leading clerics in the community who committed social indiscretions in their youth and have succeeded in becoming bishops. There are also politicians who have been in trouble in their time who have become Leaders of the Opposition. No doubt they have redeemed themselves in many other ways. Let us not perpetuate the sins of the past for ever, if indeed they are only sins and not serious offences.

All clerks serving in the courts at the moment are made justices of the peace in order to carry out their duties in that office. Making it automatic saves administrative procedures and makes sure that the matter is attended to.

Lord Mayors and mayors have not automatically been justices of the peace. That was proposed in the amendment.

**Mr. Burns:** In the Bill?

**Mr. KNOX:** Yes. Only the chairmen of shires were automatically justices of the peace. Mayors of cities and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane were not automatically justices of the peace, and the proposal was to make them justices. However, we have changed our minds, and we do not intend to proceed with that provision.

**An Opposition Member:** What was the reason for changing your mind?

**Mr. KNOX:** We had not thought very much about it until the honourable member for Rockhampton raised the question of members of the Legislature automatically becoming justices of the peace. A member of the Legislature is higher in the table of precedence than mayors and shire chairmen.

**Mr. Jensen:** You wouldn't think so sometimes.

**Mr. KNOX:** From the behaviour of one or two members on the Opposition benches, I quite agree. If it is proper for members of the Legislature, mayors, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, and shire chairmen to be justices of the peace, I see no problem in their attaining that office. We are not, as the honourable member for Rockhampton suggested, excluding them from becoming justices; they have equal opportunities with all

others in the community. I hope that that explains the Government's view. If there are any other questions, I shall endeavour to answer them.

**Mr. JONES (Cairns) (9.46 p.m.):** I take issue with the Minister on this point. I should like to know whether the Local Government Association has been made aware of this proposal or has had its opinion sought on it. I recall very early in my political career making representations on behalf of a mayor of Cairns, who was not of my political ilk, and I was advised that he was automatically a justice of the peace. I made those representations, I think, to the Minister for Justice who preceded the present Minister.

**Mr. Knox:** I misinformed you. It is in the definitions. He is regarded as shire chairman.

**Mr. JONES:** I have proved that point.

I now take my other point. Justice of the peace is a traditional office. The mayor of a city or the chairman of a shire is elected as the first citizen of his community. This is the point that I want to make. He is always recognised as having that position. He is supreme in his own little area. He is a big frog in a very small puddle. I feel that if we reduce his standing, we will be doing him and his office a disservice. The office of mayor of a city or chairman of a shire goes back a very long way in British tradition and if we reduce the status of this office by such an amendment I feel that we will be doing a wrong.

In one fell swoop, without reference to the organisation that represents local government, we are going to make a decision tonight that I believe is incorrect. The office of mayor or shire chairman is well respected and well regarded, and the duties attaching to it are very important indeed. I believe that a mayor or shire chairman in the execution of his duties is certainly a justice of the peace. He is the first and most important citizen of the community, and I do not believe that he should be reduced in status by an amendment put before us.

**Mr. WRIGHT (Rockhampton) (9.50 p.m.):** I agree with the honourable member for Cairns. Section 8 of the Justices Act 1886-1974 is headed, "Chairman of Local Authorities to be justice." The section reads—

"The chairman of a Local Authority shall, by virtue of his office and without any further commission or authority than this Act, be a justice of and for the State."

I heard members of the Government stand up here during the debates on the introduction and the second reading and stress the importance of making sure there are plenty of justices in country areas. They said, "We can't cut back the number because we

have to have them available to the community." Yet tonight four of five of them—Liberals except one from a semi-rural area who belongs to the National Party—are quite prepared to change this. They cannot have it both ways. Surely if honourable members opposite say it is hard to find a justice of the peace, then the chairman of the local authority is the logical man to have as a justice of the peace.

**Mr. Frawley:** You can never find them; they're never home.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** It really pleases me to hear the National Party deriding their own shire chairmen throughout this State because they're the ones we're talking about. I doubt that very many chairmen of shires would be Labor supporters. There may be a couple, but I don't think there are very many.

**Mr. Frawley:** What about Caboolture?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I should think that the bulk of the chairmen are National Party members.

**Mr. Jensen** interjected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I take that interjection. One knows the number of members who come into this Parliament after acting as shire councillors or shire chairmen, so it is passing strange that one moment—

**Mr. Frawley:** Are you doing this for Rex Pilbeam?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I don't mind. We can go on about Rex Pilbeam and how much he does for local government. I don't think we should knock him. I am quite happy to see him become a justice.

**Mr. Frawley:** You can nominate him for it now.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I could too, but he has never requested it and I will not go into the reasons.

**Mr. Frawley:** I gave you a chance.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** But I think it is strange how honourable members opposite say they need to have justices available but now they say the chairman should not be one.

**Mr. Knox:** You keep saying that we are saying that chairmen of shires should not be justices of the peace. No such proposals have been forecast.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I shall rephrase it, Mr. Hewitt, for the Minister's sake. The Minister is saying they should not be justices of the peace by virtue of their office. Government members say that this has applied for many years, that it is hard to find a justice and that in country areas it is vital that these justices be available. I accept that it is essential to have some consistency and availability; but really, regardless of the comments of the honourable member for Murrumba and the attack he made on shire

council chairmen, who is better and who is more available than the chairman of the shire? I think it is wrong. We have not got the numbers to succeed on division but at least we on this side of the Committee will be opposing the amendment. We will not continue with our proposed amendment because it is quite obvious we would not win. But I really wonder whether in fact the Minister has engaged in this exercise tonight simply to avoid accepting an Opposition amendment. We have had a couple of breakthroughs over the years, but I start to wonder because there are many arguments for making us automatically justices and many arguments for the automatic appointment as justices of chairmen of shires, mayors and the lord mayor, too. I think this has been proved. Government members say that they are prepared to accept that any clerk employed as an officer of the Public Service of Queensland in an office of the Supreme Court, a District Court or a Magistrates Court should automatically be a justice without being checked out. If that is so, then surely the chairman of a shire should be; a mayor should be and a lord mayor should be, and surely members of Parliament should be. We will be opposing the Minister's amendment.

**Mr. SIMPSON (Cooroora) (9.54 p.m.):** I think the honourable member for Cairns answered this point when he said he inquired about making the chairman of the shire a J.P. and then found he was automatically one. This is an indication that there are many who did not know this was available to them.

**Mr. Jones:** He was a Liberal.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** It does not matter what he was.

**Mr. Knox** interjected.

**Mr. SIMPSON:** That's right. That is not the criterion. We have shire chairmen who are so busy with their jobs in local government that they are hard to get hold of. Surely a standard should be set that will still enable these people to become justices of the peace by going through the normal procedure. The amendment will not in any way prevent them from becoming justices of the peace.

Amendment (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.56 p.m.):** I move the following further amendment—

"On page 3, line 37, omit the words—  
'clerk of the court, chairman, mayor or lord mayor,'

and insert in lieu thereof the words—  
'or clerk of the court,'"

Amendment agreed to.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (9.57 p.m.): I move the following further amendment—

“On page 3, line 43, omit the expression—

‘(viii)’

and insert in lieu thereof the expression—  
‘(vii).’”

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 18, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Clause 19—Functions and jurisdiction of justices—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (9.58 p.m.): Honourable members will recall that at the introductory stage and on the second reading, I made a point of stressing the importance of educating justices of the peace. Two days ago, I had as my guest in this building a Church of England minister from my area who is very concerned about Aborigines. He brought to me a couple of Press cuttings that I think emphasise better than anything I could possibly say the need to ensure that justices of the peace who serve on the bench know what they are doing.

The first is from the Rockhampton “Morning Bulletin” of 21 August 1975, and it says—

“Blackwater—Two Aboriginal youths charged with evading a rail fare were sentenced to two months’ gaol when they appeared in the Blackwater Magistrate’s Court yesterday.”

I do not wish to have the names of the men recorded, so I will not read them out. The article continues—

“They had caught the train at Woorabinda and had travelled to Blackwater.”

In other words, they had jumped the rattler.

**Mr. Lowes:** A very prevalent offence.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** They were sentenced to two months’ gaol for evading their fare.

In the Rockhampton “Morning Bulletin” of 26 September 1975 it was reported that another man, 26 years of age, was fined \$8, to include \$3 fare, or four days’ gaol, for evading payment of a taxi fare.

In one instance a magistrate dealt with the case and assessed the offence as being a minor one and imposed a fine of \$8. In the other instance, two justices in Blackwater had two Aborigines brought before them and sentenced them to two months in gaol. Surely that is unfair.

**Mr. Moore:** Had they robbed a bank before that?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** They did not have legal assistance or representation. Unfortunately, 28 days has now expired. I think that is a pity, because I believe that if the matter had gone before a magistrate or had been taken on appeal to the District Court—I asked

the honourable member for Brisbane about this, and he said there would be a right of appeal to the District Court within 28 days—perhaps the two men concerned would not have gone to gaol for two months.

That emphasises the need for some type of training if justices of the peace are to act in the capacity of magistrates on the bench. I do not think it is fair that two young fellows, whatever their colour, should be sent to gaol for two months for what is known as “jumping the rattler”. Many other people have done it. When I was young and living in Townsville, it was the normal practice for young people to do it to get to school. I am not suggesting that honourable members should be advocating it or that offenders who are caught should go scot-free.

**Mr. Katter:** You realise the implications of what you are saying?

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Of course I realise the implications of it. I am dealing with the question of sentence. I am making a comparison between a magistrate fining a man \$8, with the alternative of four days’ gaol for evading a taxi fare and two justices of the peace imposing a sentence of two months’ gaol for a similar offence—the evasion of a train fare.

In dealing with the functions and jurisdiction of justices, let us ensure that those who sit on the bench know what it is all about. A number of people in the legal field have told me that the court system is very reticent about having justices on the bench, anyway. The story is told in my area about a former member of this Parliament. I will not mention his name but he represented a seat around Rockhampton. He acted in the capacity of a justice at Duaranga.

**Mr. Knox:** A former Labor member.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** A former Labor member, who is now a member of the National Party. He really did over the poor old fellow who came before him. I am not sure that he had the training to act in the capacity of a justice of the peace. Let us hope that the Minister does what he said. He said that he intended to ensure that these people received training of some type. Let us make sure they know what their functions, obligations and responsibilities are all about.

**Mr. FRAWLEY** (Murrumba) (10.1 p.m.): Those who listened to my speech may recall that I suggested that justices of the peace should be trained fairly well. It is interesting to note that the honourable member for Rockhampton claimed that when he was shadow Minister for Justice his suggestion about a small claims tribunal was awaiting legislation. That is a lot of rot.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! It is also not relevant to the clause under discussion.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I suggest with all respect that it is.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order! I do not debate my rulings. The Committee is not talking about Small Claims Tribunals.

**Mr. FRAWLEY**: On many occasions the honourable member for Rockhampton has claimed credit for things done by the Minister for Justice. This is something the Minister for Justice has done. He is going to make certain that people acting as a justice of the peace receive a certain amount of knowledge. Books are available. When I made the suggestion that every new justice of the peace—

**Mr. Wright**: No doubt you read my speech.

**Mr. FRAWLEY**: What a lot of rot! I don't even bother reading the member's stupid speeches. It is a very good idea that J.P.s should be given certain training, as I suggested. I take full credit for it, despite what the honourable member for Rockhampton says. They can obtain certain books from the Justices Association.

**Mr. Wright**: Are you a financial member?

**Mr. FRAWLEY**: I always have been.

**Mr. Lowes**: What training is necessary to become a member of Parliament?

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order! The honourable member will disregard that interjection.

**Mr. FRAWLEY**: Looking at members of the Opposition—no training is required. One can be an idiot and get into Parliament.

The Minister has done a fine thing in making certain that justices will receive a certain amount of training.

**Mr. KATTER** (Flinders) (10.4 p.m.): I did not intend to speak in this debate but certain things have been said which most certainly need to be corrected. The honourable member for Rockhampton cited a number of cases where justices of the peace had made what he considered to be obvious errors. They might have been errors in his opinion; they might have been errors in the opinion of most honourable members; they might have been errors in the opinion of the majority of the citizenry of Queensland. But let us not lose sight of the ideal of justice, and that is what the common man thinks is right and wrong. We should not give away the right of the common man to others because they have received some specialist training. The law should reflect what the average man in the street thinks is right and wrong, not what some people think because of university training, secondary education or some special training. People cannot be trained in a concept of justice of what is right and wrong. I am proud to say that I have met men in the Gulf of Carpentaria who had had no education whatsoever but whose sense of justice and fair play would rival and excel anything

we might hear from the Opposition benches in spite of the tertiary education of some A.L.P. members.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.5 p.m.): I think the honourable member for Flinders effectively demolished the honourable member for Rockhampton. I pay great credit of course to the honourable member for Murrumba for the many worth-while suggestions that he puts forward in this Chamber which are adopted by the Government.

**Mr. Jensen**: Don't be so facetious.

**Mr. KNOX**: Would the honourable member like me to sing his praises, too?

**Mr. Jensen**: Yes. I don't think you can sing.

**Mr. KNOX**: It is only because I am tone deaf that I refrain from doing so. It would be rather flat.

It is intended that some assistance will be given to the Justices Association—which has a rather impressive membership of 12,000—in relation to the training of justices in their duties.

The duties of justices of the peace go far beyond the witnessing of documents and indeed sitting on the bench occasionally. They are called upon to perform many other duties. The association publishes a booklet to assist J.P.s in these matters. There is also a series of lectures that members of the association can attend, and papers are available to them.

**Mr. Jones**: In the metropolitan area.

**Mr. KNOX**: The material is distributed right throughout the State.

**Mr. Jones**: The lectures are not available.

**Mr. KNOX**: The papers that are produced at the lectures are made available to members. The department can assist the association in relation to these matters, and we intend to do so.

Clause 19, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 28, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

## SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### SECOND READING

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.8 p.m.): I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Members of this House can indeed be proud of the fact that Queensland has led the way with Small Claims Tribunals.



At the fourth Commonwealth Magistrates' Association Conference, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in August of this year, a paper entitled "Small Claims Procedures in Australia" was presented for discussion by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Office.

This paper stated—

"The first prototype is to be found in Queensland where a referee, constituting a tribunal independent of the judicial system, considers small claims. This approach has been followed in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. On the other hand, in South Australia (up to \$500) and the Australian Capital Territory (up to \$1,000), the subordinate (Magistrates') Courts exercise the small claims jurisdiction."

The Queensland delegates to this conference have reported that the paper immediately became a focal point of interest for all participants, as it appeared the Queensland Act was the first to come into operation and it had many advantages over the English system. I can report that, a few weeks ago, New Zealand adopted the Queensland Act and that very soon the Commonwealth will adopt it in the A.C.T. and the other territories.

There appears to be no doubt that many of the provisions of the Act will find their way into the Statute Books of many Commonwealth countries because of the numerous inquiries we are receiving about its operation.

Since the inception of the Small Claims Tribunal, a total of 3034 claims have been dealt with and of this number approximately 500 have been heard in country centres.

The largest number heard in any one country centre has been 91 at Southport, where the referee has made seven visits. The referee has made five visits to Townsville, where there have been 67 hearings. There are another 22 claims on hand at the moment awaiting hearing at Townsville. Altogether there are 170 claims on hand awaiting hearing in country centres.

The referee proposes to visit Cairns and Townsville next month, Ipswich at the beginning of December, and is making plans to visit Maryborough, Bundaberg and Gladstone.

Hearings already held at other country centres include 38 at Toowoomba, 30 at Nambour, 19 at Rockhampton, 12 at Caloundra, six at Ipswich and four at Gympie.

It is proposed that a second referee be appointed at Brisbane.

When the Small Claims Tribunals Act was first introduced, the jurisdiction of the tribunal was restricted to \$450 because of the provisions in the Commonwealth Bankruptcy Act whereby a creditor's petition cannot be presented against a debtor unless the debt amounts to \$500.

This question has been examined and it is considered that on the change in money values alone, the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Tribunal should be increased.

However, when increasing this jurisdiction, due regard has to be given to the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court which is limited to \$1,200.

The Act was amended in 1974 to include in the definition of "small claim" claims relating to the recovery of moneys lodged as a bond or security for tenancy.

An argument has been received that an aggrieved tenant who wished to take action under the Act for the recovery of bond moneys may technically not be eligible to refer his claim to the tribunal as he is not a consumer within that definition in the Act. Under section 24 of the Act, a consumer is the only person who may refer a claim to the tribunal.

It is therefore proposed to amend the definitions of "consumer", "small claim" and "trader" to put the matter beyond doubt but at the same time not bring any other type of landlord and tenant situation within the jurisdiction of the tribunal.

The other proposed amendments are more in the nature of procedural amendments and it is considered they will further improve the administration of the Act.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (10.13 p.m.): I think all honourable members recognise the value of the Small Claims Tribunal. At the introductory stage, the Opposition stated quite clearly what it thinks of it. Its success was obvious from the start because it was informal; it was a cheap jurisdiction in which to lodge a claim and it ensured swift justice.

**Mr. Moore:** And a bit of rough justice, too.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I do not think that is so. Most people have been very happy with it. I have spoken to some retailers and manufacturers who have had actions taken against them. They have been very impressed with the way in which claims have been dealt with. They felt they were treated very fairly. Although I have met quite a few people who have had dealings with this tribunal, I have not met one person who has any disparaging remarks or serious criticism to make about it. The only comment is that sometimes a delay of two or three months is involved before a claim is dealt with. The honourable member for Windsor is completely wrong. If he thinks that the referee is dealing badly or unfairly with people—I think that is what he means—that is his complaint, but I do not think many honourable members would agree with him.

The Treasurer outlined in his Budget speech that a new referee is to be appointed. It is a pity that with the growth in population, the need for this tribunal will increase.

Because of the growth in the number of claims in Townsville, Rockhampton and other provincial areas of the State, such an appointment could well be made in Townsville. I would like to see one appointed to there to accord with the growth in the law structure there. I understand that a new District Court judge is to be appointed very shortly; and possibly the time will come when we will need a referee there.

**Mr. Moore:** Save it for when you do your seat. You'll be able to take the job on yourself.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I believe I would do fairly well at it.

The Minister made the point that very few claims come from the Rockhampton area. That is true. We have handled our own problems. The Central Queensland Consumers Association, which, as honourable members know, I founded—I will take some credit for that; I am currently the president—has handled dozens and dozens of complaints. We have copied the idea of the Small Claims Tribunal. We get the retailer and the consumer to come in. They sit down and talk about it and come to a compromise. The fact that we have been able to resolve some problems has created other difficulties when it comes to the final withdrawal from the Small Claims Tribunal.

In view of what was said by way of interjection about who first raised the idea of the Small Claims Tribunal in this Assembly, I shall make one other point to keep the record clear. I will quote from volume 261 of "Hansard", 1972-73, at page 3216. The then honourable member for Baroona (Mr. Hanlon) said—

"I hesitate to act now as any authority on the matter of who did pioneer this legislation or the concept of it. But I have 'Hansard' to guide me and, for the record, it is true that it was raised in the Supply debate on 24 November last year (page 2050 of pamphlet 'Hansard' No. 16) by the honourable member for Rockhampton (Mr. Wright). Later, on 28 November (page 2084) the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt (Mr. Chinchon) also raised the matter and dealt with it quite extensively. So I think we could agree that both honourable members brought forward this concept in the Supply debate. If we want to draw a photo-finish line, I suppose the honourable member for Rockhampton won by a short half head."

Let me say, however, that it wasn't something new from my point of view. I had read about it. Something like this had been studied and initiated in some States of America. However, what gets me is why the Government is so upset because I was the first to mention it in the House. They possibly have good reasons for it. What is wrong with using it at election time? What is wrong with that? I think that is quite valid.

Returning to the legislation before us—I wish to refer to the extension of the definition of "consumer", which is to clearly and definitely include a tenant. In view of the numerous disputes that have arisen about bonds, that is necessary. This matter was raised very early in the piece by the same member for Baroona (Mr. Hanlon). We know that difficulties arose because landlords were asking for ridiculous amounts as bonds and they needed only the slightest reason for refusing to hand back the bond money. I know of one lady who employed a professional cleaner at the end of her tenancy. When she asked for her bond money, the fellow said, "I am not giving it to you. The place is dirty." That certainly was not so, but nothing could be done about it. Eventually this type of case came before the Small Claims Tribunal. I think that acted as a warning to many landlords, because the prevalence decreased.

It will be very interesting to see whether the Act will now allow the Small Claims Tribunal to determine claims relating to overcharging of rents. In answer to an interjection of mine at the introductory stage, the Minister said that we will certainly not revert to rent control or the charges of rent generally. However, cases arise in which a person says, "I have paid you two weeks' rent in advance." The landlord says, "No, you haven't. You owe me rent up to a certain time." This brings us back to the issuing of receipts. Most honourable members would agree that a lot of landlords do not issue receipts and, if they do, the information put on the receipts is minimal. Certainly they do not show the period covered by the rent. The only date recorded is the date on which the money is paid. If actions such as that have not already been brought before the Small Claims Tribunal, I would hope that they could be handled by the tribunal.

I move on to the general topic of tenancy. I am pleased to see that a Bill is to be introduced relating to residential tenancies. I hope that it will be fair and equitable and that it will protect the rights of both landlord and tenant. After all, in this House we try to adopt a balanced approach. That has certainly been done in the legislation now before us in that we consider the rights of the retailer, the rights of the trader and the rights of the consumer. Let us make sure that in any legislation we introduce we consider all sides.

I point out that we have only until December to legislate. That is a pity. It will not leave much time for the various community groups to consider the Bill when it is introduced and printed. If it is introduced tomorrow—and it could be—it would probably not be till next Tuesday or Wednesday that members would have an opportunity to take it to the R.E.I.Q., the Q.L.R.E.A. or other groups in the community. I have in mind groups such as Shelter, and others

involved in housing matters. They will not have an opportunity to do much about it or to suggest amendments.

I hope that the Bill removes the grey areas and the doubt that surrounds tenancy laws, because there is a need for clear and exact guide-lines which can be followed with certainty, especially by lawyers. Haven't they made a fist of this one! They have made many thousands of dollars from problems between landlords and tenants. I hope that the legislation will cover the landlord's investment, because this has to be protected. Equally, the rights of tenants have to be protected.

I realise that, under legislation such as that now before us, it is important to protect the tenant, just as it is important to protect the landlord. I know, from some of the cases that have come to my attention through the Central Queensland Consumers' Association, that there are some shocking tenants. I imagine that similar tenants are to be found throughout the Commonwealth. Some tenants go into a property without having any intention of paying rent after the first couple of weeks. They have no intention of caring for the premises. They just do not care what happens to them. I recall a case in Emu Park in which a woman took over a place and immediately sublet it, knowing full well that she had no right to do so. I hope that should such a case now arise, it could be taken to the Small Claims Tribunal. Is that so?

**Mr. Knox:** No, I do not think so. I think you will find that that comes under another Act.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Let us hope that something will be done about it, because such disputes will continue to arise. Whether we like it or not, there are what I might call multi-problem families in the community. They are people who will always be a problem. They present problems in social welfare, and certainly problems when it comes to paying their way. I know also that there are some extremely despicable landlords who do little for the comfort of others and care only about the return that they receive on their money.

The Small Claims Tribunal has certainly been successful in resolving disputes over bonds since it was amended in 1974. I hope that tenancy agreements can be resolved in the same way. Whether or not it will apply to them will depend, I suppose, on interpretation.

The most important amendment increases the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Tribunal to an amount not exceeding \$700. We all know that previously the amount was \$450. I believe that the limit should be \$1,000, and I know that others agree with me. The Minister says that that would bring it too close to the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court. That may be so, but we are, after all, talking about small claims not so much in the sense of quantum of money but in the sense of

household goods and appliances. Does it really matter whether a television set that becomes the subject of a dispute cost \$200 or \$800? Whatever the price, the problem is just as bad for the consumer. I would have thought that if the amount had been increased to \$1,000, all the problems that exist, and will arise, would be covered.

The honourable member for Bundaberg made the suggestion that the legislation include a provision under which the amount could be changed, probably by way of regulation, in accordance with rises in the cost of living index. I could not see any way in which the Bill could be so amended. The Opposition considered moving an amendment to increase the amount to \$1,000, but we do not now intend to do so, because we lack the numbers to succeed. No doubt in time such a provision will have to be introduced by the Minister. I think that it would be a progressive move, because within six months, the way costs are increasing and the way technology is producing more home appliances such as hot-water systems that cost \$1,100 and \$1,200 and hi-fi sets that cost \$900—as articles become more sophisticated—prices generally will increase.

I agree that a person making a claim could say, "The whole article cost \$900, but I am prepared to accept \$700." But I do not think that that does justice to the applicant. If there is a dispute over an everyday household appliance which in fact cost \$900, the applicant should be able to recover \$900, because that was what was paid in the first instance. I know that there would be difficulties if the jurisdiction too closely approached that of the Magistrates Court. It has been suggested to me that perhaps the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Courts should be altered. Lawyers have said to me, "Don't do that, because they are already overburdened." I shall therefore take that point no further.

I notice that under the present Act the Small Claims Tribunal can either require a party to a proceeding to pay money to rectify a defect, or dismiss the claim. We are now covering claims for relief from payment of money and claims to pay up. Apparently this has been an oversight and some problems have arisen, because I originally thought that the Act covered those situations.

It is a wise move to allow the Small Claims Tribunal to include in proceedings another person or party who may be involved but who is not named by the claimant. How many times do consumers not understand exactly who their case should be against? I see it in my electorate where they say, "It is the retailer's fault and we have the claim against him." In fact, when it gets to the Small Claims Tribunal it is very quickly realised that it was the manufacturer's fault—I imagine this would be overcome—or vice versa, if in fact the action is against the manufacturer and the warranty was the responsibility of the retailer. Then the Small Claims Tribunal should be automatically

able to bring that person or party into the proceedings. These amendments are necessary and they do have the support of the Opposition, but we hold firmly to our belief that the maximum quantum of claims allowable should be \$1,000. I do not think the reasons given have been good enough. I see no real problems in further increasing it to \$1,000. The Minister was reticent the first time, when the Act was introduced in 1973, and again in 1974, to go anywhere near bankruptcy. Apparently this is no longer a problem. To me what he is concerned about is getting too close to the Magistrates Court jurisdiction.

I have some points to make when we debate the clauses, but otherwise we in the Opposition support the legislation.

**Mr. FRAWLEY** (Murrumba) (10.26 p.m.): I rise in this debate to put the record straight on some of the statements made by the honourable member for Rockhampton. First of all, I know for a fact that the Minister for Justice deserves to be congratulated because it was his idea to introduce the Small Claims Tribunals, and he thought of this—

**Mr. Moore:** We had been debating it for a month in our committee.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Notwithstanding anything said to the contrary he had it in mind well and truly before it was ever suggested by the honourable member for Rockhampton. I have a lot of respect for the previous member for Baroona, but I still say that the Minister for Justice had this in mind before the honourable member for Rockhampton ever rose and spoke about it. To put the record straight here, the honourable member for Rockhampton claimed in his election campaign that since he became the shadow Minister for Justice his idea of the Small Claims Tribunals had been introduced in Queensland. I refute that statement. That is an absolute, downright untruth and he misled the electorate of Rockhampton before the last election by saying that and claiming some of the credit.

He also castigated his own mates in the Opposition by saying that he was the only Opposition member commended by the Treasurer for his speech on the Budget. I was here during the debate on the 1974 Budget and I do not remember the Treasurer commending him for any speech he made. But fancy saying that about his mates! He said or implied by those words that the honourable member for Bulimba made a rotten contribution to that debate. An election pamphlet stated—

“Wide publicity has been given to the fact that on a number of occasions the Government has either amended or withheld legislation at Keith Wright’s suggestion.”

I am quoting his words. That is also a lot of rubbish. The Government has never once withheld legislation at the suggestion of the honourable member for Rockhampton.

I want to go on record as saying that this whole idea came from the Minister for Justice and his committee which discussed it well and truly—

**An Opposition Member** interjected.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** If you had been here all night instead of attending to other business you would know it is all about.

**An Honourable Member:** Is that a paid advertisement?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** Certainly it was a paid advertisement in “The Morning Bulletin.” I believe that increasing the amount that can be claimed from \$450 to \$700 is a very good idea. I have referred many people to the Small Claims Tribunal. They have come to me and discussed their problems and I have always sent them there. The majority of people have been satisfied. From memory there have been only one or two who were dissatisfied but mostly it is a very good thing and I am glad that the Act was introduced in 1973.

**Mr. Wright:** Are you critical of the referee?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I am not critical of the referee. The referee is subject to human failings the same as we are. It is quite possible for the referee to sometimes err in a decision but after all he is only human, and when human beings are involved—

**Mr. Wright:** How long have you been perfect?

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** I have never been perfect and I am suspicious of anyone who says he is. The honourable member for Rockhampton certainly cannot be accused of humility when he stands up here and says how great he is and what he knows.

**Mr. Wright:** Who made all the claims—

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Rockhampton will cease interjecting.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** There is no doubt about that. I think if he gets tossed out of his seat he would do a far better job as an advocate or a referee in the Small Claims Tribunal than he has done as a marriage counsellor. At least he would not be in so much trouble.

**Mr. Moore:** Does he look into their eyes?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member will come back to the Bill.

**Mr. FRAWLEY:** He would not have to hypnotise anybody when he is hearing a claim before the Small Claims Tribunal. There is no doubt that the Minister has done a good job on this. He is to be commended for moving the amendment. Any new Act has teething problems and a Minister who later brings down amendments—in this case it is to increase the amount from \$450 to \$700—is to be commended.

The Minister for Justice never receives any credit from members of the Opposition. They always castigate him and try to claim credit for what he does. In my opinion, he has done a good job in his portfolio, and I again commend him for introducing the Bill.

**Mr. GYGAR** (Stafford) (10.31 p.m.): It has often been said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

**Mr. Wright:** Well, sit down.

**Mr. GYGAR:** The honourable member for Rockhampton is walking proof of that saying. He is a well-known half-baked lawyer. I also claim credit for being one myself, and I hope that eventually I will be able to make a worth-while contribution to the legal profession. The track record of the honourable member shows that all he will do is drag it further down into the mire.

The honourable member for Rockhampton has claimed credit for almost everything since the creation, but he should acknowledge that this is one measure for which he cannot claim credit. In his usual style, he has jumped onto the political band wagon.

I think it is worth investigating where the legislation came from. Although the honourable member for Rockhampton claimed credit for it, honourable members will have noticed that he did not give the page of "Hansard" at which he first spoke on the subject and the page at which the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt first spoke on it. He quoted the comments of his crony the former member for Baroona. It is obvious why he did that. If he had gone back and really examined what occurred, he would have found that the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt had spoken about it and that it was not until some time later—not a matter of minutes or hours; it takes his brain a little longer than that to work—that he finally got the message. The penny dropped; he saw political capital in the matter and leapt onto the band wagon. It had already been discussed in the newspapers before the honourable member realised what was going on. It is unfortunate that there is not an original thought in the honourable member's head, but we will have to get used to that.

The measure originated with the Minister for Justice. The idea was examined in some detail by his committee and then raised in the House by the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order and persistent interjections will cease. I ask honourable members on both sides of the House not to heed interjections.

**Mr. GYGAR:** As I said, the legislation came from the Minister for Justice. It was developed by him and his committee over

a considerable period and subjected to microscopic examination. I think it is a compliment to the Minister that this is the only error that has yet been discovered in its operation—and it cannot really be classified as an error.

The Minister is now seeking to clarify the Act and ensure that bonds for rental accommodation come within the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Tribunal. The Minister has stated that this is one of the problems faced by consumers. People find that they have justice on their side but that, because of the high cost of litigation, it is not worth their while going through a lengthy legal process to gain justice.

**Mr. Frawley:** Have you noticed that the honourable member for Archerfield hasn't spoken in this debate? He hasn't got a brief.

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

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr. GYGAR:** I do not know whether the honourable member for Archerfield would even be qualified to carry a brief. His legal standing is even lower than that of the honourable member for Rockhampton.

The Bill introduced by the Minister clarifies an important point for the little people who are affected by the legislation. The people who need justice and to a large extent can find it before the Small Claims Tribunal will be aware that the protection given to them is extended and made more certain under the measure introduced by the Minister. I hope that the amendment is given wide publicity by the Press and the other media so that people will understand exactly what their rights are and know that they have access to the Small Claims Tribunal when questions arise over tenancy bonds.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.35 p.m.), in reply: The usual regurgitation of who discovered small claims tribunals seems to have cropped up again, so let us get the facts straight. The first member to mention them in the debates in this Chamber was the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I rise to a point of order. I take exception to that. Let us make the record accurate. I take the point of order because if the Minister will look at page 2050 of "Hansard", volume 261, he will note that I raised the matter. At page 2084 he will note that the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt raised the matter.

**Mr. KNOX:** I will accept the honourable member's statement about the debates on that occasion.

**Mr. Wright:** Page 2050.

**Mr. KNOX:** I have the reference. I accept the honourable member's statement that he raised it on that occasion. But those honourable members who were here will recall it was in fact the honourable member for Mt. Gravatt who raised the matter in the Address-in-Reply debate, which preceded the debate to which the honourable member for Rockhampton referred. Indeed, that was the first time the matter was aired in the House.

**Opposition Members** interjected.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Cairns and other honourable members on my left will refrain from persistent interjections or I will have to deal with them.

**Mr. KNOX:** If the honourable member cares to turn over a couple more pages of that debate, he will see where I spoke. On that occasion I said that perhaps the dispute about who thought of a small claims tribunal could be resolved quite quickly by considering not who spoke about it first in the House but who did the leg work in finding out all about it. As mentioned in that debate, that was Mr. Pluckrose, the then and present Commissioner for Consumer Affairs. A few weeks after I became the Minister I arranged for him to do a world tour to attend conferences and inquire into the operation of small claims tribunals that I was aware of in the United Kingdom and North America. It was his report on his return from overseas that led to my making a public statement outside the House that we would consider the introduction of small claims tribunals in this State.

**Mr. Houston:** Did you have your photograph on it?

**Mr. KNOX:** Not on that occasion, but we corrected that later.

I said in that debate that if anybody was to get the credit for thinking up and designing the principles of small claims tribunals in this State it should be Mr. Pluckrose, who did all the homework necessary to reach the stage where we could present legislation to Parliament. It took nearly a year of work, including research and inquiry—not continuous, of course—to produce the sort of legislation that would work in our social and legal environment. Numerous conferences with members of the Law Society and Queensland Bar Association assisted greatly in the preparation of the Bill.

That is the history of it. I do not see any particular merit in the honourable member for Rockhampton or any other honourable member making the claim that he first mentioned it in the House. That is the history of it.

**Mr. Jones:** But the honourable member for Murrumba keeps telling lies about it.

**Mr. KNOX:** No he doesn't. I am sure the honourable member for Murrumba has never told a lie in this House in his life. It may well be that some members of the Opposition do not like the truth.

It was extremely difficult legislation to prepare, and it took some time to prepare simply because we did not want to cut across existing procedures and the civil rights of people on both sides to be heard in the various courts. It had to be approached with considerable care, and again I place on record my indebtedness to Mr. Pluckrose for his work in the matter. It is about time the honourable member for Rockhampton paid tribute to the people who did the leg work.

**Mr. Lowes:** What justification does the honourable member for Rockhampton have for presiding over this kangaroo court that he appears to have set up in Rockhampton?

**Mr. KNOX:** I do not think he is operating under any charter. If he should get into some difficulties, as he seems to have done in some other jurisdiction in which he operates, he will have to face the consequences.

**Mr. Alison:** He's running into someone else's electorate again.

**Mr. KNOX:** He very often does that, too.

Very few complaints are made in relation to the operations of the Small Claims Tribunal. In fact, I can recall only two or three. One was that the parties felt the matter should be heard at a place other than where it was to be heard; another was made in relation to the time factor. That is the one that concerns me. It has been mentioned by the honourable member for Rockhampton and others.

We are endeavouring to overcome the time lag by the appointment of another referee. In fact, the person involved is already working as acting referee. This will reduce delays. I had hoped that by now there would be a reduction in the number of cases, whereas in fact the number has increased.

I believe that in the long run there could be a reduction, because people now have confidence in the Small Claims Tribunal, traders understand its rulings and are guided by them, and more and more cases are being settled at the door of the court simply because of the precedents that have been established to which parties can refer. I hope that in time there will be a reduction in the number of cases, simply because people will know that there is some inevitability about decisions made by the Small Claims Tribunal and will settle the matter out of court. On the results, this would appear to be happening.

The question was asked whether we should change jurisdiction by regulation. If in fact only a penalty or some fee was involved, I would support changing the monetary amount

by regulation. But when we come to changing the jurisdiction of the tribunal, I think we are changing one of the fundamental principles of the legislation. While it has been necessary to do it sooner than we had expected, because of the pressure on the community caused by inflation, this is still a matter for this Parliament rather than one for regulation. As I say, it is one of the two or three major principles of the legislation; it is more than a mere fee or penalty, which might be regarded in other circumstances as requiring automatic adjustment.

I thank the honourable members for Murrumba and Stafford for their contributions and support. I think they helped put the record straight.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE

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

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, as read agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of s.17; Exclusion of other jurisdictions—

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (10.44 p.m.): The honourable member for Stafford said that tonight was the first time we have had to try to fix up any of the errors.

**Mr. Moore:** He didn't say that.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** He did. He said, "This is the first time we have had to make any changes." He said "errors", and then suddenly changed his mind and said, "They are not really errors." As he is such a distinguished legal person and one coming from the university—I am told he failed in a few subjects—I should inform him that if he looks back he will find the Act was amended in 1974 in relation to bonds. No doubt he does not understand. I am told that he always makes a good contribution because he is Forum-trained whereas the honourable member for Flinders was Rostrum-trained.

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** He circumvents the truth—I am sure of it. I think that is where he lets down his model. I am not sure whether he is the model for Mr. Killen or Mr. Killen is his model, but it is something like that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I think the honourable member should return to clause 4.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I make the point that Mr. Killen certainly would not go on as he does.

To return to clause 4—

**Mr. Moore:** It shows that he is a heavy-weight.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I am told that he looks in the mirror constantly to make sure—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the honourable member to get back to clause 4.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I shall do so, Mr. Hewitt.

Section 17 prevents a matter being heard in any other jurisdiction if it has previously been referred to the Small Claims Tribunal. The section contains a provision that a matter may be heard in another jurisdiction if it has already been commenced in a Magistrates Court or been withdrawn from the Small Claims Tribunal. We are now adding, "or has been struck out for want of jurisdiction". No doubt this amendment may be warranted but we are already causing ourselves some trouble and this will not help in any way to overcome it.

In a recent case in Rockhampton an extremely elderly pensioner had a dispute with a local plumbing firm. When we realised that no compromise was available, we got her to lodge a claim with the Small Claims Tribunal. Some time later she received a claim that had been lodged by a local solicitor for the amount outstanding, which was some hundreds of dollars. The solicitor was advised that the matter had been put before the Small Claims Tribunal. The parties then agreed that they should try to settle it. As much as the honourable member for Brisbane may deride what we try to do in Rockhampton, he is having a go not only at me but also representatives from the C.W.A., the Housewives Association and many other decent organisations such as the Pensioners League.

When these two people came before our committee, we were able to get them to agree to a compromise, and the Small Claims Tribunal was advised accordingly. The solicitor is now claiming legal costs in the sum of \$27 for the original claim. He backed up his right to this money with a letter from the Small Claims Tribunal saying that the original issue did not come within the scope of the Small Claims Tribunal's jurisdiction and was cancelled. Yet it was in the Small Claims Tribunal before an action was lodged in the Magistrates Court. It was to be dealt with by the Small Claims Tribunal and was withdrawn because it was settled.

Solicitors now have the right to charge legal fees. Will this amendment make the position worse? When do we decide that a matter has been struck out? If it is finally struck out after having been before the Small Claims Tribunal for three months, and action is taken in a Magistrates Court about a month after the claim was made in the Small Claims Tribunal, will a solicitor still be able to charge legal fees when a matter is struck out at a latter date (as the proposed amendment says), "for want of jurisdiction"? There are obviously some loop-holes here. I wrote to the Minister hoping that he would be able to do something about it. Quite often I get replies

from the Minister that people should consult their solicitors about these things and that he cannot give advice.

I visualise great difficulties arising because a manufacturer or retailer in a dispute can take action through the Magistrates Court although a claim has been lodged in the Small Claims Tribunal. He can simply wait, hoping that it does not come within the tribunal's jurisdiction, or that it is cancelled for some reason and he can then go ahead. If that is so, we are defeating what we are trying to do here.

The Minister made the original intention very clear (and everyone supported him on it) that if a person gets in first to the Small Claims Tribunal no other jurisdiction can be approached to have the matter resolved—that the Small Claims Tribunal has precedence.

**Mr. Lowes:** Surely the Small Claims Tribunal has no jurisdiction when an action has not commenced.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** The point is that the matter has been lodged. It could take three months before it is decided that it is out of jurisdiction. I know that the honourable member for Brisbane has a very personal reason for protecting solicitors—to make sure that they can rip-off as many people as possible. We have to protect the consumers. If there are loop-holes, claimants will be forced to go ahead with claims even though it is possible to settle them.

Very often when a matter is lodged in the Small Claims Tribunal the party says, "Let us try to settle this if we can." The manufacturer or the retailer says, "O.K. I know it has been lodged. I think we can settle this ourselves. Why don't we come to a compromise?" Under the provisions of this amendment, it would be far better for the complainant to go ahead and pursue the matter to extreme lengths, because if at some point the action is cancelled he may find that he has to pay legal costs.

I think this does create a loop-hole and that we will create real trouble for ourselves by this amendment. Unfortunately, the problem is there whether we amend it or not. I do not know what the Minister and his advisers can do about it. It is a pity that we cannot allow the matter to stand over at least until next week, by which time we would have had a chance to study it. The matter has to be tidied up. I know of only one major instance when the solicitors charged costs. I know of a few instances when they said, "We will waive the fees. Don't worry about it." However, one fellow is determined to get his money out of a pensioner. I wonder how many other solicitors will follow suit once they know that this avenue is open to them.

If the Minister and his advisers have not had an opportunity to consider the matters that could arise out of this, maybe it would be better not to go ahead with this aspect

tonight but to come back later on. I would hate to think that in a month's time this has to be amended again simply because a loop-hole has not been closed.

**Hon. W. E. KNOX** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.51 p.m.): I think the honourable member for Rockhampton is creating an Aunt Sally.

**Mr. Wright:** Tell the old lady. She is 83, I think.

**Mr. KNOX:** I do not know the circumstances of it.

The situation at the present time is that one must refer to the Act. It was felt because of the wording of section 17 that, once people have got into the court—we are not speaking about making a claim—they are excluded from taking action elsewhere. That was the original intention, but it did not cover the situation of discovery during the course of the hearing that a matter is outside the jurisdiction of the tribunal. Indeed, one matter that went to the Supreme Court was found to be outside the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Tribunal. That was referred to on a previous occasion when the Act was amended.

If, as is suggested in the amendment, a case has been struck out for want of jurisdiction, it would seem to be prejudicial to the claimant to preclude him from going elsewhere simply because the matter was commenced in the Small Claims Tribunal.

**Mr. Wright:** If it has been resolved, there is no need for it to go elsewhere.

**Mr. KNOX:** We are not certain that in all circumstances the matter would be resolved. We are trying to overcome all the problems so that the claimant—he is the one we are worrying about in this amendment—is not prejudiced. We believe that a possibility exists that the claimant would be prejudiced and, because of that, it is in his interest that we keep the options open. The want of jurisdiction is not the claimant's fault. There may be a misunderstanding. The claimant may have received wrong advice. On the other hand—and this has happened—the referee himself, having allowed the claim into his tribunal believing it to be within his jurisdiction, might discover within the course of the hearing, from information that was not available to him prior to the matter being listed, that it does not come within his jurisdiction. To avoid the possibility of that occurring, this amendment is suggested.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (10.54 p.m.): The Minister referred to the Act. I think it is worth while that we do that. Section 17 says—

"Exclusion of other jurisdictions. (1) Where a claim, being a small claim, is duly referred."



The Minister led us to believe that the matter has to be dealt with; has to be before the referee. The Act does not say that. It simply refers to the small claim being referred. I presume that refers to the claim being lodged or an application being filled out and the prescribed fee of \$2 lodged at the Magistrates Court or sent down here to the referee and duly acknowledged as having been referred to a Small Claims Tribunal. In that case, it cannot be taken to another court.

If that is the situation, it may be many months before it is decided that the matter does not come within that jurisdiction. We well know that if a matter is referred to the Small Claims Tribunal, the solicitors are not told of it. The Magistrates Court in Rockhampton does not send a notification to every solicitor saying, "Do not take out summonses on the matters listed here because they have been referred to the Small Claims Tribunal." We have had cases in which the solicitors involved did not know that they had been referred to the Small Claims Tribunal. We did not bother to tell them in the first instance. When we found out that solicitors were involved, we advised them and in a number of cases they said, "We do not want to go ahead. We hope it can be resolved." I say that trouble could be caused in this way.

The Minister did not answer the other point that I raised, and I think he should. Let us suppose that a matter was referred to the Small Claims Tribunal. If it was there for three months and, before it was set down for hearing, it was heard that it was outside the jurisdiction, what would happen if within that time it was referred to the Magistrates Court and legal fees were involved? Would the person concerned be liable for those fees?

**Mr. Knox:** Of course.

**Mr. Wright:** I think that is completely unfair. Surely if action is taken in the Magistrates Court after a matter has been referred to the Small Claims Tribunal, there should be no fees forthcoming for the solicitor. Surely that is only fair.

**Mr. Moore:** What fees do you charge?

**Mr. Wright:** We do not charge anything. We have a membership fee of only \$1. As a matter of fact, the honourable member is eligible for membership if he could get through our rigorous checking system, but he probably would not qualify; I know he is anti-consumer.

It is obvious that we will not resolve this matter here. I do hope, however, that when the Minister receives the personal representation that I have made to him he will see the real issue involved and perhaps the Act will have to be brought back for amendment at a later date.

**Hon. W. E. Knox** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (10.57 p.m.): I do not think that there is any

matter to resolve. I am sorry that the honourable member misunderstands the situation. However, I shall have a look at the case to which he refers. I give him an assurance that on all the advice that I have, this is a desirable amendment to preclude any prejudice to the claimant.

On the matter of solicitors collecting fees—a number of matters come before the Small Claims Tribunal because people have sought advice from solicitors, for which they pay a fee. Indeed, I believe that a number of claimants have solicitors help them in preparing the statements that they make for the Small Claims Tribunal. That again is a proper matter for a solicitor to attend to, and for which to charge a fee.

**Mr. Wright:** I am not talking about that.

**Mr. Knox:** I know the honourable member is not, but I am leading up to the fact that if people consult solicitors and have them at various places to assist them, it is quite proper for fees to be charged. I do not think that there should be anything in this Act or any other to prevent solicitors from collecting their just fees. What the Act does is exclude advice that could be given for reward by barristers or solicitors—in this case solicitors—and prevent them from appearing without consent of the parties and without the approval of the referee. This is a departure from normal practice, and it is one on which there were some reservations. But there is nothing in the Act to say that solicitors should not accept fees for advice tendered to clients who might, at a subsequent hearing, require it. I would not dream of preventing solicitors from collecting their fees.

Clause 4, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 9, both inclusive, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

## LIENS ON CROPS OF SUGAR CANE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### INITIATION IN COMMITTEE

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

**Hon. W. E. Knox** (Nundah—Minister for Justice and Attorney-General) (11.1 p.m.): I move—

"That a Bill be introduced to amend the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931–1971 in a certain particular."

The Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act deals with crops of sugar-cane that are made security for any debt or liability by an owner of such crops. Provision is made in section 21 for the various fees that are to be paid to and received on behalf of the Crown. The 1976 Budget provides for an increase in these fees.

It is therefore proposed by this Bill to repeal section 21 and to provide that the Governor in Council, by Order in Council, may prescribe the fees to be paid in respect of filing or registering any document, searching registers, making copies of or extracts from any document and in respect of any other act or thing done for the purposes of the Act. When the Bill is passed it is then proposed to make an Order in Council to give effect to the proposed increases provided for in the 1976 Budget which the Treasurer has announced.

I commend the Bill to the Committee.

**Mr. WRIGHT** (Rockhampton) (11.2 p.m.): In holding the shadow portfolio of Justice I am learning just how wide the ramifications of the Minister's portfolio really are. When I saw this Bill on the Business Paper I could not believe that it was something to do with the Minister for Justice but I found out that it certainly was. So I decided I had better go back and look at the original legislation and I found it was introduced in 1931. Volume 160 of "Hansard" records that the Bill was introduced to overcome difficulties that had repeatedly arisen relating to liens on sugar-cane lands and the first and second liens on the sugar-cane crops themselves.

**An Honourable Member** interjected.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** Yes, it was introduced by the Moore Government of 1929-1932. The legislation gave official and statutory recognition to the second lien. Apparently there were many problems in those days. The main clause of that Bill related to the distribution of the proceeds of sale. The Bill also dealt with the manner in which liens were to be registered.

I read through the various amending Acts and found that in 1961 the Act was amended in relation to registration. The fees were increased also and the places of registration were changed from the registries of joint stock companies in Brisbane, Townsville and Rockhampton to the registries of the Supreme Court in those places.

We have no argument with what is being proposed tonight. We are removing the need for amendments to the legislation all the time by simply making provision for an Order in Council when necessary. But it is always interesting to go through old debates and learn that things do not change very much. As recorded on page 2353, volume 160 of "Hansard", the comments of the honourable member for Herbert (Mr. Pease) following the speech of the Attorney-General in the second-reading debate on a Bill to introduce this legislation in 1931 were—

"This is really a legal, technical Bill, which will probably be better dealt with in Committee. I am afraid there is a 'nigger in the woodpile' which the Attorney-General has not disclosed. In the main clause the landlord is protected

to the extent of one year's rent, while the people who have a mortgage over the crop are protected to the extent of one year's interest. What is the position with regard to wages? It is particularly noticeable that all the legislation introduced by the Government pays due regard to rent and interest while showing no concern whatsoever for wages. The people to whom wages are due are not protected, despite the very definite promises by the Government that full protection would be afforded in this respect."

So it is fairly obvious that things have not changed much from the 1929-1932 period when the Moore Government controlled this State and the present time when its counterpart occupies the Treasury benches. It is fairly obvious, however, that we do not want to incur the cost of always coming to this Assembly for an increase in fees. But let us not forget the right of this Parliament. I realise there has to be a balance. I realise the cost involved in sitting to amend legislation. It was mentioned by the honourable member for Mansfield at one time that it costs many thousands of dollars to amend legislation because Parliament has to sit and the officers of the Parliament have to be paid.

**Mr. Lane:** Why waste time by saying anything more? Why not save some money.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I wish to make a point that I think is valid, particularly as a regulations committee is to be set up. Such a committee is long overdue and has been asked for by honourable members on both sides of the Chamber. I know that you, Mr. Hewitt, have sought it, as have the honourable member for Lansborough and members of the Opposition, including myself.

**Mr. Knox:** I thought of it before you did.

**An Honourable Member:** Me, too.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** I will take that interjection, Mr. Hewitt.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Before we get too far into "me-tooism", I think I should point out that subordinate legislation is not under discussion.

**Mr. WRIGHT:** In one way it will be, Mr. Hewitt, because it is intended to allow the fees to be changed by Order in Council.

When I came into this Chamber originally, I was told that the greatest advocate for change in the procedures of this Assembly was without doubt the honourable member for Nundah. As a back-bencher, he was the man who aspired to change the system, to clean up the Standing Orders, to fix up what was wrong by having an accounts committee, a legislation committee, a subordinate legislation committee, a public finance committee and so on. As the person to whom I was speaking said, "When he made Cabinet, he suddenly forgot." Perhaps the Minister did think of this a long time ago. What a pity

he did not do something about it! We would not then have had to wait till 1975 to set up a regulations committee.

The Opposition does not oppose the proposal. It takes the view that at times amendment such as this are necessary. I only hope that all honourable members watch closely what happens, because the Opposition has a huge task in examining regulations that are tabled. Everyone knows how difficult it is to have them changed. One has only a short time in which to move for their disallowance, and it is very difficult to keep up with what is going on.

I reiterate that the Opposition does not oppose the proposal. I simply point out that it is amazing how history repeats itself, particularly in the case of Tory Governments.

**Mr. ROW (Hinchinbrook)** (11.7 p.m.): In speaking to the motion I must admit that, having been absent from this Chamber since yesterday, I have not had a great deal of time to study very thoroughly the implications of the proposed amendment. It seems to me to be purely a machinery matter that will not create any great change in the concept of the existing law relative to liens on crops of sugar cane.

I know that the honourable member for Rockhampton has to some extent gone back into the history of the Act in parliamentary records. However, the history of liens on sugar cane probably goes back to the early days of the establishment of the industry, when it was the practice—probably it is not so common these days as it was at the turn of the century—for large sugar-milling companies that had plantations and were introducing to the sugar industry the concept of independent small growers to provide finance to enable people to become established on areas that formerly had been plantations attached to the mill and which were being cut up and segregated in order to set up the system of sugar-cane farming that exists in Queensland today. It was a very convenient means of providing security for the company making the finance available, and I think it was highly commendable.

To get back to the proposed amendment—no-one likes to see fees constantly increasing relative to security for finance. However, as the Budget provides for an increase in fees, I suppose the machinery necessary to enable that increase to take effect is also necessary and the amendment is warranted. I support the motion.

Motion (Mr. Knox) agreed to.

Resolution reported.

#### FIRST READING

Bill presented and, on motion of Mr. Knox, read a first time.

The House adjourned at 11.12 p.m.